

Walking in the Spirit - Part 3

by Bruce Wilkinson

Bruce Wilkinson emphasizes the importance of walking in the Spirit for spiritual growth and avoiding sin through dependence on the Holy Spirit.

Duration: 1:53:04

Scripture: Acts 7:51, Ephesians 4:26-32

Topics: "Spirit Filled"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker begins by praying for guidance and asking for the joy of the Lord to be their strength. They then encourage the audience to take out their Bibles and sing a chorus together. The speaker shares a personal story about a financial commitment they made and how they were unable to fulfill it. They emphasize the importance of integrity and trusting in God's provision. The sermon also touches on the idea of focusing on one truth while not neglecting other truths in the Bible. The speaker concludes by leading the audience in singing a chorus and expressing their love for the Lord.

Transcript

A number of years ago at the dinner table, we were talking and my daughter, who was in her early teens, all of a sudden at the dinner table said, Dad, you and mom better know about something I'm praying about. I said, Jennifer, what do you mean, what are you praying about? Well, I'm praying that you and mom would have another baby. I said, Jenny, that's not a good prayer to pray, sweetie.

And she said, no, it's a prayer that... Why are you praying that, Jen? Well, Dave and I have been asking you and mom to have another baby. You keep saying no, so we went over your head. I couldn't believe this, so we laughed about it and in a few months she was pregnant.

We've banned prayer from my daughter's life. I walked around in a day's stun with my wife when we realized that this is really going to happen to us. And it's been like what you always hear.

It's absolutely wonderful. And that little girl named Jessica has her dad in particular all around her little finger. We play Uno together and Skippo and dolls and tea.

It's wonderful. The tea part, I don't know about the tea part. Well, I was talking to Darlene, my wife, and she and Jessica were supposed to come this weekend.

My other daughter, who's Jennifer, is a high school senior, was here last weekend. And my son's in college, so they were all excited about coming. And then Jessica got sick and she got two ear infections and the doctor said you probably oughtn't fly.

And so they're at home. Well, she's been talking to us for, it seems like forever, about getting a guinea pig. And we go on a date every week, Jessica and I. And we went out on a date last week or the week before, I forget.

And I said, Jess, this time you pick where you want to go. I want to go see a guinea pig. Okay.

So we went out and there were all these guinea pigs and there was a little one. And she fell in love with this little wimp of a guinea pig. And she just got all this motherly instinct and picked it up.

Oh, daddy, please let me have this. We'll talk about it. So one of the issues that happened this week was when she couldn't go here, we were all disappointed.

And so we said she could get a guinea pig. And I confess. Well, I was on the phone today with Darlene and talking to her.

And she said it was the funniest thing happened. She said the paper was there and she was reading about the President OK-ing unlimited abortions. And she was saying, Jessica, we need to pray for our President because he's not making wise decisions right now.

And she wanted to know at five what all this meant. And Darlene, of course, didn't talk about what abortions was. She said he's just not making good decisions some of the times.

And Jessica got real quiet. She had her guinea pig. This is what she said.

I hope the President doesn't pass a law that you can't have animals in your house. I tell you. Well, we're glad that you're here.

And as you sense in this series, this is the first time I've ever taught this material. And I hope to shed some light on it. Some of you may be in the darkness about this.

But we hope that it's a help. Evil people love darkness. What does that say about you on this side over here? And whenever you take one particular truth and you hold it up and that's all you look at it.

And you focus all of your attention on it. It can sound as if, well, what about all these other truths? Well, they're still there. But this is the truth we're talking about.

And I need you to relax about that and just focus on this particular part of the truth. If I was in a different audience, I probably may be talking about the exact opposite. That is, how do you grow spiritually mature? And the five talks or the four talks that I'd be having would be entirely different than the talks I'm giving here.

So just remember that. Now, this is a talk that's very important. One of the big ideas we're trying to present to you is the concept that says the effort of the spiritual life isn't doing it yourself.

The effort of the spiritual life is getting to a place that the Spirit does it in you. Both of them are work. Both of them are extremely difficult.

This one happens to be so difficult, it's impossible. This one, however, is extremely difficult. So the work of the spiritual life just moves from you doing it to getting into a situation where the Holy Spirit can do it within you.

Now, there was a question that was given to me right before the session. It was a great question. And the question was, are you saying that you don't do anything and the Spirit does it all and you just go passive? I said, oh my goodness, no.

That doesn't work at all. You are active with the Spirit, but most people are so far removed from the Holy Spirit in their life they have not the vaguest idea of how that works in cooperation. I told her a story about this young Bible college student, because I usually take a Bible college each year and take a spiritual life week.

One year I was doing this and afterwards a young man came up and he was complaining about how his life wasn't working together. And I said to him, tell me about your walk with the Lord. I said, do you get up in the morning and pray and have your time in the Word? Well, sometimes.

I said, well, how often? Whenever God wakes me up. I said, tell me about that. He said, well, I pray to the Lord every night.

I said, Lord, if you want me to have devotions in the morning, then wake me up. And if you don't, it's fine. Now, that is the extreme of passivity, isn't it? That it's God's fault he doesn't have devotions.

I said, no, young man, you set your alarm clock at 530 and you get up. This issue of how about dependence is what we'll talk about tomorrow morning. So let's hold that back.

But we've talked about what the Spirit does before salvation, what the Spirit does after salvation. And then we're talking about tonight and tomorrow, what the Spirit does as a result of indwelling us, sealing us and so forth after salvation. And this is a potential.

It is like we talked about electricity in the wall that you can plug into anytime you choose to plug into it. It's real important also that walking with the Spirit takes a long time to learn how to do. If you're looking for a couple of quick answers tomorrow morning, you're going to be surprised.

I don't have them. You remember watching your children stumble around for years, it seemed like, before they could walk across the... They learn, they fall, they get up and said, Oh no, I was off balance this way and they fall. Then they were off balance this way and they fall.

They're off balance this way and they fall. And they wonder if they can ever walk. Walking by the Spirit is a learned, practiced situation.

And it takes, to be honest with you, a long time to learn how to do it. So give yourself some room. That's what we'll be talking about tomorrow, the walking in the Spirit.

And that's the part you'll probably feel most comfortable with. Tonight we're going to back up and deal with the other two things that hinder us from walking in the Spirit. These are the hindrances or the obstacles or, I believe, the reason why 90-some percent of all Christians I've ever met don't walk in the Spirit.

It's these two ideas. Let's take a look, however, what happens to a believer if they choose to walk by means of the Spirit. Take a look, therefore, in Galatians tonight.

Galatians 5, verse 16. And you'll just see for yourself, in your own scriptures, what it will look like if you walk by means of the Spirit. Galatians 5, verse 16.

It's the classic verse in the whole Bible on walking in the Spirit. But it gives you and it gives to me the results of what I will look like when I am walking in the Spirit. And it's very clear.

It says in verse 16, I say then, walk in the Spirit and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. It doesn't say walk in the Spirit and sometimes you will not fulfill the lust of the flesh. It doesn't say walk in the Spirit and you shall not fulfill some of the lust of the flesh.

It says you don't fulfill it. Therefore, guess what happens to a believer who's walking by means of the Spirit? Answer, they don't sin. Well, how long can that last? As long as a believer chooses.

God doesn't get tired. We don't wear Him out. We will not sin when you walk in the Spirit.

How do I know when I'm walking in the Spirit? Well, one of them is, am I sinning? And if I'm sinning, I'm not walking in the Spirit. Not a hard, two-fold question here. So today, a few times, I noticed that I, because I was so tired, although that's not a good reason, excuse me, I noticed a couple times that I did not have the love of Christ in talking with people.

I don't think they noticed that, but I noticed that. And I said, whoa, I'm not walking in the Spirit right here. Gather back on, get back off the floor, confess the sin, claim the blood of Christ and begin to walk forward by faith and watch your demeanor change.

So, how many of you would love not to fulfill the lust of the flesh? Yeah. So the issue is, how on earth do you walk, therefore, in the Spirit and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh? It's also helpful to realize that there's nothing else said about that except those words. If you do this thing, you will not sin.

Don't add a whole bunch of other things to it. Focus, let me hold this truth way up to the light and look at it. Walk in the Spirit and you won't sin.

I shared with you that it's a three-year pilgrimage for me and I'm a learner. I wish I knew a lot more than I do. Many of you could ask me questions in the corner and I'll say to you, I don't know yet.

Unlike many truths where I've chewed on it for a long, long time, I could probably answer every question you give to me. This one I cannot, but I'm learning. I found, as I've walked in the Spirit more in the past three years, I've sinned a lot less.

That's the truth. So just as a word of testimony to you, this is the truth, not only because it's in Scripture, which is the only reason we need, but on an experiential level, it's wonderful. And that gives me hope that says, the more I don't hinder the Spirit by the two methods we're going to talk about tonight, and that I do walk, that I will be sinning less and less as I grow in Christ.

It's also surprised me. Some of the sins and temptations which seem to bother me all the time, as you go through the process we'll be talking about tonight, some of those things which used to be overwhelmingly strong in my life, some of them, not all of them, some of them are gone. They're no longer there.

They're not a temptation. They used to be an overwhelming temptation. Now they're not.

Why? Because areas that I used to sin in repeatedly, that became a powerful temptation. And the more then I learned how to do the two things I'll be talking about tonight, and walk by means of the Spirit, when those temptations come, if I am walking in the Spirit when they come, guess what? I will not sin. It's wonderful.

It's so different. Where have I been? Now the other idea that we've been trying to share with you is back a page or so in Galatians chapter 3, 1 to 5. And again, it's a big idea. O foolish Galatians, who has bewitched you that you should not obey the truth? So this is an issue of truth that I don't obey because somebody named, I believe, Satan, in this particular case, through other people and through himself, acting upon a believer, has bewitched you that you should not obey the truth.

Before whose eyes Jesus Christ was clearly portrayed among you as crucified. This only, now notice how he focuses in this particular part of his chapter on one idea and one idea only. This only I want to learn from you.

Did you receive the Spirit? So this is the act of the Spirit coming into your life by the works of the law or the works of the flesh or by the hearing of faith. Again, the Spirit comes in on the basis of what I believe, on the finished work of Christ for me. When that takes place, regeneration, sealing, etc.

takes place in my life. It is not what I do, it is in whom I believe. All that seems simple to us now.

Although when the first time you heard this and somebody said to you, how do you expect to get in heaven? And you gave your litany of, I'm doing the best I can and the scale's going to be good and so forth. And somebody said, no, that won't help you anything, you just got to believe. I'm sure you said, what? What are you talking about, just believe? What good is that going to do? So there was a whole area of coming to grips with in time that that's the truth.

The other half is where we're struggling together. Verse number three, are you so foolish, are we so foolish, having begun the Christian life in the Spirit, are you now being made perfect by the flesh? What is that trying to say? That once the Spirit comes, why do we fall back in to say it's by works that I do apart from the Spirit that gives me spiritual growth, spirituality, being made perfect. Therefore, it's taken all these years in my life where I believed the lie and somebody bewitched this person to believe it's through works of the flesh that I am made perfect and I was bewitched.

And I believed the lie. I think many of you in the room may have fallen in that same case. Now, therefore, I must change my mind and say it is not what I do that makes me perfect, but it's something else by faith.

In verse number five it says, Therefore, he who supplies the Spirit to you, which is God the Father, and works miracles among you, does he do it by the works of the law? And you know that Paul means there the works that you do, trying to do what the law says, or by the hearing of faith? Look up here for a moment. Do you do it by the works of the law? Did you get it by the hearing of faith? Did you get it from the hearing of faith? Therefore, the same activity in the believer, this is so thought-provoking, the act of belief that God the Son does it, saves me. The act of the belief that the Spirit of God does it in me is the same secret.

It is not of works on this side or this side that anyone should boast. When you walk in the flesh over here, you have reason to be proud of your achievements in your Christian life, because you know you did them. And you try to be humble about it, but the truth of it is, down deep you knew you did it anyway.

On the other side, when you learn to do what the Scripture teaches, you are the first one to say to yourself, I know I didn't do that. And therefore, there's no false humility. There is the truth.

The truth is, I was a vehicle, and I did my part, and I worked at it. But as far as what happened, the Spirit of God did it, because I was the one who was making sure He did. Because I got so far away and cooperated with Him, that He's up front and I'm back.

And I am His lips, but that's all that I am. I'm a vehicle of what He has to say and how He wants to say it. Therefore, there is no pride in this side of sanctification, and there's no pride on this side regarding salvation.

For years I've tried to understand that, never understood it. Now, three parts. Let's put a canopy over all of this part.

Be filled with the Spirit. How? Don't do this, don't do this, do this, and you are filled with the Spirit. Don't do this, don't do this, when these are not happening in you, you are finally free to start doing this.

When you are doing this, and this isn't true about you, and this isn't true about you, you are being filled by the Spirit. These two are the ones we never get our foot onto the track of walking with the Spirit. It's because these two have tied our feet to the floor and we cannot move.

Now, what are these two? Number one, number one. Just two very simple passages. Ephesians 4, verse 30.

Ephesians 4, verse 30. It's a classic passage. Obviously, Ephesians is written to Christians, and verse 30 jumps in the middle of a whole movement.

Verse 30 says, and, which connects the idea above it, and, do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God. By whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Question.

Can a believer grieve the Holy Spirit? Yes. That is a shocking sentence to me. It shocks me that I can grieve God.

Let's get our emotions just tied into this a little bit. When somebody says, oh, that grieves me, what are they trying to say to you? What do they feel? When a person's in grief, sad, hurt, sad and hurt, say it again, insulted, anguish, disappointed, say it again, down, go deeper, pain, thank you, pain, more, go deeper, offended, deeper, agony, better, go deeper, anger, grief, that's good enough. Go back in a moment to the time in your life you were the most grief, you were the most grieved of your whole life.

Think for a minute, just take a moment. The most grieved in your whole life. Picture something concrete.

Who can share a moment that would be appropriate? How are you grieved the most? Yes, thanks. I don't know of anything in a parent's life that will grieve you more than a child who will not do right. When that happens, you never leave it all day long, do you? No matter what you're doing, it's right there.

And there's something about it that deeply saddens you and it hurts you and you have anguish and you cry at night. Give me another grieving. Like Bob's.

I was sharing with somebody not too long ago. Married? No. Not now.

But married? We're married? Yes. She's 35. We talked for a while.

Said, what happened? She said, I was head over heels in love with my husband as much as a woman can love a man. I love my husband. We were married for a few years.

Extremely happy. I could have never asked for anything more in my life. He came home one day and said, I'm leaving.

And she said, where are you going? On a trip or what? No, I'm leaving. You're leaving? Where are you going? I'm going to live with another man. And I looked at this woman that I knew and said, She said, I could barely come out of my house for two years.

I'm just starting to get over the grieving process. She said, I'm desperately in love with a man. But it's over.

Grief. I can't imagine that grief. I cannot.

God. God. Feels.

Those feelings. When I sin. Against him.

I cannot imagine that. The two stories we've just told. Are remarkable because they're true about me.

Sometimes in my life. I have been the prodigal. And have wandered away.

Other times in my life. I have been unfaithful to him. Like we read yesterday.

You adulterers and adulteresses. I have not been loyal to him. Therefore, the most.

Grieving things we as humans can name among each other. I have done to God. How does grieving take place? I'll go back to the passage.

Start about in verse number 26. Ephesians chapter 4 verse 26. Be angry and don't sin.

I love that passage. That means I can be angry and I don't sin. I've learned how to do that and I hope you have too.

Do not let the sun go down on your wrath. Nor give place to the devil. Anger is a great place for devil.

To come upon a Christian. And influence a believer. Let him who stole steal no longer.

But rather let him labor working with his hands. What is good that he may have something to give. Him who has need.

Let no corrupt communication. Now watch the context. Don't miss this.

Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth. But that what is good for necessary building up. That it may impart grace to the hearers.

Skip verse 30. Skip verse 30 and get the rest of the context. Let all bitterness.

Wrath. Anger. Loud quarreling and evil speaking.

Be put away from you with all malice. And be kind to one another. Tender hearted forgiving one another.

Just as God and Christ also forgave you. You know what that tells me? If this microphone was the phrase that says. Don't grieve the Holy Spirit.

All the way around it are all these sins that I can commit. Now I know what makes the Spirit grieved. My sin.

Therefore when I am bitter. I have grieved the Spirit. When I have wrath and anger with sin in it.

I have grieved the Spirit. When I have a loud quarrel with you. I have grieved the Spirit.

When I speak evil. I have grieved the Spirit. If I'm not kind to you.

I have grieved the Spirit. If I'm hard hearted and not tender hearted. I have grieved the Spirit.

If I don't forgive you. I have grieved the Spirit. Therefore.

I have grieved the Spirit in my life. More times than I want to admit to anyone. What is the Spirit like? I've been trying to get to know Him.

For three solid years. I feel like I know this much of Him. And that is no end to knowing Him.

I try to find men and women. Who have been walking in the Spirit for many years. And ask them questions.

One time I was asking the Lord on the way to the airport. In fact three weeks ago. Saying Lord put somebody next to me.

Who knows some of these answers for me. And I have a funny habit sometimes. If I'm really tired.

I will come to the airport. And as I come to the gate. I will say to the Lord.

Lord God. I'm really tired. I've been working hard for you.

Do me a favor and move me to first class. And I will go to the gate person. And say.

Is there any room in first class? And they say do you have a first class ticket? No. Do you want to buy one? No sir. But I'm really tired.

And I sure would love to sit in first class. Well as of today. I've been keeping track the last few times.

I'm three out of six. Sometimes I don't ask. Because I'm not that tired.

And don't need it. And I don't want to bother God. About that particular thing.

Well that particular time. I was on my way to Phoenix. To the pastors conference Jerry.

And I said to this man. And he said. First class? Why not? He questioned me.

He said just because I'm feeling generous. I said yes sir you are. Thank you.

And I just about whistled. All the way on the plane. And they gave me a seat.

Which was next to. A kind of a heavy set man. And there was two seats across.

And I wanted to be by myself. And just work for a little while. So I sat across the aisle.

And then a couple came in. And they had those seats. So I had to move next to him.

He began to ask me all these questions. What do you do for a living? Well I don't want to tell people what I do. Because I might want to witness to them later on.

I'm in publishing. What do you publish? A lot of different things. He must have asked me 20 questions.

He didn't get one straight answer from me. And I said to him. When I get a chance.

What do you do? I'm an evangelist. And he was 55 to 60. And he'd been preaching for many years.

And I began to ask him questions. Because he came out of a certain denomination. That he ought to know the answers to my questions.

A small denomination. And I began to ask him these questions. He looked at me and said.

Why are you asking? I said because I'm on a pilgrimage. He stopped and said. You were born again? Yes sir I am.

I'm glad to see that you are as well. So we began to talk. And I asked him question after question after question.

And I was the learner. I love when I'm the learner. I love to learn from other people.

And then I said to him. And he was answering most of them. Some of them he didn't know either.

And I said to him. I've always wanted to know about. I'm not going to tell you the name of this person.

They're dead. And how that person did it. How they walked with God.

And he said. I knew that person. Tell me about it.

He said. I asked this person one day. What's the secret that you've learned? And the person said.

I never leave my prayer closet. The power I have in the prayer closet. I bring with me all the time.

Because I never leave. You know what? That's walking in the spirit all of the time. That's the goal.

By the way. The spirit does teach, doesn't he? And he does lead. And he does have a humor at times.

Putting you in first class. And putting you next to the one person. Who'd be able to answer your questions.

And knows the person that's dead. And one chance in a hundred million. This person would know.

And knew them personally. And knew the answer to the question. Does the spirit teach? Yes.

Does the spirit put people together? Yes. Are you asking for any help? When's the last time you asked him to teach you something? Don't grieve the Holy Spirit. What happens when I grieve the Holy Spirit? The text doesn't say.

So this is where you have to go back. And add other passages of the scripture. What does the spiritual person do in 1 Corinthians? Comparing spiritual things with spiritual things.

Knowing the deep things of God. So when you bring yourself to the question. What happens to the Holy Spirit who is grieved? The Holy Spirit pulls back.

Because there's sin in the life. And there's sin in the life. Because the believer wasn't walking in the spirit.

He was walking against the spirit. Because the flesh and the spirit are in opposition against each other. And they fight.

And when I sin. It's because I gave authority to my flesh to go. And I stopped walking in the spirit.

When I stop walking in the spirit and sin. The surprising part about it is. God grieves when I do that.

I asked another lady in Phoenix that Terry would know. Walks with God has for years. Walks with the spirit.

Remarkable woman. I said to her. We were having a cup of coffee one day.

I said. Tell me about the spirit. Why do you want to know? I want to know him more.

And you know him much more than I do. Tell me about him. He's a gentleman.

He's a gentleman. He's very gracious. He's quiet.

He's not boisterous. He is kind and compassionate. But he is gentle with us.

And he is extremely tender hearted. Notice that verse. Be tender hearted.

The spirit is tender hearted. Oh, did that ever open things up to me? When a person is tender hearted. And you do something directly against them.

How do they feel? Yes. The spirit is. Of course he's tender hearted.

I knew that. Put it together with grieving. Sinning.

God doesn't get a hard heart. Toward me. He doesn't ever get over the fact.

That I keep sinning against him. He stays tender. Unlike you and I. Who decide to get a callous on our heart.

He stays tender. Therefore I have a sense. Can't prove this biblically.

That the hurt that God feels. From the first time I sinned. Is no different than the hurt that he feels.

If I sinned today. It doesn't get easier with God. To live with me.

Because I sin. Therefore the first thought. You and I must understand.

Is the reality. Of a created being. Called man or woman.

Can turn around. And hurt God. Did people hurt Jesus? And did Jesus weep? Oh, Jerusalem.

Jerusalem. I would have gathered you together. But you would not let me.

God. In the sun. Wept.

God the spirit. I believe. Don't have a verse.

Weeps. Inside of you and me. When I choose to sin.

Now. What happens then? What does the spirit do. When I live in sin? Answer.

One of the things he does. Is he backs away from us. He puts the conviction.

Not just on the world for sin. But he puts the conviction on the believer. That's why when you have a tender heart.

And you sin. Oh, you feel what? You feel the conviction of the spirit. Saying, oh, don't do that.

Please don't do that. That's sin. And if you're walking closer to the Lord.

And you feel that. You will apologize. Make restoration.

And the grief of God is over. Our hearts gets calloused. I don't believe.

His pricking stops. I just believe. We become numb.

We are no longer sensitive. To the spirit. I do not believe the spirit becomes passive.

The spirit is always active. In us. And we become hardened to him.

Therefore, if there's sin and sin and sin. Like there is in many of our lives. Over a lifetime of walking with God.

Only in name. Not in principle. Guess how much grief the spirit has.

Piled there. And therefore, when you come. And you start to try to walk with God.

And it doesn't seem like God's cooperating with you. It's because there's this pile of stuff. That's still sitting there.

Grieve not the spirit. Because if you do. Forget walking with him.

It won't work. It won't work. And when you and I try to walk in the spirit.

When we got all this stuff from the past and present. Known as sin still with us. You can forget it working.

You'll last two days. And you'll give up. And you'll say it's too hard.

And you know what? It's impossible. Because the spirit is grieved. And pulls back.

And waits for us to make it right. Therefore, what must take place. In the life of a believer.

Who wants to walk with God. Answer. Coming to grips with all the sin that's still there.

And when you get serious with this. You will find out. That the Lord doesn't dump it all back on you.

Because I think he'd kill all of us. But he. Here, what about these? And then we're faced with it.
And if we humble ourselves. And repent and make restoration. We will find.
God's presence more with us. Experientially. He who.
Knows my commandments. And keeps them. Is he who.
And. Come on. He loves me.
Come on. I will come on. Manifest myself to him.
You know what the condition is? To have God show up in your life. And nobody has to tell you. That you know it's real.
Because he showed himself in your heart. Keep. His.
Commandments. Then you'll only keep his commandments. As you respond to the spirit.
Who convicts you. And the reason we don't have this. Almighty God showing himself.
In our lives. There's now two Christians in a hundred. That experience God in their lives.
On a regular basis. There's not. You know the number one reason.
Sin. Sin. So.
Since I have revealed to you. A kind of a personal truth. That I've been trying to do this.
For the past three years. Guess what. I've been doing.
For the past three years. Say it again. No.
Not near as much. Yes. I've been repenting.
A whole lot. And confessing. And clearing things out from.
Years. Ago. I was coming down from the mountain.
Yesterday. And was praying. Fervently.
Lord what else grieves you about me. Let me have it. And I came down behind that.
Small little. Log. Brown log cabin behind it.
Oh dear. Stop dead track. This.
This. This. Same sin.
Different situations. You did them all. If you'd have been a little person on the outside.
Looking through the window of that little brown house. You'd have seen me stop right next to. A part of the road that's chopped out.

And you'd have seen my hands go up. And pray. And you'd have heard me confess.

That sin specifically. That sin specifically. And that sin specifically.

And ask for forgiveness. Acknowledge that I did it of my own free will. And it was terrible sin.

And it was. And ask for forgiveness. One at a time.

And repent it. They didn't interface with any other person. Just with me.

No restoration was needed. How old was that? High school senior. Long time.

When's the last time I thought about those three things? I can't remember the last time I ever thought about it. Lord. What else grieves you about me? Let me have it.

Now. The challenge is. Friends.

When he answers your prayer. What will you do about it? You know what? It will require every single time. Humbling yourself and confessing your sin.

Therefore. I have found. When I bump into somebody else.

Who's on a similar pilgrimage. I will ask them a couple questions now. To verify that this is a universal.

And thus far. I've yet to find one person who didn't say. The identical thing's been happening to me.

What is it? Cleansing of sin. It's encouraging that God doesn't stay. Withdrawn.

As you begin to deal with sins at a time. When you're in the process. The gentleman.

Holy Spirit. Gives mercy. And he gives grace.

When you are in the process. Of humbling yourself. He gives you grace.

And he gives you freedom. And he encourages your heart. Even though there's more stuff here.

You. Walk with him more. And you realize.

You are being changed. From the inside out. Because you and I. Never know.

How much sin. We have done. Because we don't want to remember it.

And the Lord. Hasn't forgotten. One of them.

Therefore. Number one. Clean it up.

Clean it up. How long will this take? I don't know. I'm on my third year.

I was dealing with one on the phone. Yesterday. When will it all be done? I don't know.

I thought it'd be done three years ago. And it wasn't. There are seasons in which there's nothing revealed.

And there's no known sin that stops us. And then God again comes back to us. And said.

Okay. Time to clean up some more. Humble yourself.

Every single time. There's five other verses I could talk about. But I don't think you need them.

I think you get the big idea. Do you have the big idea? We make it so complicated. It's not complicated.

Purity. Holiness. Is the requirement.

If it's not cleaned up. Forget walking. Because God won't walk with you.

He's back here. Stuck. With all the sin.

Now I'm going to stop for a minute. And do something with you. When we're done with this.

We're going to take a five minute break. And then I'm going to give you the other one. Because I don't have any other time to give it to you.

But tonight. But I want to finish this one. I want you to watch the spirit do something in your life.

Right in front of your eyes. Because some of you are still wrestling. With whether this whole thing with the spirit is true.

You're going to hear it. Yourself. In about two minutes.

Yourself. And it will amaze you if you have unbelief in your heart. Many of you won't amaze you at all.

Because you know this is the truth. You remember a minute ago that I said. I didn't believe that the spirit withdraws.

But the spirit continues to convict. We become hardened. We don't hear him anymore.

I believe the second we have ears to hear. We hear him. And he's been there all along.

Let's test together. In unison. Whether or not the spirit of God.

Who dwells in you. If you're born again. Is grieved in your life.

If he is in a moment. He will expressly. Bring back to your memory.

A list of sins. Are you willing for that to happen? It's a starting place. But let me show you.

How real this whole thing is. This isn't preachy stuff. So leave your eyes open for a minute.

Keep looking at me. Let me pray. Do not close your eyes.

Just relax. Lord on the behalf of all these people. That are here.

We invoke you to. Come here. And as I prayed earlier.

That your spirit would move in this room. Freely. Easily.

That's my job. My job is to. Be the John the Baptist for him.

For you. And Lord. You need to demonstrate to them.

The reality of your presence. In their lives. And I give you freedom.

In the name of Christ. To do that in their lives. On behalf of them.

And I give you freedom once again. That time for spotlight in my life. Again as well.

There's none absent from this. We seek you. We ask that you will command the spirit.

To speak clearly. Specifically. To every believer in this room.

If there's any sin. That is grieving the spirit. Now.

In Jesus name. And for our sakes. Amen.

Now what I'd like you to do. Is on a piece of paper right there. As the Lord brings a sin.

To your mind. Write a letter of the sin down. So nobody would ever know.

What your letter A stood for. Nobody will know if it meant. An abortion.

Nobody will know if it's an adultery. Nobody will know if it meant anger. They won't know.

They'll never have any way of knowing. And I want you to open your heart. To the spirit.

So bow your heads for a minute. And just be quiet. Be very quiet.

Because the spirit's not going to shout at you. And I would like to ask you. To pray something in unison with me.

Like we pray the Lord's Prayer. In unison at church. Let me state it.

And then you state it after me. Dear Heavenly Father. Out loud.

I would like to ask you a favor. Would you please reveal to me. Right now.

Any sin that's grieving you. And now be quiet. And just write as the answers.

Good. Many of you are writing. Open your heart.

Open it. That's good. Ask him again.

Lord, what is there between us? Listen. Ask him again. Lord, what else? Don't fight it anymore.

Some of you are fighting the spirit. Do not fight the spirit. Open yourself to him.

Lord, what else? Think of people. Think of personal and private sins. Think of unforgiveness.

Think of bitterness. Ask him one more time. Lord, what else? Amen.

Look up here. Count how many on your list. Now, how many of you had at least one on your list? Good.

Now, do you understand why you're not walking in the spirit right now? You cannot walk in the spirit if you're grieving the spirit. You can try all you want. You can pray all you want.

You can memorize all the verses you want. And it will not occur. You must start with grieve not.

Let me give you a little help from a guy who's been doing this personally for a while. Look at your list. One of them by far is the hardest to deal with.

Put a number one next to it. And then number it to the easiest from your one. Now, you remember a minute ago I said to you, there's two ways we try to work at the spiritual life.

One is we try to do God's work for us, and that's work, and it's impossible. The other one I said is harder than that. And it's trying to get our lives so that He can walk through us.

This is the work right here. It's not the doing of love, joy, peace. It's cleaning up your life so His love, joy, peace comes out.

And I promise you, as a pilgrim en route, it happens. And you'll watch it. Grieve not.

Every single act on there takes humility. It takes all the pride that you've built up looking at those sins and the hardness of the heart fighting it to make a choice before God. I will, I will confess these as sins.

I will obey God. I will obey the Spirit of God. I will do whatever it takes to make it right until when I ask the Lord, what else, there's nothing else on the list.

Then you will find, you will find freedom. Now look at your list. There's not one thing on this list you cannot do because you're commanded not to sin and you're commanded to make restoration.

You may have certain sins on your list that are 20 years old. And they've become strongholds in your life. And that's a whole other talk that can't be this weekend.

But you believe the lie about that sin and you believe that the Spirit of God who dwells in you cannot conquer it for you for good. That's a lie. And you've believed a lie.

If you start to rightly relate to the Holy Spirit, in time, in time, you'll start walking with Him and the very things that you thought will never be free you'll be set free from them. But you're looking at condition number one. Will you stop grieving the Spirit? Therefore I want to ask you a question.

Will you do whatever it takes to clear up your list, put a line underneath it? All I'm asking you is the list you got so far because he may reveal some more tonight. Just the list right here. Will you commit before God and yourself that you will get your list, whatever it takes, you will humble yourself and you will experience the grace of God as you do.

You'll get it fixed a week from Sunday. I'll give you some time. I used to say by tomorrow.

And I realized people can't do that. More time. A week from Sunday.

Look at your list. If you can make that commitment, I'd love to see it. I'd love to make a physical action tied to it.

If you're willing to commit before God, God I will repent of this, I will confess this and I will make restoration and the people right here I have to go back to, I will go back. If you'll do that, take your sheet and wave it at me and then put it back down. Wonderful.

Look at one verse and then we'll close. We'll close and take a five minute break. Actually a ten minute break.

Don't go downstairs though because the food's not ready. 2 Timothy 2. 2 Timothy 2 verse 21. Let's go back to 19 and get the perspective.

2 Timothy 2 verse 19. Some of you haven't been in 2 Timothy in a long time. Having trouble finding it.

It's right after 1 Timothy. 19 says, Nevertheless, the solid foundation of God stands, having this seal, the Lord knows those who are His and let everyone who names the name of Christ depart from iniquity. Everyone depart from iniquity.

But in a great house, there are not only vessels of gold and silver, but there are also of wood and clay, some for honor and some for dishonor. Now how do you get to be honor? Therefore, if anyone, if anyone, what are the next two words? Cleanses himself. Guess what? From the woman who asked me the question earlier.

God will not cleanse you. You must take the first step. You must cleanse yourself and come before Him.

Then as you confess, He's faithful and just to forgive you and cleanse you from all unrighteousness. But the first step of cleansing is you doing it. Cleanse himself from the latter.

Look at this wonderful promise. I claim this promise all the time. He will be a vessel for honor.

I want to be a vessel for honor like you. Sanctified and useful for the master, prepared for every good work. You know what? If you're not grieving, you are prepared by Almighty God through the Spirit for every good work.

But you must cleanse yourself. Let me pray for us. And now Lord God, thank you for repentance.

Thank you for the beginning of cleansing. Thank you that we don't have to hear great orators. We don't have to hear beautiful music and choirs.

We just need to hear your Spirit. And then we need to do what He says. And He has been so clear that we have opened our hearts to Him tonight.

And there's barely been an exception in this whole big room of a believer who did not say, you know, oh, look at my list. Therefore, we have been grieving you. And every one of us who has a list, right this minute, the Spirit is being grieved.

We therefore have one thing to say to you about that. We are very sorry for that. We apologize for hurting you, for experiencing anguish because of us, for being prodigals, wayward children.

And we do apologize for that. Thank you for not abandoning us. We've given you all a million reasons to leave.

Thank you that you've committed not to leave until we are fully redeemed. And that you will hang in there through thick and thin, but you will be so grieved. We thank you, therefore, that many of us tonight made a commitment that may be a beginning for many people of an entire different way of living a spiritual life.

And I pray for those in this room who are seeking that, who believe down deep, there's a lot more, and I haven't found it, and this is it. This is part of the answer. Give them, therefore, courage, and give to them a Spirit of God, the grace to humble themselves, and to not be high and lifted up in their own eyes, but to realize it's only by the grace of God that we do not sin.

Please continue to move this weekend. I give you complete freedom to do whatever you want any way you want, but we do give this time to you and ask for further work by your Spirit in our lives. For those who are tired from a busy weekend, we ask that the joy of the Lord would be our strength, and that through these ten minutes, some of us who are tired would go get in contact with the joy of the Lord and come back refreshed, because it's not coffee that gives us strength.

See you in ten minutes. Okay, kind of head back in this direction if we can. We need to get moving on or the ice cream will melt, they tell me.

Take out your Bibles. That'll always get a group back together again. Why don't we sing a chorus together? Yeah, that's a good idea.

What's a good chorus? Oh, good. Yes, Lord, yes. Okay.

I'll say yes, Lord, yes To your will and to your way I'll say yes, Lord, yes I will trust you and obey When your Spirit speaks to me With my whole heart I'll agree And my answer will be yes Yes, Lord, yes Let's sing that again. I'll say yes, Lord, yes To your will and to your way I'll say yes, Lord, yes I will trust you and obey When your Spirit speaks to me With my whole heart I'll agree And my answer will be yes Yes, Lord, yes It's request time. I love you, Lord.

Is that what I heard? I love you, Lord. I love you, Lord And I lift my voice To worship you Oh, my soul, rejoice Take joy, my King In what you hear May it be a sweet, sweet sound In your ear I love you, Lord And I lift my voice To worship you Oh, my soul, rejoice Take joy, my King In what you hear May it be a sweet, sweet sound In your ear The only thing that's a sweeter sound to God than that is Confession of your list. Somebody said to me at break I didn't have a pad big enough for my sins Somebody else came up and said Does it get easier in time to repent?

The answer is absolutely yes The more we see of ourselves for who we are The more it's not a surprise to us And we humble ourselves Secondly, the more you walk with the Lord And you sin You do not want to grieve him Even though you have because of the sin Repent Ask for forgiveness, confess your sins And make restoration if it affects somebody else So the answer is yes, it does get easier In fact, I find in my own heart I ask him Lord, please reveal any sin in my life Please If there's anything Now, let's see if we can move to the next step And then we'll be done for the evening And then we'll have one session tomorrow morning And thank you for sticking with me On a heavy, heavy message Big idea Be filled with the Spirit Question, how?

Answer, don't ask him to be filled with the Spirit Do what he's asked you to do And you will be filled with the Spirit Don't ask to be filled with the Spirit Do what he's asked you to do And you will be filled with the Spirit If you have no grieving him And in a moment you'll see You have no quenching him And you're walking by him You are filled And nobody will have to tell you that You'll know that Quenching is different than grieving Let's take a look at 1 Thessalonians Chapter 5 Right before Timothy 1 Thessalonians 5, verse 19 Do not quench the Spirit Do not grieve the Spirit Do not quench the Spirit The Greek word quench Means to put out a fire And as you know When the Spirit came on Pentecost It was like what?

Fire I'm using the choice of terms here Do not quench the Spirit Can you quench the Spirit? Absolutely Can you, in a sense, put out the flame in your heart? Yes Quenching the Spirit isn't equal to grieving the Spirit They're very different Grieving is because I willfully sin Quenching is because I will not do what he asks me to do Please go do this I don't want to Now that's a sin But it's different than grieving I say no to the Spirit And that's what it means to quench Please do this No Please witness to this person at work I don't want to That's quenching the Spirit That puts the Spirit out in your life It also has the idea of resisting the Spirit Resisting Please do this No, that's resisting So there is a resisting by God toward me And there's a resisting that I can have toward God God resists the proud And gives grace to the humble So God resists me when I'm proud I can resist God Shock It's God He made me You're dead, come home If you want to do And to some people he does There's some among you who are sick And some among you who are dead Because of the sin you've committed And God does say that's enough And takes people home early Premature death is all through the body of Christ And that's a whole other talk But the concept that says God resists me And I resist God When?

Could you imagine the thought Of having almighty God resisting you In everything you're trying to do? I think I'll go do this in my business Go ahead and try I think I'll try to make my relationship right with my kids Go ahead and try Resist Many people's lives in the Christian community Are in shambles Because God is resisting them in every direction I've decided a while ago That's not a good idea Therefore, one thing that I as a believer Seek to do Is humble myself every time I get a chance Why?

God gives grace To the humble I want the grace of God How do I get more grace? You humble yourself Is humbling yourself easy? Of course not Humble yourself And he gives you more grace Now, I can resist him How foolish and arrogant Of a person To think it's wise To say no to God That's the epitome of arrogance God says, please do this No Utter arrogance Don't quench Don't ever say no Will God test you about this? You bet Will he test it harder and harder on you as you grow? Yes, he will That's the truth Will he ask you to do more and more difficult things for him?

Yes, he will That's the truth Does it ever end? No, it doesn't That's the truth The truth sets us free That's the truth There are opportunities at all parts of our Christian life To say no to God And I found in most of our lives We hit places where he says Now, it's time for you to do this Do this No way And you know what? People's lives stop right there And in time They slide back It's called backslide And then they'll get their life a little bit together And they'll come right back at it again And the Lord hasn't budged Do this No That's why many people never grow Because God has said right here Do it It happens all the time at work It happens all the time in marriage And people get divorces and think it's the wrong person It wasn't the wrong person It's the wrong thing to do And the next person you marry You'll find the wall is bigger It's never the will of God to divorce Well Can we quench God? Yes Does he ever leave? No.

Why not? He has sealed you to the day of redemption And he gave you a down payment Called the spirit, the deposit So he never goes out Don't think of a fire Going dimmer, dimmer And the spirit getting weaker, weaker, weaker Oh, he's out What have I done? You can't put the spirit out But you can resist him So that you don't experience him In your life anymore Now There's a couple passages that are worth seeing here Take a look at Acts chapter 7 verse 51 Acts chapter 7 verse 51 Acts chapter 7 Verse number 51 They made a tremendous sermon By Stephen And he is rather straight forward You know what?

When you're filled with the spirit You are tremendously more honest And when you are filled with the spirit You are more humble So you speak the truth more clearly about yourself It's only when you're not That you protect yourself Acts chapter 7 verse 51 A very clear presentation You stiff necked What a speaker

You stiff necked And uncircumcised In heart and ears You What's the next word in your bible? Always resist the Holy Spirit As your fathers did And so do you Can a believer Resist the spirit of God For years at a time?

Yes or no? Some of us in this room Would say Don't ask me to talk about it But there are years in my life I resisted the will of God Clear as a bell You know what? You sinned a lot in those years Because if I grieve God I don't walk by the spirit I therefore fulfill the lust of the flesh And I sin more and more If I quench the spirit of God I cannot walk by the spirit of God I will fulfill the lust of the flesh more and more And I will sin more Who is the perfect person Who never grieved the spirit?

Jesus Because he never sinned Was he tempted? Yes, in all ways as we were And yet did not sin That's pretty obvious Here's a little deeper question Who is the best illustration of a person Who did not quench the spirit? Jesus Christ is again When you are fully When this part of your life Is fully in sync God asks you to do anything That you will say no to Nothing Move to South Africa And live in a hut Yes, sir, when? Give all of your money away Yes, sir, when? Quit your job and go move to Canaan Yes, sir, when?

There's nothing That he can ask you to do That you say no That's when you know You're not quenching the spirit And you're stuck Because there's so much sin But if you go through the grieving And you're on the quenching I will frequently, when I'm searching To find out what's the problem Why they have no release in their life I'll say, if the Lord said to you right now To sell your house And to move your whole family And to live in the middle of The desert of Sahara Would you go?

The answer to the question Tells me a lot Because he may If he did, would you go? If the person switches all around like this And doesn't give me a straight answer They're quenching the spirit If they can say, yes, I will And they mean it, and they know it And you know they know it They're not quenching the spirit We saw this in Russia When I was leading that prayer study On Thursday morning At the convocations We were all praying together And I said to our group Of godly people I said, now, we need to let the spirit Free in the meeting I want it the way the spirit of God is free If we don't quench him I said, therefore Let's tell him one at a time That if he wants us to move to Russia For the rest of our life and minister We'll be willing to go Dead silence No one prayed No one I said, we're living in sin If we cannot pray that and mean that We're living in sin We're quenching the spirit One man said, God, make me willing No, be willing Don't ask God to do something He commands you to do Don't ask him to do something for you He said, you do Don't quench the spirit That whole group quenched the spirit Don't quench the spirit Now, to be honest with you The Lord brings us through a process In which he asks more and more of us It goes from being unconverted To converted To becoming a follower of Christ And the transition from being a follower To starting to be a disciple Is the whole issue of quenching And the reason why there are so few disciples of Jesus Is because when Jesus says He's asking us to do more and more for him That means that we cannot do what we want And that's why so few people ever keep going And when you meet a person Who's way down the road You know that he's gone through all those yeses You don't even have to ask If you know what's going on I could ask a person who's down there Ten questions and the answer would be Yes, yes, yes, yes, yes, yes, yes Why are you asking these questions?

How do you know these things? Because they're the same for all of us Now what do I mean they're the same for all of us? Well I'm glad you asked Matthew chapter 16 Matthew chapter 16 Classic passage, well known Matthew 16 verse 24 Then Jesus says to his disciples If anyone Now watch this, see that universal? See, if anyone Therefore it's you and me If anyone desires in your heart To come after me Then here's what you have to do Number one, deny yourself Simple, no problem, right?

No, very difficult Number two, take up your cross And follow me For if you desire to save your life You're gonna lose it And if you lose your life for my sake You'll find it after you're dead For what is a man profited If he gains everything and loses his own life In the process? What will a man give in exchange for his life? There's a whole other part there But stick on the first two verses What's required of every believer Who wants to walk by means of the Spirit? Answer, to say yes to everything God asks you to do What will God ask every one of us to do As we grow in him?

He will say, please deny yourself here And everything in you will say No way do I want to do that Please deny yourself If you don't deny yourself What will happen to the Spirit In your life? Just like that And if he's quenched Listen, if he's quenched It's impossible for you to walk in him And if you can't walk in him Give it time and you will fulfill the lust of the flesh And you will sin Remember I said There's two ways to try to live the life One is in the flesh Can't be done One is in the Spirit And it takes all the effort of your life To get in process Of doing it right and confessing it And you gotta keep on saying yes And you know what?

He'll ask more and more and more He's never done Now, does he ever ask us to deny ourselves? You bet Does he ever ask us to take up our cross? Yes, what does that mean? The cross to Jesus Is it something he wanted to do? No, he did not want to do it A cross is simply this Denying yourself is to say No to something I want I will not do that Even though I really want to do that A cross is the exact opposite To do something you don't want to do But you know he wants you to do it Some people think it's their sickness or something Come on It's God asking you to do something That you don't want to do That's the cross Does God ask of us More and more To die for him?

Yes or no? Yes he does Does he ask us to die more to self as we grow? Yes Is it ever easy to die to self? No Is it ever easy to take up our cross? Answer no because he gives us harder crosses The more we grow And we have to die more to self And take up a bigger cross I told a personal story last week That may be a good example of this When the commission happened to us None of us wanted it None of us planned it None of us were praying for Russia Maybe a couple of people were I sure wasn't And I never wanted to go to Russia And I didn't want to do anything like what I'm doing And when the commission happened Somehow I got stuck in coordination roles And committee work I don't like committee work Committees can often times be a real pain in the neck Well I only had too much to do And didn't want to do the commission at all And this started Kind of in September, October, November, December And in January a year ago We had our first big meeting And it kind of became obvious Wilkinson you're supposed to take leadership In some ways of this thing And I didn't want to do it at all So we had a board meeting At Walk with the Bible for a week We take a week's board meeting Every other year with couples We have our own way We have a wonderful time We were down in A French island down in the Caribbean Having a wonderful time And all morning we'd work and pray And for one week We talked about the commission And I kept asking my board Can I get out of the commission Will you give me freedom To get out of this I don't want to do this And they talked about it at length And unanimously voted no I didn't want to do that Yes sir I will Their authority And if I would disagree with them Besides already giving them my opinion And debating it with them But they made their choice My job is to obey it Or I grieve the spirit So yes But did I want to do it No way It got worse and worse Finally one of the board members Of Walk with the Bible Here at the NAVS Dr.

John Ish Who gave a testimony last week Knew what was going on Called me on the phone Said Bruce how's the commission Fine Is God working Yes he is How you doing Fine Does God want you to leave the commission And they talked about it at length And unanimously voted no You need to stay with the commission Their authority And if I would disagree with them Besides already giving them my opinion And

debating it with them But they made their choice My job is to obey it Or I grieve the spirit So yes But did I want to do it No way It got worse and worse Finally one of the board members Of Walk with the Bible Called me on the phone Said Bruce how's the commission Fine Is God working Yes he is How you doing Fine Does God want you to leave the commission Maybe Double minded Unstable Maybe is a lie

Sorry spirit That's a lie So Does the board of walk through feel you should Yes What about the people in the commission They do too I don't want to do it Is God calling you to do it I hated John at that moment Yes Are you going to obey God I love it You stiff necked friend of mine Oh John Come on He stayed at it for half an hour And he helped his friend And his words were Healing to me I was sweating And I said at the end of half an hour John I got the point Are you going to do it I don't know But I don't need anymore of this right now I got it clear He said ok We hung up and the next day I was still processing this Had I taken up my cross at that point Uh uh Was I quenching the spirit Uh huh So here I am driving to work And I wasn't even thinking about John's conversation And as I was

coming around 78 on 285 I said to the Lord As I do on the way to work many times Lord It's my commitment to do whatever you want me to do At any time in any way If you make it clear And he said What about the commission And I broke into tears How can I have that commitment to him And then on this side of my face Say but here is the first exception To doing what you want me to do So I wept all the way to work Confessed it as sin Got out that night Came back Got out my journal In fact I can read it to you tomorrow maybe Maybe I will I wrote down I forget the date now I hereby pledge to the Lord That I will devote my life to the commission As long as he wants And to do whatever he wants As long as he asks to do it Sign my name You know what happened Release Called up John Said John thanks

friend Because we have done that to each other for years When each other is sinning We get in each other's case Until we get our act together It's called accountability It's called friendship It's called family For more than we wanted More denying of self More taking the cross Than we want to do And I remember laying in bed one night to Darlene I said sweetheart He asked for more and more Until there is nothing left And Darlene said I think that's his plan So Does it require you to deny yourself Yes Will he make it clear how to Do it Will he ask more of you later Yes he will As you grow in Christ Will he ask you to do things You do not want to do Yes Will you fight against those Yes That's not the issue The issue is will you obey them If you don't He quenched the spirit If you quench the

spirit He can't walk by means of the spirit He's quenched Now he's grieved You can't walk You're sinning more The pile's growing And you're going to be chastened by God Therefore the best idea is to say yes Number two passage, Luke 14 Is this helping tonight As I prayed through this series I almost feel like it's a spiritual mentoring Rather than a preaching series That my job with you Is to be a friend And to speak as I would In the spirit This is what I would tell you And this is the way we would talk Only you could talk a lot more Passage two, Luke chapter 14 Verse number 25 Another one And great multitudes went with him And he turned and said to them Here comes a universal That's why I know it will be true of you If anyone comes to me And does not hate His father and mother Wife and

children His own life Cannot be my disciple What's another universal Deny yourself Take up your cross What's another one That God will ask you To choose between him and the people you love More than anybody in the world And will it test you And will it break your heart Yes it will But you will have to take your Isaac And you will have to go to the top of your hill And you'll have to raise your knife We saw this here the glen This past week When the people went to Russia There was an aldec couple here Vibrant you could see it They love eachother deeply And I had seen them before Met them before And they used

to be missionary in Mexico And they walk with God You can tell that We sit down and We tasted And I asked them Where will you go to Russia in Russia.

She's going? Yes. The Lord called her and she knew it and the Lord confirmed it in me.

She's supposed to go. Where are you going? Well, I thought I was gonna go to Russia, but the Lord said, no way, you go back to Mexico. I said, you're going back to Mexico? Yes.

Have you ever been separated like this? Never in our lives. And we love each other and it's real hard. Are you sure God's leading you to do this? Absolutely.

Are you sure, ma'am, that he is? Yes. Any doubt? No. Do you want to do this? They don't know how to answer that.

Is it in your heart? Do you want to do this emotionally? No. Why are you doing this? Because it's what God wants. You bet.

Does he really mean this? You bet. Does he give grace? Yes. Will they have some severe loneliness? Yes.

Will they have some second thoughts? Of course. Will the peace of God fill their heart? Yes. Will, when they get to glory and look back, will they be glad they obeyed God? Forever.

That's how long they'll be glad. Verse number 27, and whoever does not bear his cross and come after me cannot be my disciple. Verse number 33, so likewise whoever, look at that four things he has, cannot be my disciple.

What is this? Forsake all that he has. I struggled with that for 15 years. 15 years I struggled with that verse.

What does he mean? I come to the conclusion that for some people he means give everything you have away. Everything. I have some friends who have done that.

I believe that's the leading of God and they were obedient. They don't own anything. I believe that that passage means you must forsake everything that you have and give it away in your heart.

It's just as hard as giving it away if you do it truly. So that if the Lord says to you, give me your favorite piece of furniture, ladies, you will say yes. Where would you like it? That there's nothing you own that God put his finger on and says give that to me, you say no.

Personal story. I don't know how to validate this as a sharing time. Walkthrough has a tremendous task ahead of it.

And Darlene and I always pray about what we're supposed to do as a family before I ask any of our donors, because that's a spiritual law. And we really prayed about this and how much do you want us to give? And we both were sure it was a great deal of money more than we ever had to give. And we prayed about it and talked about it and decided that's the amount.

No way. And so we put in our pledge card and we're able to give the first half. And the second half, there was none to give because of the other things that we'd already pre-committed.

Nothing to give. Lord, don't forget this. Lord, don't have integrity with my staff who saw that little pledge card.

The two or three people who had to see it. Did I misread you? Nope. How am I going to get that money? Well, one of the people that we knew asked me to come speak at their company at a Christmas banquet.

I don't say yes to those. Other people are better at that. And I started praying about it and I couldn't get freedom.

And he called and I didn't answer his telephone call because they didn't have an answer. I couldn't get an answer. They wanted me to go or not.

It was over the Christmas holidays. I didn't want to do this at all. I never take speaking engagements over the holidays.

I'm with my family. I kept talking with Darlene. I said, sweetheart, I have no freedom to say no to this.

I said no for years. Finally I said to her, I think I'm supposed to go. She said, I think you are too.

It'll be okay. So I flew up to the speaking engagement and spoke to their 450 employees. And the next morning met with their whole leadership team.

It's a big firm and talked about management for all morning. And on the way to the airport, the president, the CEO walks up to me and says, I'm not going to tell you the amount. It's an embarrassment.

But he says, this is the check we'd like to give to you. Is this enough? It had entirely too many zeros behind it. And he was serious.

And I said to the Lord, look at this. All the way back on the plane, I couldn't wait to get to Darlene and said, sweetheart, it not only paid all the thing we pledged, but it also paid the first two months of David's college money we didn't have. What was that? Do you forsake all that he has? Because sometimes he'll ask more than you want to give.

And that's a test of quenching. I personally believe the navigators are supposed to reach the goal this weekend. I honestly believe that.

I believe that months before I came here, that whatever the navigators team of leadership said they needed, I trust those men because I know them. That's how much they need. They've prayed about that.

They've argued about that. They've tested it. That's the amount of money they believe.

If you push them, that's the will of God. I believe the same way. I believe you folks are the ones who are supposed to fulfill that.

If the Lord puts his finger on you in any way, you'll know it. And it's not from a speaker. I can't put my finger on your heart.

Only God can. But if the Lord put his finger on your heart and said, you know, you can make the navigators hit the mount, then you need to do that, regardless of what it is. Who knows what it is? It's irrelevant.

The relevancy is if he says more than you want, the only answer that's appropriate is, yes, sir. Write it out here. It's wonderful.

You're not quenched. You are free. So if you want not to quench the Lord, what do you have to do? Answer? Say yes.

Lord, say yes to what? Denying yourself, talking to somebody you don't want to, doing something you don't want to, taking up your cross, choosing God over your family, and taking all the things that you think you earned and giving them back to him. I speak to CEOs of firms all the time. And do you know what the number one idol in a CEO is? Their company.

And when you watch a man or a woman take that idol in their life that they have built and nurtured, and the blood of their life is in that thing, and God says, give me your company. No way. And God will keep giving your company.

And I've watched this happen. It helped so many men and women go through this over the years, until God says, give it to me all. You do not own this.

You never owned it, even though in your arrogance you think you've owned it. You don't know a scent of it, because I can take it away from you so fast, your head will spin. And if you think it was your intelligence who brought it all together again, where do you see the other side of glory? And you find the truth out.

And that issue of a man's hands saying yes to God, in which he moves from being owner to steward, is one of the biggest breaking points in a man's life, typically. And it's the first time they can begin to be a father. First time.

Because up to that point they fathered their business. Is this hard? Yes. Yes, it is.

How much does it cost? Everything. And you think you've paid everything until he asks more. And then you think, I thought I emptied all that.

No, not even close. We're gonna end in about 10 minutes. John chapter 12.

It's a long session. It's gonna be 10 o'clock. I hope none of you fall out of the window, because I doubt if the speaker can go downstairs and get you back up.

John chapter 12. How far does Jesus want me to go? Well, he has an answer for it. It's in John 12, verse number 23.

The hour has come that the Son of Man should be glorified, most assuredly, don't ever doubt this. I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone. But if it does die, it produces much fruit.

Application. If you love your life while you're living on the earth, you're gonna lose it on the other side of glory. And he who hates his life in this world, that's why I talked to you about the other side of glory, if you hate your life in this world, you're gonna keep it for eternal life.

I mean real life. Heaven's not the same for everybody. If anyone serves me, let him follow me.

And where I am, there my servant will be also. If anyone serves me, him my Father will honor. Oh, the thought of God honoring you.

Now, look at this. I love this part. It helps me identify with Jesus.

Now, my soul is troubled. Jesus, were your soul ever troubled? Yes, this is one of the times. And what shall I say? Shall I say, Father, save me from this hour? Uh-uh.

But for this hour, for this purpose, I came to the hour. What does it take? Until you've lost your life. And no matter what God asks you to do, you do it.

And no matter what sin comes, and you sin, you confess it, and you move. Until all that matters is your private prayer, in which you say, time after time after time after time after time, help me to die to self, so that Jesus Christ can come through, and that all that is remaining of me is Him. That I am so dead, and I am so obedient, that all that's left is the Spirit of God.

Then you lose a life for His sake. But you find it, real life, because out of your heart will come springs of living water, like you've never dreamt possible, on this side of eternity. So what should we do about quenching? Last passage, Philippians, chapter 2, verse number 5. Those of you who were at the Fellowship of Companies for Christ conference earlier this year, last year, you heard me teach on this.

Boy, did God do a work in my heart about this. Verse 5, let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ. This is how he thought.

Who, being in the form of God, did not think in his own mind that he had to grasp it and hold on to his rights. But instead, I love this next part, Greek word, kenosis, he emptied himself. Look up here for a minute, so you get the picture.

He emptied himself. He made himself empty the rights he had already. Nobody took his rights away.

He, even though he was God, with all the prerogatives of deity, did not, concept, grasp them, hold on to them. He let them go. And he emptied himself.

And he purposefully made himself of no, oh dear, this is a hard one, made himself of no reputation. Lord help all of us to have no reputation. Taking on the form of a servant and coming in the likeness of men, and being found in the appearance of men, look at this next three words.

He humbled himself. God Almighty humbled himself. How far, Jesus, did you humble yourself? Answer, and became obedient, because it was not his will, it was his father's will.

He became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross. Therefore, did God the Father ask of God the Son that he die to himself? Yes. Take up his cross? Yes.

Is it something he wanted, or his father wanted it for him? Answer, not my will, which isn't to do this, but thy will be done. Therefore, Jesus is the primary illustration of not quenching the Spirit. He emptied himself of everything, he humbled himself beneath everyone, and he did the hardest thing a man or woman could be called to do.

He died. Die. All of it.

Die. Is there anything in your life that God has said, do, that you have said, no, I won't do? I don't have time, and you're too tired, but if we named the categories in which God asks of all people, you would find, probably, there's two or three things, back yonder, that you said, nope. My encouragement to you is not only deal with the grieving side, deal with the quenching side.

And say to him, when you have some more energy, because this is a lifelong process, this isn't a weekend, you say to him, what have you asked me to do in the past and the present that I'm unwilling to this point to do? And God will reveal it to you, and you'll know what to do. Answer, what should you do? Answer, say, yes, Lord. Yes.

When those two areas of our lives, no grieve, no quench, you can begin to walk by means of the Spirit, and you will not fulfill the lust of the flesh. You will not sin. It's only when you get off that a little bit, you sin.

So, my encouragement to you is, go for it. Yes. Many of you are starting this weekend.

Three years from now, if I meet you somewhere in our travels, come walking up to me and say, you know what, Bruce? I started that thing you talked about at the NAVs. It's been three years. You know what I'll know about you? I'll know you're a lot more godly person than you were three years ago, that you've confessed a whole lot of sin, that you've began to understand that the Spirit does convict, and you've made a lot more humble in process, that you're a lot more free, and you're not so proud, and you're not defensive, and you don't have self-pity or self-pride, or you're not reserved back from people, that you love people because you have no defensiveness in you anymore.

And that whatever the Lord wants you to do, you do it, and that you're gentle, and you're meek, and you're submissive to God, and you're submissive to other people, and you have flat pleasure to be around, because you're like God. And God happens to be the best person in the world to be around. Amen? Does God talk to you tonight? How many say, yep, sure has.

And that's all that I was here to do. Let's pray. Our Father in Heaven, oh dear, I feel like we've been missing it.

The glory of our salvation has been grieved and quenched, and we wonder why our lives are so dull, boring, light gray. And we never have miracles ourselves. And we think it's because Christianity just isn't what it purports to be, at least for us.

What a lie from the pit. It's because we have grieved and quenched the Spirit of God that we've not experienced the fullness of our salvation. We are paupers when all the riches of glory is within us.

We therefore commit to you, Lord God, and beg you to work with us through the power of the Spirit so that we will learn experientially how to walk by the Spirit and not fulfill the lust of the flesh. May it be true, in Jesus' name, Amen.

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