

# (A Solid Grip on the Christian Life) Filled with the Holy Spirit

by Zac Poonen

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*This sermon emphasizes the importance of thirsting and believing in God to be filled with the Holy Spirit. It highlights the need for a clear conscience, radical obedience to God, and continuous seeking of the Holy Spirit. The speaker shares personal experiences and challenges listeners to prioritize God above all else, seeking to be continuously filled with the Holy Spirit.*

**Scripture:** Luke 11:9, Ephesians 5:18, James 3:6, John 7:37, Acts 1:8, Acts 2:3, Acts 9:17, Acts 10:44

**Topics:** "Thirsting for God", "Continuous Filling of the Holy Spirit"

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## Description

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## Transcript

So, we are continuing this series on holding strongly to the Christian life, a strong grip on the Christian life. And we use the example of the hand and the palm representing knowing God is our father, and the thumb representing perfect assurance that the blood of Christ has not only cleansed me but made me righteous, which many people don't think of. And then we thought of the first finger as the word of God, not the written word, but the living word that is God, the word that proceeds in present tense from God's mouth.

Just like in Genesis chapter one, every day a word proceeded from God's mouth and miracles happened on the earth. And the same thing can happen to us, it says in Isaiah 55, my word that goes out of my mouth will not return empty. I think it's verse 12 or something, but will accomplish that for which I've sent it forth.

So, I must receive the word from his mouth and today we want to speak about another essential of the Christian life, which is the Holy Spirit. And there's a lot of confusion concerning this when it comes to the father or the blood and the word, people probably don't preach wrong doctrines on that, but when it comes to the Holy Spirit, there's such a lot of false teaching and a lot of counterfeit. And the more something is counterfeited in the world, the more valuable we know it is.

So, when people tell me, oh, there's a lot of counterfeit Christianity, oh, sure, that means real Christianity must be pretty valuable, is there a lot of counterfeit gifts of the Holy Spirit? Oh, and the real gifts of the Holy Spirit must be really valuable because people don't counterfeit brown paper and newspapers, they counterfeit gold, silver, platinum, these are the things that are counterfeited. So remember that, that if something is counterfeited, it indicates that the original must be really valuable and also that you must be very careful to distinguish between the real and the counterfeit. You see, most of us are not experts in determining what is gold and what is counterfeit gold and especially what is diamond and what is just a piece of glass.

So if somebody were to go buy a piece of diamond, he'd take some expert with him. And so it's very important, otherwise he'd be fooled with a piece of glass and live for years thinking he's got an expensive diamond when all that he's got is a piece of glass. And I really feel that lots of people I have met in the believers who are convinced that they are filled with the Holy Spirit, they've been fooled by the devil, thinking they've got a diamond when all they've got is a piece of glass, which is not at all valuable.

So it's very, very important to understand what the Bible teaches about the Holy Spirit. The first thing I want to say is God has not left us with just teaching in any area. The Word became flesh.

In the Old Testament, it was just the Word, the written Word, but in Jesus, the Word became flesh. So being filled with the Spirit, the Word has become flesh in Jesus Christ. So that's the thing that's opened my eyes to see what is genuine and what is counterfeit.

God has given me a perfect example of a Spirit-filled man, that is Jesus Christ. If I want to know what it is to be filled with the Holy Spirit, I look at Jesus Christ and I look at his life, and I'm not talking about gifts. Gifts, he had many gifts, which we don't have.

I'm talking about the life of the Holy Spirit is manifested perfectly in Christ. And the gifts are in different members of the body. One man or one woman alone will not have all the gifts.

I may have only 1% of the gifts, others have others. But when it comes to the life, the fruit of the Spirit, that is not distributed. That is for everybody, love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, and self-control.

I remember when looking through that list, I said, oh boy, how is it that the most important fruit of humility is not even mentioned there? And then I realized as I meditated that humility is the ground on which the fruit grows. So that's why it's not mentioned there, love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, and self-control grow on the ground of humility. But the example, the Word made flesh, be filled with the Holy Spirit, that Word is made flesh in Jesus Christ.

And so the way I see people today talking about being filled with the Spirit, I compare it with Christ. I compare it with the original. And if it doesn't fit in with the original, I say, okay, I don't want that.

I'm not here to judge you or criticize you, but I want to say that's wrong, that's a counterfeit. There are many examples like that in the way people, for example, when they say, many of them, when they claim to be filled with the Spirit, they fall flat on the ground. Well, I'm not against that, but very often that's manipulated.

But I never see Jesus lying flat on the ground. So I'm not interested in lying flat on the ground. I'd rather bow down with my head down before Christ and not lie down pointing my feet to Christ.

In India, it's a great insult to show your feet to somebody. And then I see all these people in television, Christian TV shows, lying on the platform, falling down one after the other, showing their feet to God. I think the devil's having a big laugh and saying, God, look at these people showing their feet to you.

In the Bible, everybody fell down and bowed their head to you, but these guys are showing their feet. It's the absolute opposite of the Holy Spirit's work. He who has ears to hear, let him hear, and those who want to be deceived will continue to be deceived.

Those who want exciting experiences, that's not what the Holy Spirit has come for. The Holy Spirit has come to fulfill the will of God, which is to make us like Jesus Christ in our character. And so as long as I put Christ as my example, I cannot go astray in any area, and certainly in this area of being filled with the Holy Spirit.

See, for example, there are people who, as I said, they lay hands on somebody and they fall down. Jesus, when he laid hands on somebody, he lifted him up. I never see him pushing anybody down.

And I say this also, if somebody does the opposite of what Jesus did, Jesus lifted people up and you push people down, there is a word in the Bible for it. What is the opposite of Christ? Antichrist. So I call that the spirit of the antichrist.

Many people are scared to say that. But I'm not, because Jesus is my example. I never once see him pushing anybody down.

I see him many times lifting people up. I never see him lying on the ground and kicking his legs or doing anything like that. So he is my example in life.

In gifts, God gives us different gifts. So I say that as an introduction. And then I want to turn to Acts of the Apostles, first of all, John's Gospel, chapter 20.

In John chapter 20, we read of Jesus in the day of his resurrection appearing to the disciples. And it is the first day of the week in John chapter 20, verse 19. It's the first time they're seeing the risen Lord raised from the dead.

And they rejoiced, verse 20, when they saw the Lord. John 20, verse 21, and Jesus said, Peace be to you. As the Father sent me, I send you.

And then, listen to this. We have got the same calling. As the Father sent Jesus into the world to show forth the Father.

John 1, 18 says, John 1, 18, no one has seen God at any time, but the only begotten came and explained the Father to us, not with words, but by his life. And remember that verse, the Lord sent his Son and he explained the Father to us. Now, as the Father sent me, Jesus says, I send you.

You go out into the world and by your life explain what Jesus is like. That's our calling. Do you know that your calling and mine is to manifest in my life and show other people what Christ is like? That's our calling.

And then, in order to fulfill that calling, what is the first thing he does? What you need is not instruction, not a lot of information. He breathed on them and said, receive the Holy Spirit. I want to ask you a question.

Was there ever a word that Jesus spoke that was not fulfilled immediately? What he spoke was done. When he said, Lazarus, come forth, he came out. When he told the storm to be still, it became still.

Always what he spoke happened immediately, just like in Genesis 1. It was the same Jesus in Genesis 1. And now he says, receive the Holy Spirit. Question, did they receive the Holy Spirit or not? They did. And then, after that, he says in Acts chapter 1, we must read the Bible carefully, exactly.

He said to them in Acts 1.8, you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you. And you will be then be my witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea, and Samaria to the uttermost parts of the earth. And when they heard that, it says they went to another room in Jerusalem and they waited there and kept on praying for these number of days.

They didn't know how long it would be, but they kept waiting. And we know it is about 10 days. And then, when the day of Pentecost came, the day of Pentecost was seven weeks after the resurrection.

The Sunday after the Passover, the day of Pentecost was seven weeks or 50 days. That's why the word pente, pente means 50, 50 days. But Jesus was already on earth for 40 days.

So this was 10 days after Jesus ascended. They waited. They didn't know it would be 10 days.

They didn't know it would be on the day of Pentecost. They waited and waited and waited. And then there was suddenly, verse 4, filled with the Holy Spirit.

What did we read in John chapter 20? We read exactly, receive the Holy Spirit, John 20, verse 22. And that happened. And now they were filled with the Holy Spirit.

So I see there's a distinction. There's a distinction between receiving the Holy Spirit and being filled with the Holy Spirit. It's right there.

If you had asked these disciples before the day of Pentecost, hey, listen, when Jesus breathed on you a few days ago, did you receive the Holy Spirit or not? They said, yeah. Well, we didn't particularly feel anything, but we believed that we received. We don't see them having any experience there.

But they believed the word of Jesus and they believed they had received the Holy Spirit. Now, how does that apply to us today? Well, when we ask, gee, when we receive Christ, do you know who you're receiving actually? Christ is in heaven. He has not come back to this earth yet.

He will come back only at his second coming. Do you know who is on the earth at present? The third person of the Trinity. The second person of the Trinity was on earth, Jesus, for 33 and a half years.

He went up and sent the third person of the Trinity, one with the Father and Christ. And when we say, Lord Jesus, come into my heart, it's that third person of the Trinity, the Holy Spirit, who comes in. The Spirit of Christ.

And we are born again. If you are born again, you have received the Holy Spirit. That's the equivalent of what we read in John chapter 20.

And that's what scripture says in Romans chapter 8. We must always compare our experience with scripture. This is the only guide. Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path.

And many, many people are deceived by experiences, the teachings of men, men who don't show them the scriptures. You know, we've spoken about the Berean Christians who told even the apostle Paul, hey, hang on, Paul, we love you, but we'll check out the scriptures, whether what you're saying is right or wrong, and then come and tell you whether we believe. That's why they never went astray.

That's why you never read an epistle to the Bereans, as I've said before. Because they didn't need any correction. Any preacher came along, they'd come and check with the scriptures.

So here, check with the scriptures, Romans chapter 8 and verse 9. Look what it says here. You are not in the flesh, but in the spirit, if indeed the spirit of God dwells in you. And if anyone does not have the spirit of Christ, which is the same spirit of God, there's no other spirit, there's only one spirit, the spirit of God or the spirit of Christ, same expression.

If anyone does not have the spirit of Christ dwelling in him, he doesn't even belong to him. You're not born again. You're a child of the devil, not a child of God.

If anyone does not have the spirit of Christ, so all the confusion that there may have been in your mind, perhaps till today, have I received the spirit or not, can disappear right now with one word of scripture. Thy word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path. The entrance of your word, Psalm 119, verse 130, gives light.

So that's very clear. If anyone does not have the spirit of Christ, you're not born again. You need to receive Christ or receive the Holy Spirit.

It's the same thing. You know, in those days, the word Christ was Messiah and Jesus was referred to as the Messiah, which we call the Christ. Now, the reason why we tell people to receive Christ and not receive the spirit, you see, in a country like India, for example, there are so many spirits.

So many spirits, most of them evil spirits. So you go around and tell a non-Christian, receive the spirit. He says, I already received more than one spirit.

So you can't explain to a non-Christian who doesn't know anything about the Old Testament or about the Holy Spirit. The Old Testament speaks a lot about the Holy Spirit. So when you told a Jew about the spirit, they'd understand that's the spirit of God.

But not in heathen nations. They will think, what spirit is this? So we have to specify the spirit of Christ. In other words, receive Jesus Christ into your heart.

That's why we preach the gospel like that. Repent and believe that Jesus Christ died for your sins and rose again and receive him. And when they open their heart and receive him, they receive the Holy Spirit.

But they may not be filled with the Holy Spirit. That depends on the measure in which they have surrendered everything to Christ. I personally believe that the Apostle Paul was converted on the Damascus Road.

He was, you read in Acts chapter 9, and he was going down the road to Damascus to arrest Christians. And on the way, he had this vision and he fell down from the horse and he heard this voice saying, Acts 9 verse 4, Saul, why are you persecuting me? And he said, who are you, Lord? And he said, I'm Jesus. And his eyes were blinded.

And he knew that moment that the one he was persecuting was Jesus. Why did Jesus say, why are you persecuting me? How could you persecute Christ? He's in heaven. That is the day the Apostle Paul got revelation that even though the head is in heaven, the body is on earth.

That's where he first got a revelation of believers as part of the body of Christ. When Jesus said, why are you persecuting me? And Paul realized, oh, I'm persecuting Christ, Jesus. And he was born again.

And for three days he never ate or drank. And then God sent Ananias to him and Ananias came to him and said to him, God has sent me, verse 17. Ananias went and entered Paul's house and said, Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus who appeared to you on the road has sent me so that your eyes may be opened and now you may be filled with the Holy Spirit.

And Ananias laid his hands on Saul. Ananias, just an ordinary brother, he laid his hands on this one who was going to be the mighty apostle. You know, just showing right from the beginning to Paul that in the body of Christ you can receive, you may turn out to be the greatest apostle but you need to receive ministry from even a humble, unknown person like Ananias.

Many lessons Paul learned right at the early part of his Christian life. And now he was not receiving the Holy Spirit, he was filled with the Holy Spirit. And the apostles also on the day of Pentecost, it says they were filled with the Holy Spirit.

Now the thing about being filled with the Holy Spirit is you know that the apostles were filled with the Holy Spirit and we read in Acts chapter 4 once when they were being persecuted they were praying together and they said, Lord, verse 31, when they prayed the place where they were shaken together was filled and verse 31, they were filled with the Holy Spirit again. These were people who were filled already on the day of Pentecost. Here they were filled with the Holy Spirit again.

So we realize that being filled with the Holy Spirit is something that can happen again and again and again. We need that Paul, Ananias laid hands on Paul and he was filled with the Holy Spirit. But we read later on in Acts chapter 13 when Paul went out preaching somewhere Acts, the apostles chapter 13 it says here in verse 9 Saul filled with the Holy Spirit again.

He was already filled in Acts chapter 9. So when you read all these scriptures, you see that receiving the Spirit is when we are born again, but being filled with the Spirit is again and again and again and again. Many times you read of people who are filled with the Holy Spirit. I want to give you one more example here in Acts chapter 10 when Peter was in the house of Cornelius and Peter began to preach the gospel to them and while he was preaching it says in verse 44 the Holy Spirit fell on those who were listening to the message and they heard them speaking with tongues and he says, hey, verse 47, these people have received the Holy Spirit just as we did.

They were born again. So when you read these expressions in the Acts of the Apostles you see there's a difference between receiving the Holy Spirit and being filled with the Holy Spirit. And the other thing we see in the Acts of the Apostles is that every place where people received or filled with the Holy Spirit, it was not a similar experience.

In the Acts of the Apostles chapter 2 there was a tongue of fire and a rushing wind and they all spoke in tongues. In Acts chapter 8 when we read the people in Samaria were filled with the Holy Spirit when Peter and John laid hands on them something happened, but it doesn't tell us exactly what we read of that in

Acts of the Apostles in chapter 8 when Peter and John laid hands on them, verse 15 and prayed that they might receive the Holy Spirit we don't know what happened. In Acts chapter 10, before anybody touched them while they were just listening it says in Cornelius, the Holy Spirit, verse Acts 10, verse 44 while Peter was still speaking, before Peter finished his message the Holy Spirit fell on them.

I'm just showing you the different places in the Acts of the Apostles where people received the Holy Spirit in Acts chapter 2, Acts chapter 8 and we saw in Paul's case, Acts chapter 9 and here in Cornelius' case, Acts chapter 10 and one more in Acts 19 when Paul came to Ephesus, he found some people and he said, did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed, verse 2 and they said, no, we haven't even heard that there is a Holy Spirit Acts 19, verse 2, and then Peter said now, this is the verse that teaches us that baptism in the name of Jesus alone is wrong Jesus said, baptize in the name of the Father Son and Holy Spirit and the people who teach that all three are one there is no three persons when it says, Lord Jesus Christ, Lord is the Father Jesus is the Son and Christ is anointed as the Holy Spirit it's one person, they say in heaven he was the Father, when he came down he was the Son then he went up and he came again as the Holy Spirit then God is only one person and they baptize in the name of Jesus and they say in the Acts of the Apostles you read that people were baptized in the name of Jesus but here, Paul says, hey how could you be baptized and not hear of the Holy Spirit if they were baptized in the name of Jesus alone they would never have heard of the Holy Spirit but Paul says, hey, you should have heard of the Holy Spirit what were you baptized in? so that makes it clear that they baptized in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit then how does the name of Jesus come in? you see, in India, for example, if you baptize a person in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit and he goes home and tells his non-Christian parents I was baptized in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit that's fine, you're not a Christian the Father, Son and Holy Spirit is the name of the Hindu gods, Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva that's Father, Son and Holy Spirit that's why when I baptize, I always baptize in the name of the Father and the Son the Lord Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit so I baptize them in the name of Jesus but Father, Son and Holy Spirit, I mentioned that in passing and then it says here, Paul laid hands on them and the Holy Spirit came on them and they spoke in tongues now, in all these examples that I pointed out to you those are the only examples in Acts each case, it was different there was no standard way of anyone receiving the Holy Spirit or being filled with the Holy Spirit and that teaches me one thing, there is no standard way even today in the first time, it was when all of them were praying together some of these other cases it was just individually and I remember when I was seeking God about this I had clear assurance in my heart that I was born again when I was 19 and a half and then I was baptized in water but then as I began to witness for Christ as I began to share the word, I found a tremendous lack of power I was ashamed to stand out in the streets just outside the naval base where people knew me if I preached, I'd go far away where nobody knew me and preach on the streets, but not where people knew me I was ashamed and afraid and I would pray and pray and pray and say Lord, I know, I need what the apostles received on the day of Pentecost to be filled with the Holy Spirit that will give me boldness and give me utterance and ability to speak with anointing and people told me to go to a Pentecostal church somebody took me there and I was shocked by what the pastor told me to do he told me to keep repeating Hallelujah, Hallelujah endlessly and he said ultimately your tongue will trip and you will speak in tongues I said no thank you, that's not what the apostles did on the day of Pentecost and I don't want that and I'm thankful I turned away from that and I found a lot of those pastors who are lovers of money I said that can't be the fullness of the Spirit how can a man love money if he's filled with the Holy Spirit of Christ it should be the opposite, he should have been loving money before that when he filled with the Holy Spirit, he was free from the love of money but I found many of these people ended up loving money more and I'll tell you something, I'm sorry to say this but the biggest preachers asking money on television are those who say that they speak in tongues if you don't

believe me, go and watch Christian television it's not the Baptists and the Brethren preachers who ask for money it's those who claim to be filled with the Holy Spirit and who say they speak in tongues that itself proves to me the whole thing is a sham if a man is filled with the Holy Spirit it will be the Spirit of Christ that frees him from the love of money not makes him plead with others for the love of money something Jesus never did so I've been very careful in the world in which we live, the Christian world in which we live is full of deception and as I sought the Lord for this God met with me in stages and at that time I sought God and He gave me a measure of anointing upon my life with one revelation which is the first revelation I got in relation to being filled with the Holy Spirit I was seeking and seeking and seeking in the church which I was going to, never said a word about being filled with the Holy Spirit then the Lord pointed out to me that when Jesus was baptized, that's when the Holy Spirit came upon Him and I saw that baptism in Jesus, when He allowed John the Baptist to dip him in the water and lift him up it was symbolic of Jesus accepting death to Himself allowing other people to kill Him not just physically but inwardly insult Him, hurt Him, and He would always die in other words, like John the Baptist, put Him in the water He would let other people kill Him His self-life, and He would go down believing that the Father would raise Him up so that baptism symbolized two things, that Jesus submitted to death, believing the Father would raise Him up that was the meaning of baptism for Jesus and then the Holy Spirit came on Him so that was a revelation to me, I'd never heard that anywhere before or after that is the secret, and I felt the Lord say to me at that time in my heart, that if you choose this way in your life, choose always to go down, to die to yourself I will raise you up and my Spirit's power will be upon you till the end of your life but if ever, it was a warning you choose to go away from this way of the cross my power will depart from you I heard that the Lord spoke to my heart not from a voice from heaven, but in my heart but as real as a voice from heaven that was in 1963 which is so many years ago, 56 years ago and I found suddenly, not in a day or so but over a period of time, a boldness a power, I could stand outside and speak, just outside the naval base even if all the sailors and officers came and laughed at me it didn't make a difference to me, I was bold I could stand up before a crowd of 5,000 people and preach deeper life teachings all of a sudden all of a sudden I got power, 1963 it was pretty soon, it was all of a sudden a transformation that took place, and I knew God had anointed me and it was not me, it was not my power, it was God and that has continued through the years but what I lacked was fellowship in the succeeding years, and that I'll come to later on, but because I lacked fellowship I sort of backslid over a period of time it went very well for some time and then I backslid, and I discovered one thing in the years of my backsliding, that I never lost my gift that was amazing, it is scary and then I realized that Satan was anointed once before he became Satan, he's called in Ezekiel 28 the anointed sheriff the anointed angel, the head of the angels he was anointed and gifted by God with supernatural gifts and when he fell away through pride he lost the anointing Satan is not anointed today the Bible says he was the anointed sheriff, not today but he did not lose the gifts and then I learned something through my own backsliding and experience, that you can lose the anointing and not lose the gifts and you can think that because you can preach so well now still, even though your thought life is not pure God is still with you, he's not with you you're exercising gifts now apart from God God doesn't take away the gifts and that's a scary thing and that's why when you see so many people speaking in a very powerful way, I'm not impressed anymore because I did that in the days when I was a backslider and I can see how Jesus will say to many of them depart from me, go to hell all of you who cast out demons and did miracles in my name Matthew 7, 22 and 23 but this made me so fed up with my defeated life that I began to see God again, I said, Lord I need a fresh infilling of the Holy Spirit that's what I need, more than anything else and I was desperate, I prayed and sought I sensed I was a lonely person, very lonely in all those years, because I never knew fellowship I could not find a church which was like a body and it's dangerous to be filled with the Holy Spirit individually and not be part of a body people who talk

about the deeper life don't build the body of Christ, they don't become a part of the body of Christ, it's very dangerous it's better you don't hear about it I'll come to that later, another session but I was seeking God, I did not know what for but I needed, I said, Lord, I asked for one thing I said, Lord, I remember a time way back, 10-12 years ago when my outer life corresponded with my inner life what I preached was real inside, but I said, Lord it's not true today, what I'm speaking, giving impression to others is not true inside and I'm asking you to fill me with the Holy Spirit for one thing and only one thing, I don't want to be a great preacher I've already written books and preached in many countries already I'm not looking for that I'm looking for one thing that will make my inner life correspond with what I speak it must be exactly the same, it's like two legs I don't want one leg to be longer what I teach must be my life Jesus did and preached, he did and preached his life and preaching were equal in length and I said, Lord, that's what I want and for that I want you to fill me with the Holy Spirit and I sought God and God met with me a second time, that was in January 1975 when I was at rock bottom and why did God meet with me when I was at rock bottom and utterly defeated and even a hypocrite but I remember the day when it happened, it was the 12th of January 1975 but that day I had decided one thing, I was preaching in a church that Sunday morning and the Lord asked me to get up in the church and tell everybody publicly that church that respected me so highly so many people would come there to listen to me and the Lord asked me to tell that church that I was a hypocrite, publicly, get up and tell them, I have been a hypocrite and I said, Lord, I'll do that I'm not bothered about their opinion but I want to be truthful and there was another preacher that day who was preaching and he was a person who always he was from another country, who always gave an invitation I've heard him many times, always he would give an invitation at the end of the meeting, every single time for the baptism in the Holy Spirit and I said, Lord, today when he gives the invitation I'm going to be the first one going forward and I'm going to tell this whole church, I have been a hypocrite here I need this infilling again and amazingly, that day he never gave an invitation so I came home disappointed and now when I look back, I see the Lord was saying to me I saw that you laid your Isaac on the altar your reputation, you died to it, that was enough for me the people in the church are bigger hypocrites than you so there's no need for you to confess your hypocrisy to them that I understood later but he had accepted my sacrifice and that day that afternoon, he filled me with the Holy Spirit and my life turned around in a moment it's unbelievable here I was going all the way down, down, down and I hit rock bottom and all of a sudden God fills me with the Holy Spirit and I turned around I didn't reach the mountaintop, no, I haven't reached the mountaintop even today but my life started going upwards and I can honestly say that from that time onwards my life did not backslide not that my life was a perfect straight line graph if you use a magnifying glass you see the small ripples in that graph but the general trend is upwards it's been like that for the last 44 and a half years and I know what was it it was the Holy Spirit the Holy Spirit, I needed the Holy Spirit to have power to preach the word because that was my calling and I needed the Holy Spirit to proclaim what was true in my inner life I wanted to overcome anger I wanted to overcome discouragement I wanted to overcome dirty thoughts, all the things that young people suffer with I was 35 years old struggling with all the things, all the temptations that 35 year old young men struggle with and I said Lord I want this at any cost but I'll tell you one thing I was so desperate and I know the reason why many people who pray for the Holy Spirit never receive, never get filled I know why, they're not desperate it's not a life or death situation well, if I get it well and good if I don't, it doesn't matter so much, I've got many other things to do in life but it wasn't like that for me there were not many other things to do in life, it was do or die this is it and I want to say to all of you sitting here I think there are many people sitting here your greatest need is to be filled with the Holy Spirit but I don't think you will be till you're desperate and I don't think you will be till you acknowledge your need and say Lord, I'm born again I've received the Spirit but I'm not filled I'm not satisfied with my life I'm such a weak witness for you when I should be a bold witness

for you don't seek for speaking in tongues, I'll tell you honestly I did not seek for speaking in tongues that is an extra gift God gives and He did give it to me but I did not seek for that I'll tell you what I sought for I sought for the tongue of fire which is the first thing that happened on the day of Pentecost a lot of Pentecostals will tell you that when the Holy Spirit filled them they spoke in tongues first, no that was second, the first thing that happened to them in Acts chapter 2 verse 3 was the tongue of fire came on them on all of them then later they spoke in tongues and that's what I was seeking for I said Lord, my mother tongue I'm not wanting to speak in other tongues I want to control my mother tongue because I've seen so many Pentecostal preachers and other Pentecostals who speak in other tongues on Sunday morning in the meeting and then use their mother tongue to get angry with their wife in the afternoon I did not want that I said Lord I don't care if I never speak in tongues in my whole life but I do want my mother tongue to be under the control of the Holy Spirit I don't want to ever get angry my goal was never to be angry every single day, 24-7 365 days of the year never means never a tongue under the control of the Holy Spirit a tongue that loses its temper is a mark of a tongue that is on the fire of hell there is another type of fire you read in James chapter 3 about James chapter 3 speaks of a tongue that is set on fire verse 6 James 3 verse 6 the tongue is a fire James 3 verse 6 the tongue is a fire a world of sin in this tongue there is a world of sin and it is set on fire verse 6 by the fire of hell and it controls the whole course of our life this is like a rudder in a ship, a small little rudder you turn it a little bit and the ship goes in another direction and that's why he said earlier that a man who does not control his tongue James 1 verse 26 his Christianity is worth zero I believe that James 1 verse 26 a man who cannot control his tongue he is deceiving himself and his Christianity is worth zero so that's what I sought for to tell you honestly I never sought for the gift of tongues I wanted control of my mother tongue and I said Lord I want it at any cost are you serious about being filled with the Holy Spirit are you disturbed that you get angry with people and lose your temper and shout and yell at your wife in an uncontrollable way and you come to the church like a very pious holy person absolute hypocrisy that's what I was fed up of I never got angry in the church building I never yelled at anybody there they respected me, holy man getting up and preaching but it was a different thing at home it was a different thing when some cab driver cheated me yeah it was a different tongue there I was a hypocrite and I got fed up of my hypocrisy show me a person who is fed up of his hypocrisy and who is desperate to overcome his anger I tell you and who prays to God he'll be filled with the Holy Spirit in no time at all Jesus said if anyone thirst let him come to me what should we thirst for he said that earlier in Matthew chapter 5 blessed are those who thirst for righteousness who have a desperate thirst to be holy desperate thirst what does he say to such people John chapter 7 that verse by the way is in Matthew 5 and verse 6 those who thirst for righteousness and then in John chapter 7 he said if anyone is thirsty like that anyone is thirsty for righteousness in his life in his tongue, in his speech, in his thought life come to me don't go to man don't go to some meeting and in the emotion of that meeting you babble something or you do something and you say oh I got filled with the Holy Spirit, I don't want any deception I have told people we're not going to conduct meetings for being filled with the Holy Spirit because everybody will come, 99% of them are not ready he was getting everybody excited and shouting and yelling I don't want to fool people, I said go home get alone with God, get alone in your room search your heart, set everything right with God get alone, all alone God can meet with you there, it's much safer in our day of counterfeit to see God alone in your room to be filled with the Holy Spirit I'm giving you some advice but the condition is you got a thirst, come to Jesus, you don't have to go to a man don't ask some man to put his empty hands on your head, nothing will happen go to Jesus, ask him to lay his nail pierced hands on your head, that's what I pray many times Lord Jesus, I don't want any man to lay hands on my head in the days of ignorance even in those days in those days I never allowed people to lay hands don't allow people to lay hands on your head if you don't respect that man it's a dangerous thing because you

don't know what spirit that guy is transmitting to you I remember meeting a young sister in Australia who came to me and said, Brother Zach, some preacher from America came here and told people to come forward for the baptism of the Holy Spirit and laid hands on me, and my whole life has been in confusion ever since I said, that was the wrong spirit that person communicated to you by laying hands on you but that's no problem, we can deliver you, I'll pray for you and you'll be free so I have told people in our church don't ever let a man lay hands on your head if you're not absolutely confident that that man is a godly man and a man of God whose spirit you can trust, it's better if you can pray on your own you don't need anybody to lay hands on your head so Jesus says, come to me and I'll do it so avoid this you may suddenly find yourself in a meeting where I remember once somebody came visiting my house some arrogant guy long ago this was, and we prayed together he laid hands on my head and I pulled his hand away and pushed it away in the middle of the prayer I couldn't care less what he thought about it he was really offended, I'm glad he got offended, but he learned something from me he was much older than me, but he learned something from me that he dare not try those tricks with me I remember my wife was in a meeting where they were all sitting in a chair and one arrogant person was going around laying hands on everybody and my wife just got up and moved around so they couldn't allow him to lay hands there are ways of escaping it, I'll tell you that if you're really serious so, come to me, Jesus says and drink drinking is the easiest and the most elementary thing that we can do, it's what a baby does not even have to be taught we have to teach a baby 101 things but one thing you don't teach a baby is how to drink the moment it's born it knows how to drink and it's got a longing for it and Jesus used that word the longing, drink and believe believe in him that is my other problem in my life that I couldn't believe because after I was converted I grew up in the Plymouth Brethren faith where I put a lot of doubt into my mind everything had to be questioned and I couldn't come in the simple faith and I remember when my wife was filled with the Holy Spirit 5-6 years before me she had no problem because she wasn't this intellectual type like me I mean she's much cleverer than me in other areas but when it came to the Bible I was always checking, checking, checking so she could just receive by simple faith but I would only say, hey does that fit with this verse, that verse and the other verse which is good in one way but it hindered me but finally I'm thankful that that day I just believed because that brother with whom I was praying he told me one thing I told him brother I seem to be full of unbelief and he said Zach do you think God will call you to serve him and refuse to give you his power can you think of that and I said hey that sounds so true and it was a word that delivered me from unbelief and I said Lord I believe and I received the Holy Spirit right there so it was not only thirst in my life it was faith, thirst plus faith that's what we see here, thirst, come to me, believe so I believe these are the only two things that can hinder anyone from receiving the Holy Spirit either he doesn't thirst enough other things are more important for him in other words he's not yielded to thirst means I'm willing to give up everything the Holy Spirit being filled with the Holy Spirit is the most valuable thing I need in my life many people are not willing you ask yourself whether God is more important to you than everything else on earth simple question ask yourself is God more important to you than everything else in your life I mean people who watch your life will they see that God is more important in you than everything else are there some unclean television programs that you watch things that waste a lot of your time do you waste such a lot of time on useless sites on the internet is God really most important how much time do you have to see God and to read his word but a lot of time for these other forms of maybe not sinful things but many many other things you are occupied with and you want to be filled with the Holy Spirit my dear brother sister it won't happen for the next 100 years even if you live that long I'm sorry to tell you that but that's true you got to thirst God has to mean everything to you and you must believe that he speaks when he says something he'll fulfill it I saw in Luke chapter 11 you know Jesus teaching his people how to pray they came to Jesus Lord teach us to pray and I want to say this is how we must pray for the

Holy Spirit also Lord teach us to pray and he said okay I'll teach you to pray and the prayer many people think it ends with the Lord's prayer no it doesn't end there it's a lot more than that teach us to pray okay first is what we call the Lord's prayer we know that then continuing you wanted me to teach you how to pray okay here's an example Luke 11 verse 5 it's like going to your neighbor's house and asking for bread not for yourself but for a friend of yours who's come to your house that night at midnight you go to your neighbor's house at midnight and say please give me three loaves because a friend of mine has come I don't have anything to set before him that's exactly how I felt Lord I want to bless others who are in need but I don't have what it takes to bless them I'm shy I'm reserved always looking down when I'm afraid to talk to people directly about Christ and the gospel Lord give me these people are needy they're needy around me I need Lord something to give them and I don't have it if I think I have it oh because I've studied the Bible such a lot and I've gone to a church where I hear so many good teachings I can share all that that's the trouble we can't go to God and say I don't have it I have all this information in my head from the tree of knowledge of good and evil I'm stuffed my head with knowledge of good and evil but I don't have life I need to come to the tree of life and get power and that I don't have Lord to be able to communicate effectively so I go to this friend's house and ask and ask and he doesn't give and then I say he said don't bother me and I keep on knocking you know he's talking about how we have to pray this is an answer to Lord teach us to pray verse 1 so he keeps on knocking and I'm answering your prayer how to pray I'm teaching you how to pray and then he will get up listen to this wonderful promise verse 8 last part he'll get up and give him as much as he needs I say wow you'll give me as much as I need for every area of my life yes then I say to you verse 9 ask like this and you will get seek like this and you will find knock like this and it will open to you because everyone who asks like this will receive and if you haven't received it's because you didn't ask like this you gave up after some time or everyone who seeks like this finds and everyone who knocks like this it will be opened then he says if you fathers know how to give good gifts to your children your son asks you for a fish will you give him a snake he asks you for an egg will you give him a scorpion no if you who are all evil from that verse I see that compared to God the best father on earth is evil that's how good God is if you being evil know how to give good gifts to your children how much more will your heavenly father give what answers to prayer no the Holy Spirit to those who ask him Lord teach us to pray and he ends up with telling them how to pray for the Holy Spirit did you get that it's not just the Lord's prayer it's persistent asking and that's thirsting and the second is believing verse 13 believing that I am asking my daddy and he will not deny me my earthly daddy never denied me anything that I needed how will my heavenly daddy deny me boy I wish we could teach our children that I wish everyone of us here could believe that what a difference it will make in our life it's not the doctrine of the Holy Spirit we need to understand my brothers and sisters it is a thirst and a faith I can give you a big long lecture on the various truths about the Holy Spirit it won't help you one bit but if you have thirst and you have faith that you're talking to your heavenly dad and you persist and say Lord this is the most important thing I need in my life I tell you you will not be denied you will not get a scorpion you will not get a snake you'll get the Holy Spirit definitely and you'll be filled with the Holy Spirit and like we read next the apostles we need to be continuously filled with the Holy Spirit and in order to remain continuously filled with the Holy Spirit two things I would emphasize without making it too complicated one always keep your conscience clear the moment your conscience tells you something is wrong don't argue with your conscience never never never confess it to God you hurt somebody go and confess to that person ask forgiveness from your wife even if you have to ask forgiveness 10 times a day because you spoke a rude word 10 times a day ask forgiveness 10 times a day are you serious about wanting to be continuously filled with the Holy Spirit do it keep your conscience clear did you feel there was something unrighteous in that money dealing set it right keep your conscience clear don't sign a statement which you know is false no matter who gets offended

I'm sorry I can't do that that's a false statement I can't endorse that I can't even I remember refusing to sign as a witness once to a statement which I felt was a little shady I should get somebody else to sign that I can't do it to a brother to a brother in Christ I'm sorry I can't do it I was willing to hurt every human being but I won't hurt God keep your conscience clear be willing to hurt every brother and sister even your wife or husband see I'm not going to hurt God you find people like that I tell you they'll remain filled with the Spirit all the time this is the thing God finds it so difficult to find someone who's so radical that God Almighty means more to him than any human being just a simple thing like that isn't it sad that God can't find people who talk so much about Jesus and Christianity and New Covenant and all that but to whom God is not everything some human being means more to them than God money means more to them than God their job means more to them than God something on earth means more to them than God and they talk about oh we are not like other churches we are New Covenant don't fool yourself my brother sister God knows everybody's heart He knows whether God means everything to you or not that is New Covenant yeah we need to be filled with the Holy Spirit all the time there's one word in conclusion Ephesians 5.18 Ephesians 5.18 says be being filled with the Holy Spirit that's the real translation of that word don't get drunk with wine but be being filled with the Holy Spirit two statements and we are all so particular about that first statement what about the second one ask yourself would you ever come to this church meeting drunk with alcohol I think you'd skip the Sunday meeting if you were drunk one day you would never come to this meeting as a drunken person okay you obeyed the first part of that verse don't get drunk with wine do you come to this meeting without being filled with the Holy Spirit ah see that's not so important it's in the same verse the same verse two commands one don't get drunk with wine second be filled with the Holy Spirit you said don't get drunk with wine is important be filled with the Holy Spirit is not so important ah I can come along to the meeting I don't have to share anything today you don't have to share anything so you don't have to be filled with the Holy Spirit my dear brother sister what have you understood the Holy Spirit is our lifeline it's like breathing be always filled with the Spirit it's like to be breathing all the time the Holy Spirit is the oxygen of our Christian life we need to understand that may God help us I think I've said enough I pray that you will be gripped by this and you seek God and believe that he'll do for you more than you can ask or think everyone you don't have to be a senior believer or you may be born again yesterday and you can be filled with the Holy Spirit and live filled with the Holy Spirit I tell you your life will be completely different you learn how to be free from grumbling murmuring always having a spirit of thankfulness and never in a bad mood what a wonderful thing it is to be never in a bad mood people will want to fellowship with you or want to meet with you because you're never in a bad mood you're never upset with people you never get into arguments with people you're quick to apologize not that you won't make a mistake you may make mistakes we are human but you'll be quick to set it right let's pray I want you to pray that God will remind you of what you've heard today before you go to bed and say Lord don't let this don't let me lose this you've spoken to me today and I never want it to go away from me until it has become real in my life Heavenly Father help everyone here we pray in Jesus name Amen

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