

Believing as the Scripture Says

by Erlo Stegen

The sermon emphasizes the necessity of believing in Jesus as the scripture says to experience the transformative power of the Holy Spirit in our lives.

Duration: 39:29

Scripture: Isaiah 35:1, Matthew 6:33, John 7:37-39, Acts 1:14-15

Topics: "Belief"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher focuses on the passage from John chapter 7, where Jesus proclaims that anyone who thirsts should come to him and drink. The preacher emphasizes the importance of believing in Jesus as the Scripture says, and how this belief will result in rivers of living water flowing out of one's innermost being. The sermon also touches on the preacher's personal struggle with worrying about what others think and how this can hinder one's faith. The preacher encourages the congregation to prioritize seeking God's approval rather than pleasing people.

Transcript

Lord, we thank you for this opportunity that we can come together under your word. Lord, the matters of you and your kingdom are the best. There's nothing on this earth that is as bright and as wonderful as that.

Amen. Our text will be in John chapter 7, from verse 37. On the last day of the feast, the great day, Jesus stood up and proclaimed, if anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink.

He who believes in me, as the scripture has said, out of his heart shall flow rivers of living water. Now this he said about the spirit. Let's just end there.

I'd like to speak about this, he who believes on me, as the scripture says, so that it's not too long. He who believes on me, as the scripture has said, rivers of living water will flow out of his innermost being. This word was a real problem to me.

It was at Mapumulu in 1966 when I was there. This word troubled me day and night. He who believes in me, as the scripture says, rivers of living water will flow out of his innermost being.

And I said, but I do believe. And I don't doubt that I believe. But the rivers of living water, I don't see.

We have a river down here, the Tugela. One river. The desert turns to be a garden.

All sorts of fruits and vegetables grow from it. In 1966, I was in real trouble. And I said, Lord, you say in your word that if anybody believes, as the scripture says, rivers of living water will flow out of that person.

I believe, but I don't see the waters. Preached for 12 years, day by day, but I still don't see any rivers of living water flowing in KwaZulu. And then I looked in the Bible and I said, now where does it speak about rivers of living water coming out of a person? Now I'd go to the service, and the service was in an old, was actually in the stable, an old house that was built out of corrugated iron and wood.

And that's where we had the service. And in the service, I said, men and women, you Christians, the Bible says, if you believe in the Lord, then there will be rivers of living water. Who of you believes in the Lord Jesus? And they all put up their hands.

Now, I should have been very pleased because everybody there said that they do believe in the Lord Jesus. And I said, but here's a problem. The Bible says, if you believe in him, as the scripture says, there will be rivers, not one river, rivers of living water flowing out from that person.

As you say that you believe on the Lord Jesus, are there rivers of living water flowing out of your life? Nobody could answer in the affirmative. And I said, I too must, I'm still looking into the word and praying because this thing's got me beat. And then I realized that I mustn't make a mistake.

The Lord Jesus is he that believes on me as the scripture says. And then I realized that the Lord Jesus says that the Bible speaks about believing on the Lord Jesus. They said, let's now have a look to see what does the Bible say about believing on the Lord Jesus.

Then we started studying the Bible to see what does the Bible say? Was a word that really picked me and that really worried me. When the Lord Jesus says, I haven't come to judge the world, but the words that I have spoken, they will judge the world. Then I brought the two together and realized, but these words will judge us on the day of judgment.

And I said, oh Lord, speak to me through your word. I want to know, what does the Bible say? Twice a day we would meet. We used to come together twice a day at seven in the morning before the store opens.

And after five, when the store is closed, we'd come together again. To read and study and to see what does the Bible say? And then we read the book of Acts. And it came to the day when one day it was a Saturday.

Then some came to me and said, can't we go home today, to do our washing, to see to the children. Can't we have the service earlier, at half past one or at two o'clock? And I agreed. And when we came together, I said, let's do it at half past one, at two o'clock, with the magistrate, the assistant magistrate, the postmaster, the party, the police, and the police.

I said, let's do it at half past one, at two o'clock. Now, across the road from us, there was the magistrate, assistant magistrate, postmaster, the chief of the police, other police. They were all together, just across the road, to play tennis, and I was here in this old stable, together with the blacks, having a service.

The magistrate was an atheist. The junior magistrate was an atheist. And they used to not like me at all.

They used to say that things are wrong and go wrong in South Africa is because of the missionaries. The missionaries have done all the damage in this country. They are spoiling the blacks.

Now, we came together, broken hearted, and I said, let's do it at half past one, at two o'clock, with the magistrate, the assistant magistrate, the postmaster, the chief of the police, and the police. Now, we came together, broken hearted, and sincerely seeking the face of the Lord, and suddenly I realized that this was a bad time, because they might hear us. They might hear me crying because they're just across the road from us.

Now, that building had the old-fashioned sash windows that you've got to lift up and then lock. And then I got up and I thought, well, let me just go and close the window, that those that are outside don't hear how we are crying to the Lord on our knees here. We literally cried.

When last did you cry and shed tears before God? If you've never done it, and you haven't got only a head of wood, you must have got a heart of wood or a heart of rock. And I got up and I pushed the window up and I closed it properly. And when I closed the window and I closed it properly, then I heard the voice of the Lord speak to me.

He said, yes, close it properly, because then I'll be on the outside and you'll be on the inside. I didn't need anybody to interpret that. I understood that word very well.

God isn't kept out by the glass at all. He is kept out by the heart of man. I turned around and I thought I would start the service.

I suddenly saw like a big words written in front of my eyes, like the screen here, only bigger as it were hanging in the air. God resists the proud. It was like a spear that pierced my heart.

And I said, I've always thought it's the devil that's resisting me. It's the devil that stops the people from coming to the service. It's the devil that stops the people from getting converted.

Is it God that resists me? All these years I blamed the devil for making it so hard and difficult for me. And all of a sudden God revealed Himself to me and said, I am in your way. Because there's still haughtiness.

There's still pride in your life. I am resisting you. Then I said, oh God, if only the devil would resist me, there'd be still a chance by your grace to overcome him.

But if you resist me, no hope. I can't do anything. If God is against me and I resist, I am hopelessly lost.

I can't do anything. God opened the curtain a little bit and I saw His holiness. I saw His fearful holiness and I just cried out and said, oh God, have mercy on me.

I am a hopeless sinner. And I cried out and I said, Lord, deal with this haughtiness. Deliver me from every form of pride.

That this may be the end of God resisting me. And I cried to the Lord, I said, Lord, save me, Lord, deliver me that there may be no pride, no haughtiness in my life. Many things the Lord spoke to us in those days and spoke to me.

I'll just touch on here and there something. I was like a blind man and it was as though the Lord took me by my neck and pushed me with my nose into things. One day I arrived by motor car because I'd been away and when I arrived I heard them already singing in the service, the Christians.

Something within told me and pushed me, go to the service immediately. And I said to myself, I can't go like this without a suit, without a tie, in my working clothes. I can't go and hold the Bible in my hands before the congregation dressed like this.

And then suddenly three people stood before me. And I thought, what will so and so say if I stand in front of them having the Bible and being dressed like I am? And so and so, what will he think about me? And what will the third person feel when they see me like this? Such foolish, idiotic things can play a role in a person's life. What people think, what people feel, and what people say, oh what a sinner I was.

What people think, what people say, oh what a sinner I was. I am not a servant of Jesus Christ. That was a knockout blow to me.

Aung San Suu Kyi wanted me to meet a person at Hattebias Potem. I had met his brother-in-law. A huge, tall fellow.

He is going to Germany now for the World Heavyweight Championships. Boxing. He boxed with the World Champion's brother, I think in three seconds or three minutes.

The person was on the ground, on the floor. Now he is going to go and meet the real champion. And I said to Aung San Suu Kyi, please, I want to meet all these people.

For that boxing match, he gets 40 million. Whether he wins or whether he loses. But he says he wants to knock him out like his brother.

But I got a worse knockout blow than that man because God knocked me out. For 12 years I told the Zulus, I come to you as a servant of Jesus Christ. And now all of a sudden, I'm disqualified.

Paul says, if I still try to please men, I'm not a servant of Jesus Christ. It really knocked me out. There was another word.

The Prophet Elijah is one of my favorites. I love his story. He prayed that it shouldn't rain and for three and a half years it didn't rain.

Then he prayed again. He put his head between his knees and he prayed. And a cloud came up the size of a man's hand.

And he sent a message to the king, hurry to get home. The rain is coming. And the rain came and it got them on the way.

He prayed and fire came down from heaven. I love that man. And I respected Elijah.

And I said, if I ever get to heaven, I'd like to shake his hand if there's such a thing. But he was just like us, just a human being, just like ourselves. I heard how he stood before his wicked king, King Ahab.

And he said, your majesty, God before whom I stand. God before whom I stand. You know what it's like if you stand before a very important person.

You forget about everything else. You just think about this person whom you're facing. God before whom I stand.

You know what it's like if you stand before a very important person. You forget about everything else. You just think about this person whom you're facing.

If you stand before an important person, you will be very careful how you stand. You won't stretch and yawn. You'll be very careful to have the right posture when you stand there.

And you will have your best manners. Forgetting everything else, just looking at this moment. God before whom I stand.

You know what it's like if you stand before a very important person. You will be very careful how you stand. You forget about everything else.

You'll be very careful to have the right posture when you stand. He stood before his king, and a king in those days was not like the kings today, that are just like a puppet. These were real kings.

They could have just commanded and he would have been beheaded. He said to the king, O king, guard before whom I stand. So he forgot about everything else.

He just remembered God, the Lord of lords, the king of kings, and realized he stood before him. And my heart broke, and I cried. And I turned to go to the service with the car, and then I saw the temple of the Hindus in my mind's eye.

And it was as though the Lord took me and showed me a film of my life, of what I was. And I saw, as it were, myself going into the temple of a Hindu. Do you ever been in a Hindu temple? There are plenty idols made by men.

Some idols in the image of a man with horns or hands like a snake, like real spooks. And I went to the first idol in my mind's eye, I saw myself kneeling down, worshipping this idol with my forehead on the ground. And I saw myself get up, go to the second idol, kneel down, bow right down with my forehead on the ground, worshipping this idol.

And I got up and went to the third idol, and I went right down and I bowed down and worshipped this idol with my forehead on the ground. And so I saw myself praying and worshipping idols. And I got up.

And I heard the word saying, I don't want you to worship idols, worship only the living God. And by that time I was at the end of myself. I went through a side door into the service, wiping my tears, hiding my face, got to the first chair and I just said, let's get down and pray.

There was nothing that I was going to preach or teach anymore, I just got down on my knees and said, God have mercy on me, save me, I am a sinner lost. That's how God took me through the mill, and he didn't do it in a nice way, with the feet first. He took me upside down with the head in first and he crushed me and he milled me.

By God's grace, that's how I got revival. That's why revival means something to me. Have you got it? Have you gone through the mill? Have you been cleansed and sanctified? Many people carry on and they live like devils.

They speak like them. Why? They have been changed. You don't just see and hear Jesus, you hear some other voices as well.

Some other voices. We heard a lot of voices last night. Many, many, many.

You can't imagine what can be in a man and in a woman. But I want to tell you, you won't get places in anywhere with God. The streams of living water won't break forth out of your innermost being unless you believe as the Bible and as the Scripture says.

Now you test yourself, even if I just spoke a third of what I wanted to speak. You test yourself. Do you believe as the Scripture says? That will determine whether rivers of Holy Spirit water will break forth out of your life.

You test yourself. Do you believe as the Scripture says? That will determine whether rivers of Holy Spirit water will break forth out of your life. Let us pray.

You Lord got up and you cried. You cried out aloud on that day even though people wanted to kill you. You had to call out because you just couldn't keep quiet about this.

You had to call out that He who believes in you, as the Scripture says, rivers of living water will flow out of their innermost being and a desert will bloom like a garden.

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