

# Book of Acts Series - Part 29 | More

by Jim Cymbala

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*Jim Cymbala's sermon emphasizes the importance of continuous learning in faith through the example of Paul and Apollos in the Book of Acts.*

**Duration:** 40:11

**Scripture:** Psalm 119:18, Jeremiah 15:16, Acts 19:1

**Topics:** "Book Of Acts"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of continually seeking to learn and grow in our understanding of God and His Word. He uses the example of Apollos, who needed to learn more despite his knowledge and eloquence. The speaker warns against being complacent and relying on our own background or upbringing to interpret the Bible. He encourages listeners to have a hunger for more knowledge and insight, comparing it to the way great basketball players constantly strive to improve their skills. The speaker also references the Israelites in the wilderness, who were given fresh manna every day as a reminder to trust in God and seek His provision daily. He concludes by urging believers not to settle for where they are spiritually, but to continually seek more of God and His Word.

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## Transcript

In our study that we've been doing together on the Book of Acts, we have come to the end of the Apostle Paul's second missionary journey. Remember, what was the Apostle Paul's name before he became the Apostle Paul? Saul of Tarsus. And we've learned that this zealous, Pharisaical-trained Jewish man who persecuted the church of Jesus Christ now has become its great spokesman.

And he ended up in a church in Syria, in Antioch, and from there he went out on a missionary journey. Let's do a little exam. What was the name of the person he went out with on his first missionary journey? It was Paul and Barnabas.

Those who said Silas, you get left back, you have to do that year over. And on his second missionary journey, he went out with who? Silas, Paul and Silas. And on this second missionary journey, he picks up young Timothy who becomes part of the group, and then he meets Dr. Luke who wrote the Book of Acts, and the team is added to.

And while he ends up in this second missionary journey in a city called Corinth, he runs into a man by the name of Aquila and his wife, whose name is Priscilla. And they are merchants, they are in business, and

he works with them for a while because he needs to support himself while he speaks once a week in the synagogue, trying to reason with the people there and prove that Jesus is the Messiah. When Timothy joins him and they bring offerings, Timothy brings offerings from some of the churches he has begun, we found out last week, didn't we, that Paul then gives himself full time to the ministry because the offerings pay for his expenses, and those who preach the gospel, the Bible says, should live by the gospel.

But when you can't, he made tents because that was his trade after his religious training. So the time in Corinth has come to an end, and when we pick up the story now, he is about to leave there, and he decides to bring Aquila and Priscilla, these not apostles, not preachers, they're lay people, but obviously, they really are fervent for the Lord, they know about Jesus. Remember now, we're going back 2,000 years ago, and at this moment in time, there are no New Testaments.

It hasn't been written yet. So all the teaching about Jesus is verbal, and they see the fulfillment of the prophecies in the Old Testament in his life, but what he taught and when he said, don't let your right hand know what your left hand doing, that wasn't written anywhere. Matthew hadn't written that yet.

So it's all verbal teaching, which made for possible error in people bringing in false teaching, and then who's to say what the truth is. Thank God for the scripture that we now have that we can study by and study from. So now he's heading, and he wants to go back to Judea and back to Antioch.

He wants to stop in Jerusalem and go home, but to do that, he crosses over a body of water and goes from Greece back to Turkey, what we would call Turkey, what's called Asia in the Bible, and he goes to the great city of Ephesus. Now, we're gonna learn more in the weeks to come. This'll be the last one for a while until the new year in our study in the Book of Acts, God willing, but we're gonna learn a lot about Ephesus, this huge metropolis, bigger than Corinth, with one of the seven wonders of the world, the Temple of Diana and all of that stuff that was going on there.

But Paul is now gonna just stop for a little while, so let's see how it all plays out, and again, what we're trying to find out is why did Luke be inspired by the Holy Spirit? Why was he inspired? Why did he put these words in the Bible, and now what can we learn? Paul stayed on with the believers in Corinth for many days, then left them and sailed off with Priscilla and Aquila for Syria, but before sailing from Sancreia, he had his head shaved because of a vow he had taken. They arrived in Ephesus where Paul left Priscilla and Aquila, he left them there, but before he leaves them there, he went into the synagogue and he held discussions with the Jews, and the people asked him to stay longer, but he would not consent. Didn't feel that was God's plan at that time.

Instead, he told them as he left, if it is the will of God, I will come back to you, and so he sailed from Ephesus. When he arrived at Caesarea, he went to Jerusalem, he greeted the church, and then went to Antioch. Now we pick up verse 24.

At that time, now a new name is coming onto the landscape. At that time, a Jew named Apollos, everyone say Apollos, who had been born in Alexandria, that's in Egypt, he came to Ephesus where Paul had just left. He was an eloquent speaker, and he had a thorough knowledge of the scriptures.

He had been instructed in the way of the Lord, that's Jesus, and with great enthusiasm, actually literally in the Greek it's and boiling in spirit, so he was very fervent, probably loud and enthusiastic in his speech style. He proclaimed and taught correctly the facts about Jesus, what he had done, who he was, that he died, that he rose again. However, he knew only the baptism of John, John the Baptist.

He began to speak boldly in the synagogue there in Ephesus. When Priscilla and Aquila heard him, they took him home with them and explained to him more correctly the way of God, the things that he didn't know about. Apollos then decided to go to Achaia, that's back to Greece.

So the believers in Ephesus helped him by writing to the believers in Achaia, urging them to welcome him. And when he arrived, he was a great help to those who through God's grace had become believers. For with his strong arguments, he defeated the Jews in public debates by proving from the scriptures that Jesus is the Messiah.

And by the way, this is one of those places where the chapter changes, but it shouldn't. Chapters aren't inspired. And really, when a story is going on, you should wait till that story closes out.

And this is really connected to it. While Apollos was in Corinth, see, he left Ephesus, Paul traveled through the interior of the province, and he arrived in Ephesus. Now he's on his third missionary journey.

There he found some disciples, and he asked them, did you receive the Holy Spirit when you became believers? We have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit, they answered. Well then, what kind of baptism did you receive, Peter asked. The baptism of John, they answered.

The baptism of John was for those who turned from their sins and he told the people of Israel to believe in the one who was coming after him, that is, in Jesus. When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Paul placed his hands upon them, and the Holy Spirit came upon them, and they spoke in strange tongues and also proclaimed God's message.

And they prophesied, as some translations have, and they were about 12 men in all. So, we read a nice little piece of early church history, so let's just review what we read and see what lessons we can gather. Paul leaves Corinth and he stops in Ephesus.

He brings Priscilla and Aquila with him. The people beg him in the synagogue, please stay, please stay, he said, no, I have to go back home. I gotta go back to the ones who sent me out.

So he goes back, he stays just for a little while, and he goes back, he lands in Caesarea, he goes to Jerusalem, he greets probably the apostles that were still there. Then he goes back north to Antioch and Syria. Then after a while, he goes back on the same route he took on his first missionary journey.

Why was he going back to where you could get killed and where you could get stoned and where you could get put in prison? Only one reason, he had to go there to strengthen the believers. To strengthen believers is what he lived for. He didn't care so much about whether he was GQ in his dress, his main thing was, how do I strengthen those who have come to faith? Because when you come to faith in Christ, the devil attacks big time, trying to break your faith, trying to distract you, discourage you.

So Paul went back to encourage the believers. Now while he's traveling there, this man Apollos, who becomes famous in the church, he comes to Ephesus where Paul just left. And he's an interesting person.

He became so well known that in the church in Corinth, they were split into different parties later on. And one said, I'm of Paul, one says I'm of Peter, and another one said, oh no, we follow Apollos. In other words, they had their favorite little pet teachers.

And Paul said, that's very carnal. He writes to the church in Corinth later on, another part of the New Testament, that's very carnal. Apollos is nothing, I'm nothing, Peter is nothing.

The only one that counts is Jesus. Only God can give growth. Don't get caught up with teachers and preachers.

There are no superstars in the Christian religion. There's only one. His name is Jesus.

How many say amen? Yeah, let's put our, just affirm that. That's the only name. And that still exists today.

You got groupies who follow teachers or preachers. Now what's interesting about Apollos here is let's look at the positive side. The Bible says he came, he was a Jew, and he came from Alexandria.

That's in the northern part of Egypt. Alexandria was the intellectual capital of the world in a sense. It had the largest library in the Roman Empire.

They guesstimated that at that time, one million Jews, just Jews, were living, possibly in Alexandria. So it's no surprise that he came from there. What else are we told in the scripture there? If we had time to go over it like I have several times, we find out he was a Jew, and that he was learned in the scriptures.

He really knew the Old Testament scriptures. But we also find out that he had been instructed in the way of the Lord. So he knew now about Jesus, and he taught correctly about Jesus, that Jesus was born of a virgin, that Jesus came as the Savior of the world, that Jesus died on a cross, that Jesus rose again from the dead.

He had it all down. Not only did he have it down and he knew the Old Testament verses, but the Bible says he was not only eloquent, but he spoke boiling in spirit. He was fervent, he was eloquent.

And he would go to the synagogue there in Ephesus, and he would reason with them, proving from the scriptures that Jesus is the Messiah. And yet, even though Apollos was all of that, he had a big hole in his theology. And as he spoke and as he ministered, Aquila and Priscilla were in the synagogue listening, and they realized that although everything he said was true, he left out certain things about the gospel, about the new covenant, about why Jesus came.

He left out certain things because he didn't know about them. So the Bible tells us that after the synagogue meeting was over, they went, come on, Apollos, come on over our house. Let's have a meal together.

And while he was there, they started to teach him more things that he didn't know. Isn't that interesting? Get that picture. Here's two lay people, two business people, telling Apollos, the great preacher, eloquent, mighty in the scriptures, knowing the way of Jesus perfectly, they're filling in the gaps for him.

They're telling him what he doesn't know yet. After a while, he decides that he wants to go to Corinth where they had been. He wants to backtrack where Paul had been, and wants to go to Greece so that he can strengthen the disciples there and do evangelism.

So let's just study that for a second and see what we learn from that. Must be a purpose, a reason why Luke put that in there about Apollos. It shows us that a minister, a pastor, a preacher can be used by God and be preaching nothing false, and yet be leaving out important things that pertain to the salvation that we have through Jesus Christ.

Apollos was mighty in the scriptures. He was doing well in the synagogue. He knew the Old Testament, he knew the way of the Lord, he was eloquent, he was boiling over in spirit when he spoke, no deadhead.

Apollos, no, no, he was full of life. And yet, just a regular couple, Aquila and Priscilla, when they heard him, they said, no, we gotta talk to you. And they told him more, more fully the teaching about Jesus.

This is a very debated upon passage of scripture, especially as you get into Acts 19, where Paul says to the believers there, have you received the Holy Spirit since you believe? I know you believe. And you see the people he met were probably influenced by the fragmentary teaching of Apollos. They had come under Apollos' teaching, and that's why Paul ran into this problem.

So let's see what we can learn. It goes to show us all that no matter what you think you know about Jesus, there's more that you can learn about Jesus. If Apollos could be the man he was, the man of God, and be such a blessing, and be so mightily used of God, and yet there were areas of teaching, areas of truth that he didn't even know about.

But as he had it pointed out to him by Aquila and Priscilla, as they explained to him the passages in the Old Testament, especially about the Holy Spirit, in that day I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh from the prophecy of Joel. As he learned that, he absorbed it, and now his teaching became more full of the whole counsel of God. That's the tragedy, brothers and sisters, when you and I think we know everything we need to know.

There are people all over America today going to church, they no more are hungry to learn anything than they are to jump over the moon, because they know, they know. And that goes for preachers too, they know. Well, if Apollos could learn more, how about you and I learning more? Now notice, Apollos had to learn by verbal teaching.

Aquila and Priscilla took him aside and talked to him. We have the Bible, we have the New Testament now that hadn't been written then, and we can study on our own and not just depend on a teacher or a preacher. But there's so much more to learn, and most of us stop with our childhood experience.

I hear this my whole life. It's not like the way I grew up. Well, why in the world would I care about how you grew up, or how I grew up? Is that the sum total now of all theology? All truth has to be encapsulated in your experience growing up in the Catholic church, the Baptist church, the Pentecostal church, your Korean church, your black church, your white church, your Methodist church.

In other words, everything now stops. It has to fit into what you and I have experienced. That's why Christianity is in decline today in America.

There's so few believers who wanna search the scriptures and learn more. Most of us read the Bible just to find verses to back up what we already believe. This is so true of denominational arguments.

Most people I found out, starting with pastors, they don't read to learn like a child like Hope would in school. No, they don't learn. They learn to just find ammunition for what they already believe.

And if they find out another emphasis or another truth that kinda rubs against their background, well, then they get edgy and move on to something else. Now, whoever would learn anything in school that way? When you play basketball, you never get to the place where you go, I got it all down. The guys that do that, they're chopped meat.

They're not gonna be any good. All the great players are, let me try to do that with my left hand. No, let me try to hold the guy up with my right and throw it up with my left near the hoop.

Everyone's trying to learn more, more. That's the name of this message, more. Apollos needed to learn more, but most of us have come under the spell of how we grew up, and that's it.

We read the Bible through that lens. This is how I grew up. Well, I don't read the Bible like the psalmist did in 119.

Oh, teach me your way, oh Lord. Show me truth from your word, oh Lord. And I wanna challenge all of you here toward the end of the year, and we're coming into a new year, start reading your Bible more than you ever have in your whole life.

How many are with me? Say amen. I wanna go on record today. I wanna start reading the Bible today on December 1st.

I wanna start reading it and make a plan for next year. I wanna read it more than I ever have because I want God to show me truth from his word. How many are with me? Lift up your hand.

Let's read it more. No, I know, I've been a Christian for 30, 40 years. None of us have figured out everything about God.

It's the excitement, it's the joy of learning something new rather than just same old, same old. Listen, when you don't grow, you start to go backwards. There is no holding pattern.

Listen to me, choir. You can't stop and say, oh, I know. The moment you say that, you start to deteriorate.

Christianity is a strange religion in this way. We have peace and we have joy, but if you're healthy, you have hunger for more. I wanna know more.

Why aren't you satisfied? Yeah, I'm satisfied with Jesus, but I want more. More, more about Jesus. More, more about Jesus.

More of his saving love for me. More of his love and grace who died for me. More, I want more.

The pastors, we need more. We need to, there's secrets in here that none of us have seen yet. We're all scratching the surface.

And imagine how the angels must stand aghast when they see Christians hardly pick up the Bible or if they do read it, it's cursory reading because they know, we know, we know. Pastor, I've been, went to an open Bible church in Trinidad and I know, I know, I know. Well, thank God for your open Bible church in Trinidad.

Thank God for wherever you went. Thank God for every church. Thank God for every teacher, but there's more.

Come on, can we say amen to that? There's more, there's more. There was more for Apollos. Now, notice also this, the humility that Apollos had.

Aquila and Priscilla say, could you come on over our house? We're gonna have a little leg of lamb and we'd like to talk to you. He could have said, hey, you don't need to tell me anything about scripture. I'm

Apollos.

I come from Alexandria. I'm in the ministry. What are you? You're trade merchants.

You make a living selling tents or whatever you do. You're gonna tell me, ah, ah. See, there's a verse in Proverbs.

Anyone who loves knowledge wants to be told when they are wrong. It's stupid to hate being corrected. It is stupid to hate being corrected.

That's from the Good News Bible, which I've been reading lately. So accurate, so good. Anyone who really loves knowledge wants to be pointed out where they're wrong, but most of us live with that shield, and anyone challenges anything we've held since we're little, we react, ah.

That's not what I was told growing up. I was told this and I was told, so now that's the sum of all things. The sum of all things is what your little life was led into, and here's this vast ocean of truth.

Look at the humility that he had to receive correction from two lay people. Let's give props to Apollos. How about some props for Apollos? To receive correction from two lay people when you're mighty in the Scriptures and eloquent, and your name is soon gonna be bandied about amidst all the churches, but he learned from them.

You can learn from anyone. God once used a donkey in the Old Testament to speak to someone, and our problem is we like to pick and choose who we learn from if we are really willing to learn, and we don't want it to be our spouse. We want a professor or a theologian to tell us something, but not my wife, not my husband.

Isn't that the way it is? I remember years ago in a previous facility, in our previous facility, a staff meeting was gonna begin with the staff much, much, much smaller in my office, and an associate of mine was sitting next to me as the people were gathering in, and something just came to my mind from Sunday. I saw something, and it was funny to me, and I was just sharing it with him, and I was just laughing about what this certain person did, and one of the secretaries walked in, and she just, because she sat near us, she picked up what I said, and she didn't like it because she felt it was insensitive that I should be laughing at such a thing, and she was right, and she just looked at me. I'll never forget that.

She just looked at me, and her look said, shame on you. Well, wait a minute, I'm Pastor Cimbala. What you talking about here? Guess what? Pastor Cimbala can be dead, absolutely wrong, and a secretary who's much newer in the Lord can be absolutely dead on right.

Am I right or wrong, brothers and sisters? She corrected me, and I just looked at her. I said, I'm sorry, but she didn't have to say a word. Her look just was like, withered me.

So we all can learn, can't we? Learn more about the Word of God from the Word of God, and we can learn it from people, and by the way, let me just go on before I close here. Why did Aquila and Priscilla know more than Apollos? Because they were with Paul, and that goes to show you that what pastor and ministry, God have mercy on me and help me as I say this, that what pastor and ministry you sit under many times conditions what you know about Christianity, and if you have a narrow-minded, bigoted pastor, if you have a ethnic-centered pastor, that stamp could easily come on you, and you're gonna bring that wherever you go in life. Why? It was taught to you.

Someone told Apollos the things of Jesus, but left out a lot about the Holy Spirit. Aquila and Priscilla told him a little bit more about it. Why did they know more? Because they had been with the Apostle Paul, and he was deeper in his knowledge about the things of God than Apollos.

Oh, I thank God for not only preachers that preach the Word of God, I'm so thankful for books. I never had the privilege of going to a seminary, but I've read books all my life, continue to read books, sermons, expositions of Scripture from men who walk with God so I can learn more because they knew more, they studied, they have insights that I don't see, that I don't, oh my goodness. I just heard one the other day from a friend of mine who's almost retired now.

It was from Psalm, and it's from one of the Psalm 138, someplace around there, and the psalmist says, my enemies have opened my back with their lashes, speaking metaphorically, they have opened my back, and I'm bleeding from what they've done to me. They've opened me up like the ground is opened up and plowed, they have plowed my back. And this writer, I have to call him this week and tell him what a blessing it was as I'm reading his devotion.

It says, well, you gotta remember, saints, that whenever somebody opens your back and plows, that means God is gonna plant a new seed. And something beautiful is gonna come out of your life because he lets someone prepare the ground. Oh, that guy makes me sick, that is so good.

Is that a good truth for all of us? Now, how did that man get that? By studying and waiting on the Lord. God gave him insight. I wouldn't have probably seen that in 10 years.

We all can learn. Brothers and sisters, please, don't stop where you are and think you're where you should be. I've watched this all my life.

I've watched people get older and die, and they wither on the vine because they know. They've been around, they've seen a mighty move of God. They have seen and all of that.

I don't find any of that talk in the Bible. It's always more. I don't find one of them saying, were you in the upper room with us back in Acts chapter two? I did never even mention the upper room.

We would be running trips and selling t-shirts. I was in the upper room. They don't even mention it.

They're just more. I want more, I want more. More of God, more of his word being made real to us.

Because if you don't get more, you end up having less. That's the way it is. Listen to me now.

If you don't, if you're not hungry for more, you're gonna end up having less. You can't stay where you are. Spiritual living is never static.

There's either more that you're learning or you're suddenly, microscopically even, falling backwards. So what was the result of all of this? Paul comes after Paulus leaves and now he's in Ephesus and he's gonna stay there three years as we're gonna learn, God willing, in the new year. And he meets some disciples and he picks something up about them.

Something's wrong, something's not right. And then he goes, now wait a minute. I know you believe in Jesus, but did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed? Now that's a very debatable passage.

To be a believer in Jesus and be a Christian, you have to have the Holy Spirit living in you because that's the sign that you are a Christian. The Spirit of God lives in you. You're a new creation.

But these folks in Ephesus, 12 of them, he picks up some women. Maybe it was a lack of joy, I don't know, just a deadness in their spiritual life. Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed? What did he mean by that? That's debatable, but anyway, he said it.

Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed? And they said, Holy Spirit, we don't even know what you're talking about. What Holy Spirit? And he goes, well, wait a minute. What were you baptized into? These were people that probably had been ministered to by Apollos before he learned more from Aquila and Priscilla.

Well, wait a minute. Then what were you baptized in? We were baptized in the baptism of John. He goes, no, John, that was a proper baptism for them, but that was about repentance of sin.

That was to turn away from your sin. And then when they, oh, no, we didn't know that. Then take us to where we need to go.

We want more. He said, you want more? Fine, I'm gonna baptize you in the name of Jesus. And he got around some water and he baptized them in the name of Jesus Christ, and then when they came out of the water, he laid hands on them.

Now, they definitely were Christians when they went in the water. You don't baptize unbelievers. You only baptize Christians.

And when they came up, he laid his hands on them, and suddenly the Spirit came upon them in an ecstatic way, and they began to speak in languages they didn't know, and they began to prophesy and speak the word of God, and something happened that was just unusual and wonderful. In other words, Paul was saying, I know you believe in Jesus and you've been taught about Jesus, but Jesus not only came to die for your sins and raise again from the dead, he sent the Holy Spirit. Are you living in the dimension of the Holy Spirit? I wanna ask that to all of you.

You believe in Jesus? You know he died for your sins? You know he rose again from the dead? You gotta go further, because when he went back up to heaven, he said, it's good for you that I go. Because I'm gonna send the Holy Spirit. And when he comes, I've been with you, but he's gonna be in you.

I haven't been able to change you much, Peter. Walking with you, you denied me three times. And you all fled when I was arrested.

Oh, but when the Spirit comes, he's gonna make you into totally different people. And I wanna challenge to all of you, we need not only more of the word, we need more of the Spirit. We need more of the word.

Come on, let's put our hands together. More of the word and more of the Spirit. Remember that and come to the prayer meeting this Tuesday.

And we'll pray for more of the Spirit. It's gonna be one of the last prayer meetings for the rest of the year, because Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve falls on a Tuesday. Think about it when we stop everything and we have a week of prayer at the beginning of January.

More, more, Lord, I want more. Because if you don't reach for more, you're gonna end up having less. You can't stay where you are.

No Christian in 2,000 years has ever stayed where they are. You either grow or you begin to subside. Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness.

They shall be filled. Don't worry about what other people have. Seek first the kingdom of God.

And everything else that the people are worried about, God says, I'll take care of it, but seek me. Seek more of my word. More, more, more, more, more.

More. You know why Christianity's in decline and the average church now in America has gone from 91 to something like 68 actual people attending on a Sunday? Is because churches, pastors, we're all to blame. People have lost the desire for more.

I got after a pastor the other day, and I said, brother, all due respect, you seem to have some respect for me, but I wanna tell you something. Why are you preaching warmed over sermons? Get fresh material from the word of God. No, but that takes time, and you gotta seek God.

Then take time and seek God, but get something fresh for the people. Don't be giving them last year's bread. It's old, it's moldy.

We need fresh, we need new every day. Come on, are you with me on this? The Israelites were in the wilderness. How were they fed every day? What did God give them? Manna.

Do you remember one of the rules about the manna? You never could keep it overnight. God said, I want you to go to bed with nothing but faith in me. I'll give you fresh manna every day.

You know, I just learned that preachers now are going on the internet, and they get sermons from well-known pastors or preachers, and they're preaching the same sermon, including the jokes and the humor. The same points, the same sentences, and they're justifying it by saying, listen, if it's truth and it worked for him, it can work for me. What a sad state of affairs.

You can't eat from somebody else's bowl. You gotta go and get your own food, and it's gotta be fresh, fresh. My wife got sick the other day.

I had some fruit. I bought some fruit, but it's not the fruit season, is it? And this fruit, I don't know when they put it in that little container. Maybe in the late 90s or something like that.

I don't know where that came from. She just took, I think, just one bite or two bites, right? She got deathly sick, because stale stuff, it doesn't work. Gotta have it fresh.

More. God's not running out. He's not running out of food for us every day.

You, every day you and I open this Word, He will talk to us. If you come like a child, if you come like Apollos, even if you're mighty in the Scriptures, you're willing to learn, He will teach you, and it might change your theology, but go with it. Let God lead you, not what people told you growing up.

Go with what God says. All the men and women through the years that God has used in a signal way, they have been people who broke the mold. They wouldn't stay restrained by how their denomination or their

heritage tried to confine them, but they broke into new areas, starting with Martin Luther, who said, no, no, no, the just shall live by faith.

I'm not doing Hail Marys. I'm not gonna do the Stations of the Cross. I'm gonna pray right to God.

I'm not gonna pray to Mary. I'm gonna pray right to my Father in Heaven. He broke the mold.

And listen, it goes down through the ages for all of us. You have to follow truth, get more, more. Your words were found, and I did eat them, and they became the joy and rejoicing of my heart.

I delight in your word, O Lord. Open my eyes that I might see something fresh and new from your word, Lord. I don't wanna read it devotionally, oh, I read my chapter today.

No, speak to me, give me more. Give me more, more of your spirit. Has God blessed you in your life? Has he ever given you peace and joy? There's more peace.

There's more, you don't even know about peace. You don't even know about joy. Oh, pastor, that's not kind to say.

No, I know you know about it, but there's depths of it that you don't know. If anyone is thirsty, Jesus said, let him come and drink. What's the only qualification? Thirsty.

War. If you're satisfied, he has nothing for you. If you're satisfied today, there's nothing even Jesus can do for you.

When he said that, most people rejected him. Why? They weren't thirsty. But if anyone thirsts, let him come to me.

Out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. He spoke this of the spirit. I want more of his word.

I want more of his spirit in my life because he's done so much for me. I don't wanna stop short of what he has for me. Are you with me today? God, would you put a spirit of seeking in us today? Would you smash complacency, spiritual pride, complacency, that I know spirit, that pride that says, I don't really need much help because I know what I need to know.

Would you give us the spirit of a child so that we would search your word diligently, that you would enlarge our theology according to your word, you would deepen our understanding of who Jesus is, you would make us more like Christ. None of us are here so much like Jesus that we can't grow some more, Lord. Would you enlighten our minds concerning your blessed Holy Spirit? Would you take away the prejudices that some people have about the spirit, confining them to, confining him to what they were told growing up instead of what the Bible says about him? Would you make us radical? Would you make us crazy for Jesus? Would you take away stiffness? Would you take away all that stuff that encumbers us, Lord? We wanna take time to thank you, Lord.

Our hearts can't get off this theme that you have been so good to us. We want more, but we wanna take time even now, Lord, to just tell you, thank you for being so good to us. Some of us should be dead today.

Some of us could have died, but you send an angel to watch over us. Some of us should be in a hospital room somewhere, a body broken down from abusing it, but you had mercy. You had mercy on us.

Donna could have jumped off that building, but you had mercy on her, Lord. You had mercy on her. And God, there's private stories in all of our lives.

If it wasn't for you, where would we be today, God, if it wasn't for you? We look all fine in our suits and dresses, some of us, but God, you know the road that you've traveled with us on. You've watched over us when we didn't want ourselves, we didn't like ourselves, and yet you kept on loving us. And we praise you for that.

And Lord, we remember in your old covenant that there would be certain sacrificial offerings of thanksgiving, a thanksgiving wave offering to you of just remembering your goodness, that when the crops came in, they would take the tithe of the crops and they would wave it before the Lord, meaning thank you for everything you do for us today. Thank you for what you do for us, not only today but yesterday, and we know you'll be faithful in the future. Well, every eye is closed if you're here up in the balcony or downstairs.

And you have a special offering of thanksgiving to God because just in the last 30 to 90 days, God just came through in a way that you and him know about. Some prayer was answered, some deliverance was wrought. Something happened that just reminded you that God's promise is true.

I will never leave you nor forsake you. I want you to get out of your seat and come and stand in the front. We're just gonna end by praising God and thanking Him.

We're gonna pick up this same theme on Tuesday in the prayer meeting, but right now, we're just gonna praise God. Would you come out of your seat and say, pastor, I have something special to thank God. If you're in the choir and you've been just worried, worried, anxious, anxious, and not been thanking Him, come up and stand behind me if you're in the choir.

But if you're here in the sanctuary, come down in the front and say, pastor, I wanna take time to just thank God for His goodness.

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