

Clothed With Power From on High

by Les Wheeldon

Les Wheeldon's sermon emphasizes the necessity of being empowered by the Holy Spirit and the vital role of the church in the believer's life.

Duration: 54:16

Scripture: Joshua 3:17, Luke 24:45-49, Acts 20:28, 1 Corinthians 10:13, Hebrews 10:32-34, James 1:12, 1 Peter 4:12-13

Topics: "Baptism Of Holy Spirit"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the disciples' experience after Jesus' resurrection. He emphasizes that the disciples were still struggling to understand and were not yet filled with the Holy Spirit. The speaker highlights the disciples' doubts and discouragements, including their desire for Jesus to restore the kingdom of Israel and their fear of persecution. However, the speaker encourages the audience to persevere and walk with Jesus through tough times. The sermon concludes with a reference to Luke 24:49, where Jesus promises to send the power of the Holy Spirit upon the disciples.

Transcript

Speaking of moving to Lanark, I decided to put in my visa restrictions. You know, I didn't want to give them a visa, but, um, no, that's not true. I've got a very, I've got a very, we haven't discussed the transfer fee, have we? We haven't discussed the transfer fee.

These great footballers have millions of pounds of transfer fees. I don't think he's worth a few millions. But I believe very deeply, and I rejoiced that we were coming to Lanark.

Why were you happy? I was happy because if God is guiding people, even out of your midst, that is your gain. It must be. It's their gain, and it's the gain of the church in Epsom.

It must be. If we stay in a place, and overstay in a place, we're not bringing back. And I rejoiced in our fellowship, I could say it was a wonderful time we had together.

I, well, I embarrassed John just with this one little story. Well, it's not really a story, it's a testimony about him. But John, I always thought of as my yes man.

You know it says that in him the promises of God are all yes and amen. Well, John and Mark are yes people. And if I said to John, would you go to Heathrow and pick up this purse? Yes, Father.

Would you go to the hall early and open it? Yes, Father. Could you lead this meeting? Yes, Father. Would you preach? Yes, Father.

Everything I asked him to do, John and Martha, there was a willingness. If I said to him, would you do this that was wrong? I know what I'd get. Never! Due to the yes man, he's also a very big no man.

He would say, no, that's wrong. Well, that's what I found with John and Martha. I said, willingness.

When I said to the flock in Epsom, they were away once, and I said to them, you know, they're such willing hearts, you must be careful that you don't impose on them. Because they will always say yes. And that's wonderful.

But if he's being abused, of course. But they are yes people, they are. We have many such ones in Epsom, and I have to be careful to think, oh dear, I mustn't ask this person to do that, I must think.

Because I know what they'll say. And if God can make us such people, that is a great, great blessing. It's a great example to us, and I believe we should follow it.

Well, let me turn you then to Luke's Gospel and to chapter 24. Which is my, you know, old age, I need glasses now. I've got these cheap \$2.99 glasses.

I know that I look very nice. But I, sometimes, I'm getting, I'm not getting very old, but I get, you know, every one of them gets symptoms of getting older. And the other day I was in the church pondering for my glasses, somebody said, can we sing How Great Thou Art? And I thought they said 484 or something.

And I sing 484, and they all say, no, How Great Thou Art, I've left my zinger frame. It's absent. But, excuse me, I've got this first on my nose.

Anyway, there we go. Now, in Luke's Gospel, chapter 24, by the way, one of the things about elders, I believe that as churches we must be, we must live with the ways we've developed and so on. And sometimes we don't always understand things.

We get things sometimes a bit right, sometimes a little bit wrong, or whatever. But the important thing is, in a church, is that we heed the Word of God. This is a great thing.

And in the Word of God, elders are commanded, again and again, to feed the flock of God, to feed the flock. It's the one great thing we're commanded to do. Jesus said it three times today, to feed the flock of God.

He says, feed the flock, tend the lambs. Use those phrases. And in Peter, it says, feed the flock of God.

Paul says, feed the flock of God. And of course, the food of the flock is love. They eat love.

They eat the Word. I think the Word is like a kind of food, but it's like, you need to have... I've never eaten haggis yet. This is an experience I've been waiting for.

Well, anyway, thank you. I've got another testimony over here about haggis. But, you know, you eat all kinds of strange things when you travel in foreign countries, so I am willing to eat haggis.

But, you know, sometimes you eat a food and it's very hard and dry. And you need something to wash it down. And sometimes you hear a sermon and you think, wow, that's a little bit hard and dry.

And the food of God, the food that He gives us is, of course, His own Son. When we eat the Word, the Word isn't enough. It must be watered by the love of God and the Spirit of God.

The food of the flock is love. And so Jesus said to Peter when He was talking to him, He said, feed the flock of God. And He said, if you want to feed the flock, this is how you do it.

He said, do you love me? If you love me, you'll be able to feed the flock. And that's how we go on in ministry. But let me take you then to Luke's Gospel, chapter 24.

And this is something that happened here. Jesus risen from the dead. And He said this.

Verse 49. Behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you, that tarry in the city of Jerusalem till you are clothed with power from on high. Clothed with power from on high.

It's very difficult for us to remember or to understand what it must have been like to be with Jesus in these resurrection days. You know that if I said to you we could have a wonderful vision of an angel, an angel could stand there. I'm sure it would affect you.

I like seeing angels. I don't expect particularly that I will, because God hasn't promised me I'll see an angel. But the sense of the supernatural could come through all kinds of things like that.

But when Jesus was with them for these days, their sense of the supernatural must have grown to the point where they believed that Jesus could do anything. It must have been such a wonderful confidence in the risen Saviour that they they believed that having conquered death and he had, and he could walk through walls because he just appeared to them from nowhere. They locked the doors and suddenly he was in the midst.

And all kinds of things were happening and he was teaching them and I think their their joy was growing. Of course they were still not filled with the Holy Ghost. They still weren't born again of the Spirit of God.

They were still struggling to understand and he still said, you fools and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have said. And as they stood there I think watching him they would have believed that anything was possible. Even said to him, will you restore at this time the kingdom again to Israel? And I, you will remember that that meant something like will you destroy the superpower of Rome and just give us like a king and all these things.

They asked me, they asked me as if it was something easy. You know when I visited East Germany back then when it was under communist rule and I went up to a communist guard just to talk to him and it was getting a bit freer in those times. It was the days of Gorbachev and it was getting freer.

And I realized when I spoke to this guard that he was a he was a Mongol from eastern Russia somewhere out there. He was so hard. I'd never met a person like him.

I thought I'd done the wrong thing. I felt he could have shocked me as easy as saying good morning. He was an aggressive, tough, hard man.

I didn't witness to him. Couldn't even communicate with him. But the thing is this.

If I stood there and said oh Lord could you cast the Russians out of East Germany this afternoon. But that's how they the disciples believed it was possible Jesus could cast the Romans out of Israel. Who

thought he could? This sovereignty of Jesus.

This all power of Jesus. You know the church must get around Jesus to the point where we are aware that we are in the presence of the Lord. We call him Lord and we must obey him.

That's certainly true. But everything must obey him. You know that no one can ultimately disobey Jesus.

You do know that Satan must obey him. If I said to you would you please make me a cup of coffee you would have a choice. And if I said to you would you follow Jesus you would have a choice.

If I said would you allow Jesus to come into your heart you have a choice. If I said would you give your life you would have a choice. But if Jesus Christ stood here this morning and said to you you bow before me call me Lord you would do it.

You would do it. When he commands there's no choice. If he commanded let America collapse you wouldn't understand it wouldn't be a process of weeks it would just happen.

If he said let the monarchy collapse disappear in a moment he can do it. There is no institution no power of man there is no strength of man that can stand against the words of Jesus. When he commands everything obeys.

And when he says to Satan Satan bow before me at the name of Jesus every knee must bow. At the name of Jesus every tongue must confess he is Lord. There is no exception neither in heaven nor in earth nor in under the earth.

Everything must obey the name of Jesus. And therein lies the faith of the people of God that we are not praying to someone who has an influence in world affairs but someone who is guiding world affairs. There is no other Lord there is no other God.

Now here he is and he's standing before them and he says this and this is one of the strange things that we always can so easily misunderstand is that the destiny of the nations cannot be changed by politicians. God gives politicians for a season we may think how could God give politicians but even God sets every ruler in their throne. From George Bush to Saddam Hussein they're all there.

God has put them there. God will remove them in his time. He has a plan.

We pray to the one who can change him. But we sometimes believe and we believe that politicians can change things. If only we could get Christian politicians to rule our countries we would be so happy and so blessed.

But I'm afraid it doesn't work like that. If I were elected and I'd like to be prime minister I would love to be. I will give you money for both of me.

I'll give you my platform I don't think I'll get very far. I'll create my own party we can launch it this morning if you like the Christian party. First thing is to be a member of this party you must be born again.

Second thing is my platform is I'm turning the House of Commons into a community. A house of prayer. Well I wouldn't get elected would I? What will be the defense of the nation? Not the nuclear arsenal.

It will be trusting God. I wouldn't be elected. But can you imagine Jesus ruling from number 10 Downing Street and saying I'm going to defend the nation by the nuclear arsenal.

Can you imagine saying I'm trusting in the nuclear bombs? No. Can you imagine him saying well I'm afraid I'm frightened. No.

Christians and politics must get it clear that we mix them up. I'm not saying that we don't have any voice. We do.

We've said that this morning. But we must be careful that we don't become fearful like the nations. We have a God who is controlling the nations.

And the Bible says I will not fear though the waves roar and the nations are in turmoil. You can read it in Psalm 40 down there. It's there.

I will not fear though the mountains be shaken. I'm not going to be afraid. Alright well we're going a little bit off course here but I'll try and lead you back to this verse 49.

I send the promise of my Father upon you. He was speaking to a little group of people. You can say well how can Jesus affect the nations by affecting a little bunch of people.

But I want you to know that this kind of meeting this morning is not irrelevant. Neither is it unimportant. The meetings of God's people have been in small groups of people around this world meeting in prayer around the Word of God and if we seek to make ourselves politically important and minimize the importance of the churches we are mad.

This is God's will. That people meet around His Word in prayer. It's happened for 2,000 years till now and it's continuing.

It's continued in Communist China. It's continued when the oppression went on. When pastors were imprisoned for 20 years or more in torture.

Many of them died there. But the churches multiplied when there was oppression. When there was rejection.

And let not the people of God lose heart. We are to flourish in this way whether we are popular or respected is not a question. We are the people of God.

This is God's will. Jesus came to a group, a small group of people and gave them promises. That God's life.

It is God's life. And one of the things I commend to all people in this room, young people, old people, whoever you are, one thing I commend to you is get it clear that Jesus loves the church. Therefore we must love the church.

Satan hates the church. All connected. What Satan hates, of course he hates what Jesus loves.

But if the love of the church, the love for the church can be damaged then we cease to love God's people, love the way God has ordained us to meet, love these patterns of things that God is doing in the earth. If we begin to cease to love the things that Jesus loves, we will go against him. We will miss his plan for our

lives.

He loves the church. And when I listen to anybody like a missionary address or whatever it is, or whatever they're talking about, I'm always listening how it is that they fit in with the church. If I hear how people are going on serving the Lord and this or that, I'm listening.

How does this affect the church? I'm not always listening for it like it's dominating my thoughts. But I know that the ministry is always connected with the building up of the church. And that which separates you from the church is not God.

And one of the things that horrified me about this modern thing you can hear statistics which frighten you, but one statistic I heard, or we're talking about it on the way here. Somebody said that the average length of life in a church is about three years or something. And I was quoting this story I heard in a Christian magazine about Christians should start getting these badges to say which church they've been to.

You know, like I've been to Yalt. And I've been to you know, I've been to Walthor and I've been and you've got all these badges on your backpack. You know, in California I don't know what the percentage is but it's a huge percentage, I think it's a half or a third or what of Christians don't go to church.

I don't know what kind of Christians that is, but you can tell I'm talking about Sunday morning. And I know in a way I never I don't like to say go to church, I hardly ever use it. I don't go to church because I am the church.

I'm the church when I'm sitting at home. So I don't go to church. I am the church.

The church comes together. But these are things that are very, very important. And we can be challenged on all kinds of things about it.

One of the things about our generation, and this affects every person, when we talk about this generation I don't think we're talking about youth. We're talking about everybody alive today. I am actually quite modern.

Because I'm here today. Alright? And the things I'm saying are quite modern because I'm saying them now. You might say well they've been said for a long time but the modernity is you will all be old fashioned in somebody's eyes one day.

I watched somebody at the wedding the other day with a certain kind of hat and I thought you were going to regret wearing that hat one day. When you look at the photograph twenty years down you look at it and oh did I wear that hat? Or did I have my hair like that? Or did I wear that? You know. I mean I sometimes look at photographs of me with barrel bottoms.

You can't imagine that can you? But I was very modern then. And I'm very modern now. But anyway.

Well this time I'm ten years old. You understand. I know I'm an old person.

But anyway. Modern generation and I'm talking about everybody in it. We live in a selfish generation.

What can I get out of it? That's what weakens the whole concept of the church because it's contrary to the whole basis of the church. The church is what can I milk this place for? What do I get out of it? What am I putting into it? And I've preached it before and I'm not going to talk about it in particular this morning but

one of the things I believe is that the church only exists courtesy of people who died for it. The founder.

Jesus. The apostles. The prophets.

The endless stream of martyrs. They all died for the testimony. They gave their lives.

And of course those who didn't die physically they lay down their lives constantly in love and in spiritual sacrifice. I sometimes say to people if you don't particularly care about the church, would it bother you if it didn't exist? Let's close all the churches and leave you alone. I don't think people would realise what deep darkness would fall on a nation without the church.

Take away the gospel. Take away the preaching. Remove the Bibles.

Remove the name of Jesus from this nation. Gone. Remove it.

Be consistent. Get rid of it all. It would be deepest darkness.

And remember what Isaiah said if they don't speak according to this word it's because there is no light in them. There is no light in this world without this book. And Jesus calls his church a lampstand to hold up the light.

Remove the lampstand holding up the light. Well, nobody will see it. These are very big things.

And God must refresh them in every person's heart to realise that your commitment to the church is not something that I'm trying to whip up. It's something that is in the Spirit of God. The Spirit of God is utterly given.

Jesus laid down his life for the church. Loved it. Gave himself for it.

And so must everybody who is filled with the Holy Spirit. These are big things. And here Jesus speaking to this little group of people who were to become a church.

They weren't a church but they were to become a church. And I send the promise of my Father upon you. Wait in the city of Jerusalem till you are clothed with power from on high.

What is that power from on high? Think of power from on high. What do you think of? This is one of the big questions when you talk in any sense about this baptism with the Holy Spirit. The baptism with the Holy Spirit is the most real, wonderful release of a soul to belong to God.

To be conformed to the things that are in God. To live with the love of God. The peace of God.

The holiness of God. The Holy Spirit comes and transforms our lives in a mighty baptism. The power from on high is power to have something from that glorious highest place in all the universe.

God's own throne. It's to have the power from on high clothing me not outwardly but inwardly. I'm inwardly clothed with power from on high.

It's wonderful. And every person who is understanding some of these things must be stirred at some point to receive the power from on high. Let me turn you to a chapter in the Old Testament.

This is 2 Kings chapter 2 with Elijah ascended to heaven. You see when Jesus said you wait until you are clothed with power from on high. And Elijah was told told Elijah he said he said various things but he was when he went up into heaven Elijah went up into heaven he left his clothing and Elijah was clothed with it.

Now if I said to you I'm standing here this morning wearing the clothes of Jesus it's a very great claim isn't it? But it is true. He has given me his clothing. His clothing, his mantle, he's put it on me.

I am anointed with power from on high. I'm inwardly clothed with it. I've got a very kind of mind that sort of isn't full of self confidence.

I'm not a self confident person. When I say these things I say them because to say anything else would be a lie. I'm not bragging.

I'm not boasting. But it's true. I've seen that power work to deliver demon possessed people.

I've seen people healed. I'm not the greatest minister who's ever lived. But I know I'm clothed with power from on high.

But I am not different to any child of God. All God's children are clothed with power from on high. All.

I have certain gifts maybe that may differ from your gifts but the gifts only differ. They're all from the same spirit. The Bible says it.

They're all the same source. All God's children are clothed with power from on high. And you know when Jesus was challenged him he said if I said I was not God's son I would be a liar like unto you.

You must know the truth and you must confess it. And you mustn't spend God's time by confessing things with your mouth that are contradicting what he says is true. You must make a good confession.

You must. You must drive into your own if you're full of unbelief and questioning and doubts and fears. Silence yourself and say be quiet lesbians.

Don't talk like that. I'm useless. Well that's not particularly news to God but God could use somebody if he just had you take me up.

So you mustn't call yourself useless. You mustn't call yourself. You mustn't contradict God and waste his time.

You must speak the truth in faith. Well we have 20 minutes left to look at this chapter. 2 Kings 2 Kings chapter 2 and Elijah was ascending to heaven and here is the moment when Elijah says something strange to Elijah.

He says you stay here please for the Lord has sent me on to Beth. This is verse 2. But Elijah said as the Lord lives and as your soul lives I will not leave you. So they went down to Beth.

Strange little exchange wasn't it? He said you just stay here I'm going over there and you have a little dinner. Then this great omen from Elijah said no as the Lord lives and as your soul lives I'm never going to leave you. It happened three times.

Three times Elijah said I'm going to go down there. Three times Elijah said no no no I'm not leaving you. As the Lord lives and as your soul lives I'm not leaving you.

Then they came to the Jordan River and he said again I'm going to the Jordan. He said stay here. No I'm coming with you.

The men of the prophet who tells you this chapter were watching and they told Elijah. They said did you know that your the Lord is going to take your head from Elijah away today. And Elijah said this strange thing.

He said yeah I know. He said keep quiet. He said shut up.

I don't know if he was polite or impolite. I've taught my children to say shut up. But keep silent I think can only really mean shut up.

But he said you be silent. Be quiet. You know that when people prophesy to you you have the right to examine what they say before the Lord and to either hold it lest it be the word of the Lord or reject it and say well I don't feel that's the word of the Lord.

And he said to these prophets be silent and you must remember whenever anybody is talking to you in the name of the Lord you must remember a human being is also there trying to influence you. Some people say I've heard people say one person said the Lord's told me I'm going to marry you and you know therefore putting pressure on somebody to accept. Because that's said so by so many people.

Many many times it isn't the Lord. It's just a very willing heart. They want it to happen so badly.

They're being sincere but it isn't the Lord. It doesn't work out. Speak humbly.

And if somebody says something well hold it. Examine it. Talk to other elders perhaps and say this is what's been said.

What do you think of it? I would advise you. Anyway. He said you be quiet he said.

I'm going on. I know all this. You be quiet he said.

They went over to the Jordan River and Elijah took the mantle and he struck the Jordan River. The waters dried up and Elijah walked over on dry land and then when they got to the other side Elijah said ask what may I do for you? Ask. Anything you want.

You can have it. This isn't very common in the Bible but occasionally God said to somebody you can ask whatever you want. Jesus said it to his disciples and of course we all take it as it were to us.

But you have to be careful that you have to realize why he said it to them why they received it in the way they did. But the thing is Elijah said ask whatever you want and it will be given you. And so Elijah didn't hesitate.

He said I know what I want. I want twice what you got. Double fortune of your spirit.

Later on you can read that Elijah did 16 miracles and Elijah did 8. He got a double fortune of his spirit. But he said I want twice what you've got. And then Elijah said well you asked the hard thing you'll ask something hard.

That's tough. You know that when Solomon was said you can ask whatever you want. He asked the tough thing.

He wants to be made very wise. Now if you think about it that's a very big request. Make me wise.

Because you know if you've got no GCSE's or something and you sort of struggle to learn to write and you can just about write your name I know people who are like that. I know one person who couldn't read and she prayed oh lord give me the ability to read. An illiterate person.

One night she dreamt she was reading. She dreamt. She woke up in the morning.

I'm talking about a very simple village girl in a village in Africa. She woke up she said where's the Bible? Where's the Bible? She took the Bible and she could read. That's tremendous isn't it? Now if you've got exams next week it's only ... Call for the elders and help pray.

Don't pray for a double portion of my intelligence. You might still fail. Anyway.

But anyway you know this is difficult. Tough request. Solomon didn't fail.

Make me very rich. Because God would have said well that's easy. Give me long life.

Well that's easy. Make me wise that I might treat people your great people well. Lead them and be a wise ruler over them.

Give me wisdom. Oh that's hard. Well he didn't say that but it is hard.

But because you haven't asked all these other things I'm going to give you wisdom to be wiser than anybody who's ever lived. Where the shallow lives apart from Jesus. But I'm going to give you all the rest as well.

And anyway well here he comes with it. He says you asked the hard thing and then it happened. He said well if you see me when I'm taken up you can have it but if not shall not be so.

It happened as they continued on and talked and suddenly the chariot of fire appeared. The horse of the fire separated the two. And Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven.

Elijah saw it and he cried out my father my father the chariot of Israel and the horsemen. He saw him no more. He took his own clothes and tore them to two pieces.

Sorrow. He picked up the mantle of Elijah and went back and crossed the Jordan in the same way that he had before. He smoked the Jordan River with the mantle and crossed some dry land.

Very wonderful isn't it? Let me just pick out a few things to show you here. The first thing is that the strangest is that Elijah tried to discourage Elijah. When I say it that way it's probably a little bit he didn't say anything to discourage him.

He just tried to find out maybe he didn't want to go with him. So he said to him stay where you are. Now if I said to you this morning that I wanted to discourage you I wouldn't go along with that.

You'd say what? The Ministry of Discouragement? One of the different gifts of the flesh is one of the gifts of the spirit. The five old ministries of the flesh and the five old ministries of the spirit. One of the ministries

of the flesh is discouragement.

You can minister to discouragement. You can minister to the ministry of condemnation. You've got the gift of exaggeration.

Anyway, there we go. All these different things. I'm not going to discourage you.

Don't go on with God. Don't go on with God. After all it's quite tough.

It's quite bleak out there when you're praying, sometimes late. It's tough when other people don't understand you. Sometimes you've got to seem strange because you can't go along with the crowd.

Don't go on with God. Just settle down. Go with the crowd.

Most people have a good time and they'll be Christians and they'll be saved anyway. Well, most of them. So don't go on with God.

Now you could say, well why are you saying that? Because actually that's what you'll get coming to you as a blast from the world, from the devil, from family, from friends, from Christians. You know there's a solidarity in sin. If people can get you to sin with them, they are happier.

They don't like people who stand out. Christians don't. I'm not talking about all Christians.

I'm talking about some Christian groups don't like people who get super spiritual. They've got insults for them. They call them super spiritual.

Oh, don't read your Bible so much. These people, they're all relaxed a bit. Come on.

Come to the pub. Shocking how many people go to the pub and are totally indistinguishable from the world. Don't go on with God.

Can I be saved if I don't go on with God intensely? Oh, yeah, sure you could. Well, it's not absolutely certain, but you'll be alright, I should guess. That's how you want to live.

Of course it's a risk, isn't it? Who would risk their eternal destiny on the word of a man? Thousands are doing it. Thousands are playing this lottery. I might be saved, I might not.

Don't go. Stay here. Just stay where you are.

You know, God will send you obstacles. God will send you discouragements. What? Oh yes, because if you've never been an obstacle, you would never grow.

You would never go on. You would wilt and your spiritual life would grow weak and die. It would.

If you don't meet obstacles, you won't go on at all. So God puts an obstacle in your path and it becomes tough to get up and pray. It gets tough and you find it hard and the reason the Bible isn't easy, and it's so easy, it's much easier to just give up and have a holiday and give up the whole thing for a while.

And God is saying, now look, now I've got to know what you really want. Could you give up? Could you? But it's in your heart and I'm not getting through. I'm not I'm not knowing the presence of the Lord.

I'm not. Things have changed hard and most of the time of temptation. Lord! And you begin to call on the name of the Lord.

Then you begin to find that the reason you were put through these paces. God said if you have to be through heaviness for a time in your faith we tested and tried we will come forth as gold and you may receive a crown of life. You have to be in heaviness for a season to get a crown of life, he said.

So don't you? That's what it was scripturally written for us. Don't be surprised if you have a fiery child. What was a fiery child? Many of them being put into prison.

Some of them killed. The groups being brutally disbanded. What are our trials? They're just as real.

Temptations from the world. All kinds of discouragements come upon us and we have a fiery child and it's tough. What are we going to do? You see when we get through through all the discouragements and it came down to verse 9 when they crossed the Jordan River we'll just go through quickly now.

When they got through and they stood on the other side of the Jordan and they'd gone through. Notice that. They'd gone through things together.

It's a picture of a soul walking with Jesus. Go through it with Jesus. Go through the toughness.

Go through the loneliness. When they got through it then he said, ask. And Jesus said to the disciples in the upper room, he said, you and they will continue with me through my temptations.

I appointed to you a kingdom as my fathers appointed to me. And you shall sit with me on twelve thrones judging the tribes of Israel. He said this to them.

And one of the further things he said to them is this, ask and it shall be given unto you. But remember he said it in the context of, you and they will continue with me in my temptations. Therefore I appoint unto you a kingdom.

So what we say is, we'll ignore that one and we'll just have the promise itself. Ask and it shall be given to you. So he started asking us for a season to get the crown of life, he said.

So don't you, that's why the scriptures are written for us. Don't be surprised, he said, at the fiery trial. What was the fiery trial? Many of them being put sent to prison.

Some of them killed. The groups being brutally disbanded. What are our trials? They're just as real.

Temptations from the world. All kinds of discouragements come upon us and we, we're in a fiery trial and it's tough. What are we going to do? You see, when we get through to this, through all the discouragements, and he came down to verse 9 where they crossed the Jordan River, we'll just go through it quickly now, he said, when they got through, they stood on the other side of the Jordan River, they'd gone through, notice that, they'd gone through things together.

It's a picture of a soul walking with Jesus. Go through it with Jesus. Go through the toughness.

Go through the loneliness. And when they got through it, then, he said, ask. And Jesus said to the disciples in the upper room, he said, you there who continue to believe through my temptations, I appointed to you a kingdom as my fathers appointed to me.

And you shall sit with me on twelve thrones, judging the tribes of Israel. He said this to them. And one of the further things he said to them is this, ask.

And it shall be given unto you. But remember, he said it in the context of, you are they who continue with me in my temptations. Therefore I appointed to you a kingdom.

So what we say is, we'll ignore that one, and we'll just have the promise itself. Ask, and it shall be given to you. So we start asking.

And it didn't seem to work like that. But Jesus gives the promise to ask anything you want to those who continue with him. That's all we have here.

When Elisha continued stubbornly and persistently to walk with Elijah over all the discouragements of everything that was against him, at the end of this process, he said to him, now ask. We talk so much unbelief, we feel miserable, we go depressed, we even miss a meeting here, we do this, we do all kinds of slipshod ways in spiritual life, and then we say, right, well Lord, you say, ask and it shall be given you. No, no, I'm asking.

Give it me. God says, but wait. Are you walking with me? Are you obeying me? Is your heart in faith, which we called courage the other day? What do you mean I've promised? Who have I promised, did you ask? Well, anybody who asks, isn't it? I don't have anywhere to hold.

Oh, did you? Well, you thought wrong. One thing you have to do is ask in faith. Says it very plainly.

But he said, ask, and he said, what do you ask? I asked a hard thing. You've got to ask Jesus a hard thing. Ask him something very hard.

Here's something hard. Give me a double portion of your spirit. Now, if you said that to Jesus, well, I don't want to be twice as much as Jesus.

Well, I don't think that's what it means. But here it says this. Double portion of your spirit.

What does he mean? Did he say, I want to be twice what you are, Elijah. I want to be twice as popular. I want to be twice as powerful.

I want to be twice as famous. No, he didn't mean that because actually, Elijah's life was constantly in danger. If you wanted twice the spirit of Elijah, that's a very big thing.

I said to you, do you want twice the spirit of General Boone? Make me twice the man that General Boone was. What kind of man is that? Well, I'll tell you. He went into the gutter.

He gathered the drunks. He gathered the prostitutes. He cared for them.

He set up homes for them, orphans. Gave everything away. He lived in constant debt.

Christians should never live in debt. General Boone was in constant debt. His giving was always outstripping what he received.

He wasn't spending anything by himself. Give me twice the spirit of General Boone. We might say, make me twice as popular as a great famous person.

No, that wasn't Elijah. Elijah wasn't very famous. What kind of man was Elijah? He was fearless against sin.

Idolatry. He denounced the gods of the nation. He confronted the false priests.

He risked his life for it. He also did great acts of faith. You know, if you said give me twice your spirit, Jesus, you wouldn't know what you were asking.

I bet none of us would. Make me so uncaring about my own life. I don't care whether I sleep on a stove.

Make me not care whether I'm eating every day. I don't think Jesus fasted as often as he just didn't have food to eat. Some of us fast and we close the fridge.

But I think often Jesus just didn't eat. Didn't have food. Too busy.

Make me, give me a double portion of your spirit. Let me be clothed with the clothing of Jesus. Now you can see why it's a great claim.

Let me be clothed with power There's more to say there, but our time's up. Let's just go back very briefly to Luke's Gospel chapter 24. If the people of God could be thirsty for the Son of God and to be like the Son of God it is the greatest thing you could ever pray.

Make me just like Jesus. I don't want to be like Jesus in his miracles and not in his loving. I want to be like Jesus.

Double portion of your spirit you can translate like this. I want to be like you, root and branch. Jesus said you wait in Jerusalem till you are clothed with power from on high.

The promises of the New Testament are far in excess of anything you could expect. What he needs is hearts that will go for him. Elisha had a heart that went for him.

These apostles were they special men? I think they were not very special. I sometimes think that God's greatest men, when you actually look behind the scenes they're actually so ordinary, so ordinary that there's something burning in them. They just want Jesus.

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