

So Great Salvation: Preparation for the Baptism of the Spirit

by Paris Reidhead

The sermon emphasizes the importance of preparation for the baptism of the Spirit, and the conditions and promises that must be met in order to receive the fullness of God.

Duration: 45:24

Scripture: Isaiah 44:3, Ezekiel 36:25-27, Matthew 6:33, John 17:18, Ephesians 3:14-19

Topics: "Holy Spirit"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the difficulty the Israelites faced in the Old Testament when God seemed distant from them despite His presence in the tabernacle. To address this, God promised to do a new thing by giving them a new heart and pouring His Spirit upon them. John the Baptist preached about repentance and the coming of someone who would baptize with the Holy Spirit and fire. The sermon then transitions to Romans 12:1-2, where believers are urged to present their bodies as living sacrifices to God, which is their reasonable service. The preacher emphasizes the importance of relying on God's help in relinquishing our rights and allowing Christ to live in us, just as the Father lived in Him.

Transcript

This morning we are dealing with step number nine. Now, recall, please, that we're talking about so great salvation. We have seen that everything that begins as a crisis is preceded by a process and followed by a process.

In this case, there's the process of preparation for the new birth--awakening, conviction, repentance, faith--and then there's the process following the new birth, the witness of the Spirit, the temptation and sin and victory, but it is still a process issuing into a second crisis, the crisis of being baptized with the Spirit. And we're now talking about preparation--preparation for the baptism with the Holy Spirit. I would like to have you bow in prayer with me.

Now, Father, as we come this morning to speak about this most solemn and important of truths, we ask for special anointing of the Holy Spirit on the speaker and special guidance and anointing on the hearers, and might it be that together we're sensitive to Thy presence. Father, save us from being, though, among that number who just have fellowship with other people about Thee. But may it be this day that we see Thy face and hear Thy voice and feel Thy touch and sense that Thou art meeting each of us personally where

we are, and we'll give Thee thanks in Jesus' precious Holy Name.

Amen. Would you turn, please, to John Chapter 17. I want you to notice verse 18.

Now, I have to be very careful to restrict myself whenever I go into John 17. Years ago, when pastor of the Gospel Tabernacle Church in New York City, I brought a series of messages on the prayers of the New Testament, the seven apostolic prayers, and then came to John 17 with the purpose of showing how those seven New Testament prayers related to John 17. And I proposed to bring four messages on John 17.

Somehow or other, I wasn't able to keep that. I was down and had completed message 37 and was at the 23rd verse when I received a letter from someone whose typewriter had a key that didn't strike carefully, so I knew exactly who it was, though it didn't sign his name. And he said, Pastor, don't you think that there might be something else in the Word of God that would be of importance to us besides John 17? Well, I had to agree.

I thought that was true. In fact, I had already considered and decided not to continue. So I say I have to be very careful and restrict myself when I come to John 17.

Verse 18, As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world. Now, I want you to notice the first word, as. I'm told from Thayer's Greek-English lexicon that the word as, *kathos*, can be translated just as, accordingly as, in the same manner as, similarly to, or in identically the same way.

Now, take any of those, take all of those, and it strengthens the little two-letter word as. In identically the same way, or the same manner, that our Lord said, As the Father had sent him into the world, even so had he also sent us into the world. So we know it's us, because down in the 20th verse, he said he wasn't just praying for those that were there, but for them also which should believe on him through their word.

And that's us. So, As the Father sent the Lord Jesus into the world, so has he sent us into the world. Now think for a moment, how was he sent into the world? First, he was conceived by the Holy Ghost.

Mary, the chosen vessel, overshadowed by the Spirit of God, one cell in her body, quickened not by male sperm, but by the divine life of the Holy Ghost, and that which was born of Mary was Immanuel, God come in the flesh. From the time of his birth, he was Immanuel. He was indwelt by the fullness of the Godhead bodily.

But at the point of beginning his ministry, the Spirit of God who had been in him, for if he had not been in him, he was not God come in the flesh. But the Spirit of God who was in him, in his nature, came upon him after his baptism, and therefore he said that everything done by him during his ministry was done by the power, by the Father through the Holy Spirit. Now the pattern then is this.

We too are born of the Spirit. We're awakened by the work of the Spirit of God. We're convicted of our sins.

When he has come, he will convict. He it is that stirs our heart and inclines us to repent. And he quickens that saving faith that reaches 2,000 years into the past to embrace Christ.

And he it is that joins himself to our spirit in that regenerating work. And he it is that witnesses to us. We are born of the Spirit.

Now for years, as a dispensational Baptist, I contended that anyone who talked about sanctification was in error. The people I knew who had something to say on the theme were saying things like this. When you're saved, the Spirit of God is with you.

But when you're sanctified or baptized in the Spirit, then he comes in you. And I knew that was incorrect because the Scripture says that we have not the Spirit of God, we are none of his. And therefore, I had to refuse it.

But I remember being in Taylor University and looking at Dr. Wengates as he would stand there and tell about the great move of God in Angola. During the years of his missionary ministry there with the Methodists. And the glory of God was on his face and in his ministry.

And I would sit over here with the senior students at Taylor and tears run down my cheek. I wanted what God had done for Dr. John Wengates. And I remember going to his room, to his apartment there at Taylor, asking him to explain to me what it was.

And you know, he came with that, he's with you and then he'll leave you. And I said, Doctor, I want what you have, but I'm sorry, I just can't. Well, I excused myself and went.

About a month later, my hunger was so great, I went over and I said, Dr. Wengates, please don't try to explain to me what you have. Because that gets us both in trouble. Just ask God, would you, that he'll do for me what he's done for you and let God take care of the explaining.

I'm having problems with your explanation, but I want what I see that you have. Well, the pattern is that our Lord Jesus was conceived by the Holy Ghost, indwelt by the fullness of the Godhead bodily. And yet he wasn't ready for his public ministry until the Spirit of God came upon him.

So with us, we're born of the Spirit, we are indwelt by the Spirit. But we too, as he said, as thou hast sent me, so have I sent them. I wish you'd turn please to John 20, there's page or two over.

I want you to notice verses 19 to 22. Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst and saith unto them, Peace be unto you. And when he had so said, he showed unto them his hands and his side.

Then were the disciples glad when they saw the Lord. Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you. As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you.

And when he had said this, he breathed on. He breathed and said unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost. Now the statement, as the Father sent me, so send I you, carries us back to the pattern we just considered.

But what I want you to note at this time is that as he said that, he breathed. Now earlier in the day he said, Don't touch me. Then later he said, Touch me.

He'd gone to his Father. He'd presented his finished work, his shed blood, certifying, completing the work he'd come to do. And now with his disciples in the upper room, he is telling them as the Father sent him, he's sending them.

And he breathed. Now he breathed in one of two ways. The preposition can be either way.

He either went and breathed on them that way or he went and breathed on them that way. He either breathed in or on and it would be the same. But in any case, he gives a commandment with that and he says, Receive ye the Holy Ghost.

Now many of the dispensational commentators have said this was instruction for the day of Pentecost. I believed that for many years. The difficulty with that is that it's in the aorist imperative.

And it therefore means, Receive ye the Holy Ghost now. And if they didn't obey that commandment then, they never obeyed it. You couldn't extend that commandment 40 days and have it valid.

Not according to the laws of Greek grammar. It had to be immediate obedience or it could not be obeyed. It was immediately obeyed.

Why? You see, up until that time, the Spirit of God had been with the disciples and with the believers. But at that moment, I believe, not only the company there but all those who savingly believed on him, the Spirit of God came in. He said before this, he said the Spirit of God is with you and he shall be in you.

And now he has said, Receive ye, take ye the Holy Spirit. Which they did. There's the pattern.

Now let's look for a moment. And this is preparation, remember, we're talking about. You have to be prepared to understand the pattern of how God is going to work.

Now I want you to turn to Ezekiel chapter 36. I believe it will be the place we'll go. Ezekiel chapter 36.

I think it's extremely important that we should understand that this was not just a, in verse 27, this was not just an afterthought in the heart and mind of God. Begin with verse 25. Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean from all your filthiness, and from all your idols will I cleanse you.

A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you, and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments and do them. This is a promise.

The difficulty you see with the Old Testament, with the tabernacle in the wilderness, was that God was too far from the people. Even though he was there in Shekinah presence, a pillar of cloud by day and a fire by night, when they got over two or three hills and back in the valley where they lived, they couldn't see the pillar of cloud, they couldn't see the pillar of fire, and God was back there. And so it was much easier for them to forget the precepts and to yield to temptation and to sin.

And so he said he was going to do a new thing. He'd take away the heart of the flesh and give them a new heart, and then he said he would pour his Spirit upon them, put his Spirit within them. John the Baptist came preaching, repent, kingdom of heaven is at hand, and then he said there's one coming after me who's preferred before me.

He it is that baptizes you with the Holy Ghost and with fire. Isn't it interesting? You don't even need to know that there be a Holy Spirit to be born again. I said a few minutes ago, it's the Spirit of God that awakens the sinner.

It's the Spirit of God that convicts the sinner. It's the Spirit of God that inclines the sinner to repent. It's the Spirit of God that quickens saving faith.

But at no point in that process does the Spirit of God identify himself and say, I, the third person of the Trinity, I am now awakening you. The Spirit of God presents Christ to the sinner. He presents Christ to the sinner.

Now we've come to the place of the new birth. What did John say when he announced the coming of our Lord? He it is, Christ it is, that will baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire. The Spirit of God presents Christ to the sinner.

Now Christ presents the Holy Spirit to the believer. You don't have to have faith in the Holy Spirit to be born again. I say again, you don't even need to know there be a Holy Spirit to be born again.

You need to know about Christ and he focuses on Christ and illuminates the Son of God. But now that you're in the family, Now it is that everything is coming down to the place where John prophesied and promised that the Holy Spirit would be given by Christ. Now we need to see that, we need to understand that.

There are certain conditions that we have to have. I'd like to have you turn to Jeremiah 29, verses 11 to 14. There are conditions.

God established those back in the Old Testament, even as he established the promise that we would be filled with the Spirit, could have the Holy Spirit. Jeremiah 29, verses 11 through 14. For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end.

Then ye shall call upon me, and ye shall go and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you. And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart. And I will be found of you, saith the Lord.

Here is the promise. He said, ye shall seek for my gifts, and ye shall find my gifts, when you discover the possibility of having my gifts. Is that what he said? No.

Ye shall seek for power, and ye shall find power, when you discover the possibility of having power. Is that what he said? No. No.

He said, however, you shall seek for me, and find me, when you shall search for me with all your heart. Dr. Simpson sang a song years ago, Once it was the blessing that I wanted. Once it was the blessing, now it is the Lord.

Once the gift I wanted, now the giver owned. Preparation here is to get our eyes off of what others may have talked about, and get our eyes on to Him. Ye shall seek for me, and ye shall find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart.

Will you turn to Isaiah, just the next chapter, the next book before you, to 44. Isaiah chapter 44 and verse 3. This has been in a song with which most of us are familiar, and a lovely song indeed it is. I'm sorry we don't sing more often.

Look at it. For I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground. I will pour my Spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring.

I will pour water upon him that is thirsty. What are you thirsty for? It, things, gifts, power, or for the Lord? He, you know, isn't it astonishing? The Lord Jesus Christ died out of longing for you. He loved you with an everlasting love.

And I believe now He wants to be wanted. He loves to be longed for. And the preparation of our heart for the fullness of the Holy Spirit is to get our eyes on to Him.

Ye shall search for me. I will pour water upon him that is thirsty for me, for myself. Well, those are some of the promises and some of the conditions, but now I want you to see how the Apostle Paul gave this to us in Ephesians, the third chapter, verses 14 to 19.

Ephesians 3, 14 to 19. We know that when Paul met the Ephesian believers and was satisfied that they had savingly received Christ, even though they'd only been baptized with John's baptism, that he then baptized them. He wouldn't have done that if he had any question about the genuineness of their conversion.

And then he prayed for them, that group that were there. And they were filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spoke in tongues and prophesied. That we're told.

Now, however, he's writing to the church at Ephesus, and he's giving to that church and to us certain instructions that we should see for this important matter of preparation. For this cause, said he in his letter to that church at Ephesus, I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, that he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man, that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith, that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth and length and depth and height, and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge that you might be filled with all the fullness of God. It's astonishing, isn't it, that Paul, he's in Mamertine prison when he's dictating this.

One of the disciples is outside. Some of you have been at Mamertine prison there in Rome under the city hall that Michelangelo redesigned and supervised having constructed. They saved the Mamertine prison, which was the household prison for the Caesars.

And it was there, just much as it is today, probably exactly as it is today, that Paul was imprisoned. Now, Paul had a wristlet of iron around his right hand and another around his left, and a chain and a soldier at the other end of the chain. And they had four-hour shifts.

I guess that explains how there was a church in Caesar's household. You put two people there at the end of a chain, chained to Paul. They thought they were keeping Paul in chains.

No, he was keeping them in chains. Well, he got the gospel unto them. At any rate, there was a church in Caesar's household.

Nero came back from that violin trip he made, and he was quite astonished that his concubine and most of the servants and his soldiers had all been born of God and were meeting there in the name of Christ. One of the things that teed him off and got him started on his persecution, by the way. Now, Paul is there, and he's dictating this letter.

And the fellow sitting there, he couldn't see too well, but that wasn't necessary. Oh, he got way over here on the side. He could look through and see who was there.

But at any rate, Paul is dictating this letter, and the disciple is writing it down. And you can just look what happens. He's saying, For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, that he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit deep in the inner man, in order that our Christ may take up his lasting dwelling place in your heart through faith, that you, being rooted and foundationed in faith and love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth and length and depth and height, and to experience the love of Christ, which passes the grasp of your intellect, that you might be filled unto all of the fullness of God.

And I see Paul's hands go up, and those chains rattle, as he says, And now unto him that is able to do, exceeding abundantly above all we can ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen. Well, do you know what he did? He put the benediction right in the middle of the letter.

He couldn't wait. He just couldn't wait. A little earlier he had said that the middle wall of partition between the Jews and the Gentiles has been broken down, and now here comes the highest revelation that we have, that Christ is going to dwell in the hearts of the Gentile believers, and they're going to be filled with the fullness of God.

Well, that's it. That's what he was telling them. That's what he wants us to hear.

Now, do you think that's the normal Christian life? Do you think that's what you see? I look here, I see three times as many, or two and a half times as many people as there were in the upper room on the day of Pentecost. Do you think that as we sit here before the Lord that this prayer has been answered in our lives to the fullest degree? I don't. I don't.

Did you ever stop to think about this? That every warning in the New Testament, all teaching in the New Testament, and all exhortations in the New Testament were given to people who have been baptized in the Holy Spirit? Did you know that? You know why I say that? Because that's the only kind there were in the New Testament. There weren't any other kinds. And so all the warnings, and all the exhortations, and all the teachings, now what he's saying is there's a relationship, and these are the glorious implications of it, and I want you to understand it.

Now, he'd prayed for them, and they'd been baptized in the Spirit of God back there when he met them. And then I'm sure that the rest of the believers there had as well, but they hadn't understood exactly what the implications of it all were. And even though they'd been baptized in the Spirit, if they had done that, if that had happened, as it did on the day of Pentecost, when Peter told them the promise was to them, and he prayed for them, and many of them were baptized in the Spirit.

But what do we have in this? What's he saying? He said, I'm praying the God of our Lord Jesus, the Father of Glory, will give unto you the Spirit, the Holy Spirit, to be strengthened with might in your inner man by the Holy Spirit, so that Christ can take up His lasting dwelling place. Now what's he talking about? Go back down to the Jordan River when Christ came. And He is going to be baptized.

To us, baptism is a picture of our relationship with Christ. What was it to the Lord Jesus? To what could He have symbolically have died by baptism? What was it? What did He have? He certainly didn't have sin, as you and I have it. What did He have? He had rights.

His eternal rights as the Eternal Son. The right to be loved. The right to be worshipped.

The right to have veneration of His name. The right to His time. The right to His body.

All of those personal rights. We're told in the Kenosis portion in Philippians, that being found and fashioned as a man, He humbled Himself. That is, He accepted the limitations of His humanity.

And He relinquished the right to His rights. As the Eternal Son, He made the world. But in order to fulfill His purpose for coming, He relinquished the right to act in His own essential deity, His Son.

And He laid aside that right. And everything done by Christ in the three years of His public ministry was done by the Father. Through the Holy Spirit.

He said, I don't do anything of Myself. I only do what I see the Father do. I don't speak of Myself.

I speak as I receive commandment of the Father. The Father that dwelleth in Me, He doeth the works. Why? So that it could be as the Father sent Me, so send I You.

If He had done anything in His essential deity, His Son, He never could have prayed that. And He never could have said that. But because He accepted the limitations of His humanity, and presented Himself to the Father, and the Spirit of God came upon Him, and everything done by Him was done by the Father through the Spirit, He could say, as the Father sent Me, so send I You.

Now what is He asking us to do? What is He praying for here? That we will be strengthened with might by His Spirit, deep in the inner man, that we too will be willing to relinquish the right to our rights. We have no right to name, and no right to reputation, and no right to plan our own future, and no right to our time, and no right to our treasure. When we become to Him, we relinquish the right to our rights, even as He did to the Father.

Now you think that's easy. It's as easy as saying it. Well, I have news for you.

It's not easy. And God never makes unnecessary provision. And when He says we are to be strengthened with might by His Spirit deep in the inner man, in order that something can happen, you can be very sure of this, that God's provision was essential for what He purposed.

And what is it He purposes? That we will relinquish the right to our rights so that Christ can have the same freedom to live in us that the Father lived in Him. That was His prayer. Father, that they all may be in union, as Thou didst live in me.

I want to live in them, and I want them to live in me the way I lived in you. And it says then the world will know and the world will be able to believe. So what do we have here? We have preparation.

We have preparation. I think it's so important for us to understand that. I was speaking down in North Carolina, Hendersonville, and dear friends invited me to lunch at the inn at Hendersonville.

And afterwards, one of them, a woman who was a matron in one of the women's dorms, was for many years at Wheaton College, said, Brother Parris, can I talk to you? She said, Please excuse us. I want something I want to share with Parris. So we went down to the end of the porch and sat in a couple of the old wicker rocking chairs.

And she told me, she said, Last Christmas, I decided not to go back to Augusta with my friends for Christmas holiday, but to stay and give Christmas to so many of the missionaries' children who weren't invited to homes. And so we just had our own Christmas house party there and we had a lovely time. But she said, My heart was so hungry for God.

I knew that I needed to be filled with the Spirit. I'd read about it, I'd talked with others, but my heart was so hungry. And I was in prayer.

She said, One afternoon after Christmas, we just had some lunch together with the girls and I was tired, so I took a nap. And during that nap I dreamed that in my dream I was in my own room, except a stand that was over against the window that had some flowers on it, flower pots on it, had been moved to the center of the room and a large crystal bowl was there. And there was a voice and I took it to be in my dream the voice of the Lord.

And He said, I have heard your cry. You want to be filled with my fullness. And I too want this for you.

If you will empty the bowl, I will fill it. And she said, I looked again and not just a crystal bowl, but in that crystal bowl were Christmas tree ornaments, bulbs of different colors without the little end on them to hang them on the tree, but just a solid ball. And I went over and I looked at them and I saw they each had a name on them, a word on them.

And I was to take them out. There was room. There was a little wicker basket on the table into which I could put the balls as I took them out.

And she said some were so easy I just picked them up and got them out. And then there were just three left. One of them was a person and the other was a privilege.

The other was something very dear, very important to me. And the first one I said, Lord, I can't do this without your help. And I reached in and took it out.

And the second one, I said, Lord, I can't take this out without your help. And I felt release of strength and I lifted it up. And I said, Lord, I can't let go of it without your help.

But the third one, I had never realized how important this was. Lord, I can't even put my hand on it without your help. I can't lift it without your help.

I can't let go of it without your strength and help. And when the last one was there and he gave help at each point I asked him, when it was finished, the hand came out with the pitcher and poured and the crystal vase was filled. He said, I woke up.

My room was as it had been, but I knew exactly what I should do. And for the first time, I understood that scripture that I've heard you preach on more than one occasion, that we were strengthened with might by his spirit deep in the inner man in order that Christ can take up his lasting dwelling place so we can be filled with the fullness of God. And she said, I knelt in prayer.

I dealt with each of those things and others that he showed me. I began to thank him that he was going to fill me with his spirit. And she said, before the evening meal, my heart's hunger had been satisfied and I knew that I'd been baptized in the Holy Spirit, strengthened with might by his spirit.

She said, is this prerequisite for everyone? No, I've known people that were baptized in the Holy Spirit very quickly. But I'll tell you, they never bypassed this. They had to come back afterwards.

They had to come back afterwards. When people come to me and say, I'm hungry to be filled with the Holy Spirit, do you know what I do? I realize this is a marvelous time and so I say, buy yourself a tablet, a notebook tablet, and then I want you to write out in longhand every verse in the New Testament that has to do with the person and work of the Holy Spirit. And after you've written them all out in sequence, then I want you to put them together.

And when you've done that, come back and we'll talk. By this time, they've got a pretty good idea of what the Word says about the Holy Spirit. And then we begin to talk.

Why? You say, couldn't you do it easier? Sure. But why should I hurry? Why should I hurry? Why not get them to face the issue? Why not get them to deal with the other? And then we begin to talk about the relinquishing of the right to our rights. This is preparation.

Oh, you may not have to do it the way I do it, but that's the way He's taught me. Not always, but sometimes I do it that way. Now, where does it lead? Well, of course, this leads us to Romans chapter 12, verses 1 and 2. This too is part of presentation, or preparation.

This is what our Lord Jesus did, and this is what He asked us to do. I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. Years ago, I used to be asked very frequently to go for the youth rallies in the Alliance.

We had youth rallies on the holidays. And I would frequently speak on Romans 12, 1 and 2. And I gave an invitation. Now, if you'd like to present your body, you come and stand here.

Many times, the young people in their earnestness would come and fill the front of the church. Well, it didn't work very well. Not much was accomplished.

And then I had a revelation. Now, of course, I'm slow, and I recognize that. I'm a slow learner.

I'm sure you would have worked much faster. But you know what I discovered? It was a great revelation. I discovered that Romans 12 comes after Romans 6. Now, you've known that all your life.

But it was a revelation to me that people couldn't present their bodies a living sacrifice until they presented themselves to the cross. Because until you have taken your place crucified with Christ, your body is the vehicle for the fulfillment of all of the interests of your ego. And two people can't drive the same car.

You could say to me, well, Brother Edith, I know you. I need a car. You've got an old one.

It's only got 200,000 miles on it. But don't criticize it. I like it.

But I'm going to give you another one. So I go out there, and there I find that you've got a car. Get in, get in.

It's yours. It's a gift. It's a gift.

Get in, get in. So I get in and said, now move over and let me in. And I look at you, and you're giving me a car? Yeah, yeah.

You go in. I'm giving it to you. Now, here's the key.

Put it in. You run the brake and the gas, and I'll steer. Now, I don't care how badly I need a car.

I'll never accept one, even as a gift on that basis, because we're going to be in a ditch. And the Lord Jesus isn't going to accept the presentation of your body, a living sacrifice, until you've found your place on the cross, crucified with Him. Because until you're prepared to stay there and say, Lord, from now on, as long as I live, I'm going to stay here, no plans, no reputation, no agenda, just Your will be done in my life as it is in Heaven.

And I'll stay here, and there's that body, and I give it. Now then, that makes sense. That's meaning.

That has importance. So, there's preparation to present your body. Now, what does He want you to do? He wants you to present your brain, so that living in you, He can use your brain to think His thoughts and get them back in the world.

He wants you to present your heart, so that living in you, He can have a heart to be broken again with compassion. He wants you to present your eyes, so that you can see even your neighbors. For the people He saw that day were His neighbors, as sheep scattered without a shepherd.

He wants you to present your feet, so that living in you, He can use your feet to go any place He wishes to go. He wants you to present your hands, so He can use your hands to lift the fallen, and feed the hungry, and guide the blind to light. He wants you to present your ears, so that living in you, He can use your ears to listen to the cry of those caught in the briars of sin.

He wants you to present your lips, so that living in you, He can use your lips to speak His word of redeeming love to those that are without life. And so He says, present your body, a living sacrifice, every part of it, all of it, to Him, so that He is as free to live in you, His life, as the Father was free to live in Him. That's what He wants from us.

That's what He's asking from us. And that's the preparation that we have to make.

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