

Are You a Soulish or Spiritual Christian

by Zac Poonen

The secret of spirituality is denying our own will and doing God's will, allowing us to grow up in the faith, live a life of service and worship, and experience a deeper relationship with God.

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Scripture: Psalm 16:11, Psalm 73:25, Matthew 7:24-27, Luke 9:23, John 4:23, John 7:37-38, Revelation 22:9

Topics: "Spiritual Growth", "Discipleship"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of moving beyond a soulish life, which is living in the mind and emotions, to a spiritual life of denying oneself and following Jesus. It highlights the need to daily take up the cross, deny one's will, and live in God's presence to experience true spirituality and stability in faith. The speaker challenges listeners to count the cost, yield to God's will, and walk the path of discipleship, ultimately leading to a life filled with joy and blessings.

Transcript

So today I want to give you some meat to chew on. We've drunk milk long enough, so I hope you're all ready. My subject is soulish or spiritual.

Now that is a word which many Christians have probably never heard, soulish. We've heard of carnal or spiritual. We've always thought there are only two alternatives.

No, there are three. And if we don't understand that there are three, we can never reach what it means to be truly spiritual. And that could be the reason why we feel quite excited with the Lord on Sunday morning, but quite depressed on Monday and Tuesday.

Because we haven't understood what it means to be consistently spiritual, to live in the spirit. So I want to turn to a verse now in 1 Thessalonians 5, 23. We have it up there on a slide, which tells us there are three parts to man.

Man is spirit and soul and body. 1 Thessalonians 5, 23. God is a trinity, three persons in one God.

Man is three parts in one person, not two parts. Many Christians think we are two, one visible, the body, and invisible, the soul. But there is a spirit deeper than the soul.

And the Bible says our spirit and soul and body must be preserved completely blameless till Jesus comes. So that's the first thing we need to see. The one who is ruled by his bodily passions is a carnal person.

The one who is controlled by the Holy Spirit in his life is spiritual. But in between, a person could be influenced by his soul, his human personality. And then he is soulish and he's not spiritual.

And that's where deception can come in. Many people live in their soul and they think they are spiritual. That's what I want to try and explain.

As I said, it's a little bit of meat, but I think we are ready to chew on that. I'll try and make it minced meat so that it's easier to chew on. But you know, one of the things that the Holy Spirit says in the book of Hebrews and chapter 5 is that the time has come.

He says when you should have been eating meat, Hebrews 5 verse 12, you should have become teachers by now, but you're still drinking milk. And that's a disappointment that a father has just like any parent would have if their child is still drinking milk when they're 10 years old and they can't eat, chew. Have you been a believer more than two years? Have you been born again more than two years? Then it says that we should be drinking milk and we should be eating meat and go beyond drinking milk.

So I want to move on to another verse in the next slide. And that's Hebrews chapter 4 and verse 12. Here it says that the word of God brings a division.

It pierces as far as the division of soul and spirit. So God's word seeks to come to that in-between part of soul and spirit in order to penetrate our spirit. Now, these are verses which probably I'm sure all of you have read because it's in the book of Hebrews, but you probably never given much serious thought to it.

You probably never meditated on it. There's a tragedy with so many Christians that when they come to a difficult verse, they just skip it and go on to the next verse. Well, that way you'll never get a spiritual education.

We got to stop there and say, you know, sometimes when I read the scriptures, I get stuck on a verse. It's like a stoplight and I stop there. And I wake up next morning and I'm still on the same verse.

That's how I got to understand the scriptures. I say, I don't want to get past it till God shows me what that means. If you really respect God and his word, you'll want to know everything that every verse of scripture means.

What does it mean when it says the word of God pierces as far as the division of soul and spirit? And if you've been a believer, say 10 years, and someone were to ask you that question, you should be able to give an answer. So, that's what I want to try and explain to you. Let me go to another verse now.

John chapter 1 and verse 14 in the next slide. It says about Jesus, the correct translation of that, I have it here in the NASB, John 1, 14, is the word became flesh and the word dwelt is tabernacled among us. Now, it's very interesting that the Holy Spirit uses that word.

Tabernacled in our midst. Because that reminds us of the Old Testament tabernacle where you read in the book of Exodus that God has taken 10 to 15 chapters of the Bible to explain the tabernacle. And then it's referred to in the New Testament in the book of Hebrews chapter 9. Hebrews chapter 9, unfortunately, is not a very popular chapter with many Christians.

We don't like to chew on the meat. And that's the reason why we don't grow up. And that's what I want to try and explain today.

Jesus tabernacled in our midst. He was the perfect example of a spiritual man. He didn't come to earth only to die on the cross.

He came to show us how God wanted man to live. How God wanted you and me to live. And he didn't just show us that.

He said, when I go to heaven, I'm going to pray to the Father and he will send the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost. He sent him in order that we can live as Jesus lived. You know, John 2, 6 says, if anyone says he's a Christian, living Bible paraphrases like this, he should live like Jesus lived.

Now, most Christians say that's impossible. It is impossible without the power of the Holy Spirit. Now, let me explain this first of all.

Every born again Christian has the Holy Spirit. If you don't have the Holy Spirit, you're not even born again. If you're not sure of that, let me turn you to Romans chapter 8 and verse 9. That's a very important verse to remember so that you're never in doubt about it.

Romans chapter 8 and verse 9, the last part of that verse says that if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, see the last part of that verse, he does not belong to him. That's crystal clear. The Spirit of Christ is the Holy Spirit.

If you don't have the Holy Spirit, you don't even belong to him. You're not even converted. But to have the Holy Spirit doesn't mean you're filled with the Holy Spirit.

Most Christians are not filled with the Holy Spirit. So that's why I want to explain how we can live a spirit-filled life. So now let me go on since Jesus was tabernacle.

Let's go to the next slide. Lessons from the tabernacle. That's what I want to explain to you.

Lessons from the Old Testament tabernacle, which we want to chew on and understand. The next slide, the picture of the tabernacle. I want to show you this so that you understand.

Here's what the tabernacle looked like. Man has three parts. I told you, spirit, soul, and body.

And so when God made the tabernacle, which is to represent Jesus finally, and also us as human beings, he made the tabernacle in three parts. Man has one part of his body visible, that's the body, and two parts invisible, soul and spirit. And so God made the tabernacle.

They didn't understand it all in the Old Testament, but now we do because we have the Holy Spirit. Had two parts. One was holy place, and the other was the most holy place.

And that corresponded to body, soul, and spirit. The tent had a partition in the middle which separated the most holy place from the holy place. Now, if you've never understood the tabernacle, you understand it now, and you'll understand its application to our life.

One part visible, let me repeat, the outer court, and two covered in the tent. The holy place, the most holy place, corresponding to soul and spirit, exactly corresponding to Jesus tabernacling in our midst. And we

are the tabernacle of God.

When the Bible says we are the temple of the Holy Spirit, this is what it means. Now, the other thing I want you to mention, I want to show you, I don't have time to show all this, I'm trying to concentrate seven hours of preaching into 45 minutes, so you'll have to rush through this. God dwelt not in the outer court, not in the holy place, but in the most holy place.

If you read the Old Testament, you understand that the ark was in the most holy place, the mercy seat was in the most holy place, and it was there that God spoke. The fire of God and the cloud during the day symbolizing God's presence did not dwell in the outer court of the holy place, but over the most holy place. And that was the place where nobody could go in the Old Testament because there were curtains.

There was a curtain right at the entrance before the outer court where you entered. That's a picture of salvation where you enter right in and there's the place where they offered the sacrifices, the altar, the brazen altar, symbolizing Calvary, followed by a big tub of water called a laver, symbolizing water baptism. Now, many Christians were satisfied with just that altar and the laver.

It's enough. If my sins are forgiven, Calvary and water baptism, I'm saved. But the Lord has more for us than that.

He wants us to go through that first part pictures Jesus as our savior, but then he wants to, he's also called the baptizer in the Holy Spirit. The one who fills us. Baptizer means immerser.

Baptism is immersion. Immerses us in the Holy Spirit and that's where he leads us further into a life of service and that's represented in the holy place. In the outer court, anybody could walk in.

All the people come in with their animals for sacrifice, but in the holy place, it was the priests, those who were the leaders who wanted to serve God and that's one step forward when you moved on from being, I'm saved and I'm forgiven and I'm on my way to heaven and you want to be filled with the Holy Spirit because you want to serve God. That's one step forward and you know Jesus as the baptizer. But there's one more title of Jesus and I want to show you that in Hebrews chapter six and verse 20, which is not a well-known title of Jesus.

Very few Christians even know there's such a title that Jesus has. Hebrews chapter six and verse 20. Here it says, if you turn with me to that verse, Jesus has entered as a forerunner.

As a forerunner. Now, if you look at the previous verse, verse 19, he's a forerunner entering within the veil, it says in Hebrews 6 19. Where did he enter as a forerunner? Within the veil.

Now, the veil was that thick curtain between the holy place and the most holy place. You see there man was body, soul and spirit. Jesus has made a way for us through the veil and where does that veil come? Between the holy place and the most holy place corresponding to between soul and spirit.

You remember that verse we saw in the beginning, the word of God pierces to the division of soul and spirit. What is the division of soul and spirit here? It is that veil symbolizing that nobody could get into God's presence. In Hebrews chapter 9, it says that veil symbolized the way into God's presence was not open.

Nobody could come into God's presence in the Old Testament. If they tried to go there, they'd die because there was this thick veil. God was saying there's something there which prevents you fellas from coming into my presence.

If we can understand that and get through that and allow the word of God to pierce through the division of our soul and spirit, we can live in God's presence 24-7. 24 hours a day, 7 days a week if we could understand this. And this is what I'm trying to explain.

This is the most important thing I want to explain in this message. What does it mean to go through the veil? What does that rent veil mean when Jesus died on the cross and the veil was rent from the top? Does it just mean that we can call God our father? Yes. But it also means that we can live in that most holy place all the time.

We don't have to just go in and out and in and out. No, we go right in there and live all the time there. We thank God for the outer court.

We thank God for Calvary. We thank God for water baptism. We thank God for the baptism in the Holy Spirit.

We thank God for knowing Jesus is our savior. And if in addition to that, you know him as the baptizer in the Holy Spirit, who's filled you with the Holy Spirit, wonderful. But I want you to know him as a forerunner.

Savior, baptizer, forerunner. Do you know him as forerunner? There are many dear brothers who preach the baptism in the Holy Spirit. Praise God for that.

But they don't know Jesus as a forerunner. I never knew him as a forerunner for years. And that's why I was defeated, defeated, defeated for 16 years after I was born again and baptized as a full-time Christian worker.

I was defeated in my thoughts. I was defeated in my inward life. I was preaching things that were not true of me 24-7.

Till I realized my hypocrisy. I got so fed up. I was ready to quit the ministry.

And I said, Lord, I'm a hypocrite. And I began to seek God again. And God filled me with the Holy Spirit all over again and opened my eyes to show me Jesus as my forerunner.

It changed my life. So I'm telling you from my own experience and I believe it can change your life. I'm no better than you.

I was a sinner saved by grace just like all of you. But Jesus made this way for me. And I want you to turn to Hebrews 10 in verse 20.

That's there on the slide. Jesus made inaugurated. It's a lovely verse.

Have you thought of this verse? A new and living way through the veil that is his flesh. And I want to say that flesh is his self-will. I want to explain that in a moment.

Why do I say his flesh was his self-will? Now flesh has got different meanings. It's used even in terms of meat in the New Testament. But it's not just that we have a flesh in terms of a body.

It's more than that. When the New Testament speaks of the word flesh, I want to show you a verse in Galatians in chapter 5. In Galatians 5 in verse 17. It says here that the Holy Spirit, the flesh sets its desire against the Holy Spirit and the Holy Spirit against the flesh.

What does that verse mean? Does it mean the Holy Spirit against my body? Certainly not. This is the temple of the Holy Spirit. How could he be against my body? Is my body against the Holy Spirit? No.

The flesh is something deeper than the body. It's my self-will. It's what every child is born with.

A self-will. A stubborn self-will. And that is the veil which prevented man from entering into God's presence.

Man's self-will. Now the question is, did Jesus come with a will of his own? We have a mind. That's our soul.

We have emotions. That's also part of our soul. That's our personality.

Some people are introverts, very shy and reserved. Some people are extroverts, exuberant, the type of person who can slap people on the back and say hi. And some people are very shy and reserved.

Emotions are different. Personalities are different. But when it comes to the will, whether you're an introvert or an extrovert, we've all got a stubborn self-will.

Every one of us from the time we are born, we see every child is like that. And until that will is broken, until we allow the Holy Spirit to break that will, we don't go through the veil to live in the Spirit. So does it mean we ignore the mind and emotions? No, not at all.

God's given them. We don't ignore our body. We got to keep them healthy and fit.

We got to use our mind and our emotions. But if you stop there, you'll never go to life in the Spirit. You'll never be able to worship God in the Spirit.

It's the will, the self-will that is the veil. Now, did Jesus have this? Let's go to Gethsemane. Did he have a will which was contrary to the Father's will? That's the question.

Did the Father want him to drink the cup? Yes. Did he want to drink the cup? No. He's honest.

There's nothing wrong in being honest with God. That's not a sin. Lord, I don't feel like doing this.

That's not a sin. But if it's your will, I'll do it. That's what Jesus said in Gethsemane.

Let's see that clearly. He had a will that was different from the Father's will. It wasn't sinful.

If he didn't have a will of his own, he would not be a human being. He wouldn't be like us. He could never be tempted like us.

He could not be an example to us. He couldn't say to us, follow me. I'd have to say to him, I can't follow you.

You never had this will of your own to choose. You never had a will to deny. Now, let me show you John 6, 38, which I call the one line autobiography of Jesus Christ.

John 6, 38. Why did Jesus come down from heaven? Let's hear it in his own words. We've got so many explanations as to why he came.

He came to die on the cross. He came to forgive our sin. It's all true.

But he himself says, I came from heaven for one purpose, to deny my own will and to do the will of him who sent me. Now, if his will was the same as the will of him who sent him, why should he deny it? I mean, if my little boy's will is the same as mine, he doesn't have to deny his will. He has to deny his will when his will is contradicting his father's will.

Not to do my own will, but the will of him who sent me. Now, when he was in heaven, he didn't have to say that. In heaven, he could say, I do my own will because it's the same as my father's will.

Father, son, and Holy Spirit were one. But when he came to earth, this is part of his humiliation, part of his becoming like us in order to be an example for us. If you appreciate that, you'll love him more.

He took upon himself a will to deny and he denied it all his life. And I'll tell you, it was painful, just like it's painful for our little children to deny their will. And it's painful for you and me to deny our will, to do the father's will.

This is the secret of spirituality. There's nothing wrong with our mind or our emotions. Jesus used his mind.

I mean, when you read the things he proclaimed, the way he taught, it's so clear. He had such a crystal clear mind. He spoke in a way that even little children could understand.

And yet there was such a depth of meaning in his words that we spent years trying to understand the meaning of that. He used his mind, his emotions, he used his emotions. He felt, he wept, he felt compassion for the poor.

He was excited when children were praising God. We need to use our mind and emotions. We need to study the scriptures.

I've spent 50 years studying the scriptures. And I've used my mind all the time. But you know, you can know the Bible and never be spiritual.

The greatest example is the devil. No one in the universe knows the Bible better than the devil among all created beings. You can't beat him at Bible knowledge.

He'd win any Bible competition, memory competition because he knows every verse. He could even quote a verse to Jesus. Can you imagine? Picking out the right verse from the Old Testament to tempt Jesus.

He knew the Bible so well. So don't any of us think we are spiritual because we know the Bible. And don't ever become proud because you know the Bible better than somebody else.

That's crazy. It proves you don't know the Bible. If you think that if it makes you proud, the Bible is meant to make us humble, not proud.

The likewise with emotions. There's nothing wrong with our emotions. We need to be expressive in our praise God.

You know, when I was born again, I didn't know much about Christianity. I was 19 years old and I joined a church where they thought that the best, the only right way to be in church was as if you were sitting in a funeral. Quiet, serious, grim.

And it was pretty dead. And then I read in the Scriptures in Revelation 19. It's quite a verse.

Revelation 19 and verse 6. If you turn with me there. That in heaven, Revelation 19 and 6, they used to praise God with a sound like mighty peals of thunder. And I said, boy, I'm going to get a culture shock if I get to heaven if I don't learn to praise God like that over here.

And that's why I'll tell you honestly, I'm really excited when I come and hear the praise in abundant life. Probably. It's probably better than almost anything I've tasted anywhere else.

I'm really excited. I believe in expressing my emotions. I believe in clapping and I believe in raising my voice and I would even dance with any of you if I didn't cause an embarrassment to others.

I believe that. I believe in expressing my emotions, but what I say is I don't believe that my knowledge of the Scripture and my excitement in praise makes me spiritual. That is not spirituality.

You've got to go beyond mind and emotions through the veil. Jesus is a forerunner who went through the veil. I've got to go beyond.

I'm not saying I shouldn't use my mind and emotions, but I must allow the Holy Spirit to control my mind and emotions. And for that, I have to say no to my own will. In other words, after I've studied the Scriptures and after I've got excited praising the Lord on Sunday, I need to go home for the rest of the week and to the office.

And whenever I'm tempted to do my own will to say, Spirit of God, give me grace now to say no to that. When somebody gets angry with me and I'm tempted and my will says respond to him in the same way, respond to your wife and your husband the way she's talking to you, say no. You know, the Holy Spirit can make you perpetually patient with a nagging wife.

Do you believe that? Is your God an impotent, helpless God who can't even help you to be patient with a nagging wife or a difficult husband? Then you must be worshiping an idol, not the God of the Bible who fills us with the Holy Spirit. He can help us overcome any temptation. When people have a road rage, the Holy Spirit can help you to be patient.

When all the guys are violating the rules on the road and they give you the finger on the road, the Holy Spirit can help you to love them. You can't do it on your own. You've got to deny your will and say, Lord, I'm going to die here.

Here's another opportunity to die. That's what it means going through the veil. Are you serious? Do you really want to dwell in God's presence? I'll tell you one of the benefits of dwelling in God's presence.

If you get through the veil into the most holy place, let me show you a verse that's helped me a lot. Psalm 16. Please turn with me to Psalm 16 and verse 11.

Psalm 16 and verse 11 says, in the middle of that verse, it says in Psalm 16 verse 11, thou wilt make known to me the path of life. In thy presence is fullness of joy. It's a lovely verse.

Psalms 16 and verse 11. In thy presence is fullness of joy. And I test myself whether I'm in God's presence by one thing.

Do I have fullness of joy right now? Then I'm in God's presence. Anytime, anytime, seven days a week, 24 hours a day, I lose the fullness of joy. I have to say to myself, for some reason or the other, I'm not in the most holy place now.

I'm not in God's presence. And the reason is I backed out from the most holy place because I don't want to deny my will in some situation. I want to assert myself.

I don't want to go the way Jesus went of self-denial. Then I back out of God's presence. And I want to tell you, that's the reason why we are so often discouraged, depressed, gloomy.

I was like that for years after I was born again. Frequently discouraged, depressed, bad moods, anger, name it. I was the average Christian.

Born again on the way to heaven, but defeated every day of the week, but praising God and clapping on Sunday morning. And I said, Lord, I'm sick and tired of living this life. I'm a hypocrite.

And one thing on Sunday, another thing the rest of the week, I'm not supposed to be like that. Jesus wasn't like that. He was consistently spiritual because he never did his own will.

He always went through the veil and he's a forerunner for us. So that's what I want to try and explain to you. And that's where we worship God.

Let me turn you to John 4. Here's another lovely verse, John 4, 24, where Jesus spoke to the Samaritan woman. He says, The time has now come, John 4 and 23, sorry. God is a spirit and those who worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.

That is worship in the spirit is in the most holy place. Remember, they couldn't do that in the Old Testament. They could only worship God in the body, clap, shout, sing, raise your hands, praise God for that.

They could worship in their soul with their mind and their emotions, getting excited, but worship in the spirit. What is that? Let me turn to the previous verse, John 4, verse 23. An hour is coming, Jesus said.

That he was referring to the day of Pentecost. On the day of Pentecost, an hour is coming and now is when the true worshipers will worship the father in spirit and truth. So that's the privilege we have from the day of Pentecost onwards where we can get into the most holy place now and worship continuously.

Worship the father. The hour is coming. It's not yet.

The veil was not rent yet. You couldn't come there yet, but it's coming. And when the veil was rent and the Holy Spirit was poured out, people could worship the father in spirit.

Praise God that we can use our mind when we worship. Praise God that we can use our emotions. But I want to encourage you to live this life of denial of yourself.

What does it mean when we pray our father who art in heaven, like we heard in the song just now. Thy will be done on earth in my life as it is done in heaven. How do the angels do God's will in heaven? Do you

know they never do their own will? They wait on the father and say, what do you want me to do? That's how Jesus lived.

He, uh, when the devil tempted him to just turn stones into bread, which he had the power to do to satisfy his hunger. You know what he said? I haven't heard from my father yet. So I'm not going to do it.

Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from God. What did he mean? I haven't heard my father tell me yet to turn the stones into bread. So even though I have the power, I will not use it.

What submission? This is true spirituality where I listen, I listen. I don't do my own will, even for good things. For example, Martha in the kitchen was doing a lot of good things, but Jesus hadn't told her to do that.

And when she came complaining about Mary, Jesus said to her, you're worried about too many things. I don't want all that. Take a lesson from Mary.

You know what she's doing? She's listening, listening, listening to me and then doing what I tell her to do. There's a lovely paraphrase of 1 Corinthians 4, 2 in the living Bible, which says 1 Corinthians 4, 2 in the living Bible says, the most important thing about a servant is that he does just what his master tells him to. That's what it means to be faithful.

This is what it means to live inside the veil. Worship is not just being excited and emotion. It's all part of it.

But it goes beyond that to bowing down. And throughout every time, it comes about 100 times in the Old Testament, in the New Testament and Old Testament. I would encourage you to take a concordance and study worship.

That's how I studied scriptures. Take a concordance and look at all the verses. And I discovered worship meant bowing down before God, acknowledging his lordship.

You could do it an idol. People did it to the idols. People do it to money these days.

They bow down to money and say, you're my God, I'll do whatever you tell me to do. That's their idol. But to worship Jesus Christ, to worship the father is to bow down and say, Lord, you're everything to me.

And one of the clearest verses that I found on that is Psalm 73 in verse 25. Psalm 73 in verse 25 says, the Psalmist says, whom have I in heaven but thee? Well-known verse. And there's nothing on earth I desire beside thee.

That I have discovered is true worship. Psalm 73 verse 25. Whom have I in heaven but thee? That means when I get to heaven, I'm not bothered about the mansions on the golden streets and all.

It's you, Lord. It's you. Even when I get to heaven.

I'm not looking just for my tears to be wiped away. I want to be with Jesus. And here on earth, what do I desire? Nothing but you.

There are many things I need, Lord, but I desire only you. And when I desire only God, he takes care of all the other needs. I'll tell you that.

You'll discover that in your life. You seek to be a worshiper where you say to God, I desire no one on earth but you. I desire nothing on earth but you.

You'll find that God adds all the other things to you. He'll add for you the house, the wife, the husband, the job, whatever you need when you seek his kingdom first. Now I want to move on to another picture.

It's a picture Jesus used, a lesson from the two houses. Let me go on to the next slide. Lessons from the two houses.

You remember the two houses that Jesus spoke about at the end of the Sermon on the Mount? Let me turn first of all to Matthew chapter 7 and verse 24. Matthew 7 and verse 24. Look at that first.

Everyone who hears these words of mine, that means he's a person who reads the Bible or comes to church. Where else will they hear God's word? And does them. That's the important thing.

In other words, he doesn't just understand it. He doesn't just get excited about it. He understands, he gets excited.

And then what does he do? He exercises his will and says, Lord, I will not do my will, but I'll do what you say. And you know, he said that at the end of the Sermon on the Mount, where he had commands like, love your enemies. I can understand it.

I may not get excited about it, but I see there, God says I have to do it. And the day I say, Lord, I don't feel like loving my enemy and I'm going to love him by the grace of God. You've built your house on the rock.

But if you just read it and say, oh, who's going to do that? Well, go to verse 26. The one who hears my word and does not do them. He's going to build on sand.

So the man who built on sand is a man who reads the Bible. He's a man who goes to the church, goes to church regularly because he hears God's word. He's a man who understands it.

He's a man who's excited about it. The only thing is he doesn't do it. Now let's go to Matthew 7, verse 21.

Matthew 7, verse 21. Matthew 7, verse 21 says, it's a very important verse. Not everyone who says to me, Lord, Lord, will enter the kingdom of heaven.

Matthew 7, verse 21. But he who does again, do the will. Now look at this verse carefully.

What does this man say? Lord. That means he's got his mind right. Lord, Lord.

That means he's excited about it. He's got his emotions okay. He doesn't exercise his will.

He'll never enter the kingdom of heaven. Do you believe that? Now I want you to go on to Luke 6, verse 48. Where did this man? It's one of the next slide there.

Where did this man dig and build? I used to think that the man who built on the rock and man who built on the sand found two different locations to build their houses. It's not true. It says in Luke 6, verse 48.

The wise man dug deep. That means he went through the sand and laid his foundation on a rock. So they were both building next to each other.

Go to the next slide there. And you see there a picture of sand and rock. You know what the sand is? You may believe in Jesus.

But if you live in your mind and your emotions and you don't yield your will, you're still building on sand. And that's why we're shaky. That's when some little trial comes.

We lose our faith and we get depressed and we complain and murmur and everything. We're built on sand. We just understand the word.

We're excited about it. But we don't yield our will. We spend years just being excited, just studying the Bible, but never doing, never doing, doing, doing what the Bible says.

Never yielding our will. We're like a stubborn child. We'll never obey the parents.

The end result is we're shaking. So we go to the next slide where we see the house that this foolish man built. When the storm came, his house was built on his mind and his emotions, his knowledge of scripture.

He's getting excited over scripture, excited when he praised the Lord on Sundays, but he never yielded his will. He never denied his will every day when he was tempted. The end result is when a trial comes, the house collapses.

Do you understand the story now? And we go to the next slide. The man who built on the rock. Same area, but he took the trouble and the effort and the money to dig deep and blast the rock, go right down and lay his foundation on the rock.

That means he denied his will. And I tell you, it's easier to live in our mind and emotions. It's easier to just superficially, just dig up the sand and build there.

It takes an effort to blast the rock. It's costly. It means discipleship.

I'm not an evangelist. That's not my calling in the body of Christ. I thank God for the thousands of evangelists who do a wonderful job bringing people to Christ.

But God's called me to make disciples out of the people who are converted by the evangelists. And I find in the passage on discipleship that Jesus said, he talked about counting the cost before you build a house. He said, before you build a house, sit down and count the cost.

It's cheaper to build on sand. It's costly to go down and deny your will every day and build on the rock. That's why the evangelist says, come forward and accept Christ.

And I thank God for people right from the time of Charles Finney down to Billy Graham who invited people forward. And many people have come to Christ. Wonderful.

I praise God for all those who give invitations. But my calling as a disciple maker, I don't invite people forward. I tell them, sit down.

And count the cost. And tell me after a few days, do you want to follow the Lord or not? Don't get all excited and say, yeah, I want to do it. I'm not against evangelism.

But I say the folks who come forward, accept Christ, praise the Lord for that. They have entered the outer court. They need to go on to be filled with the spirit and they must be then taught to be disciples.

To enter through the veil, follow Jesus. Following Jesus means discipleship. Then their lives will be stable.

And I believe this is the tragedy in so much of Christendom. There's so many people here are such good preaching. Why is it you hear of preachers who fall into adultery or who fall into homosexuality or swindle poor people of their tights in order to buy expensive cars and airplanes? How is that? Are these people following Jesus? How is it so many dumb Christians sit and give their money to these people? It's because those Christians themselves are soulish.

They're not spiritual and so they can't discern whether this preacher is spiritual or soulish. He's soulish. He's got eloquence.

He's got ability. He can convince people. He moves people like politicians can move people with their eloquence.

But he's not spiritual. And he can't lead you to spirituality because he never followed the way of self-denial himself. And he gets people to worship him instead of leading you to worship God.

We read in almost the last book of the Bible, Revelation chapter of the Bible, Revelation 22 or towards the end of the Bible anyway, wherein John falls down to worship an angel. And the word for angel, by the way, in the Greek just means messenger. So let's read it like that.

He falls down to worship a messenger and the messenger picks him up and says, don't worship me, worship God. That's a true preacher who will never allow you to worship him. Who will never allow you to be attached to him, but will point you to Christ.

Now, you may make the mistake of admiring him and worshipping him. But if he's a man of God, he'll push you away. I've had to do that with so many people who try to get attached to me.

I said, sorry. I even tell them, I don't want to see you till you learn to lean upon Jesus. Because if you lean upon me, you're not going to be stable.

You'll be like the man on the sand. Let me turn you to this last slide now. The way of the cross.

This is what I really wanted to come to. What did Jesus say? How can we follow him? It's from Luke chapter nine, verse 23. Any person, man or woman, I believe all of you say you want to come after Jesus.

Listen to Luke nine, 23. If anyone will come after him, here's what you got to do. It's not enough to understand.

It's not enough to be excited. It's not enough to praise God with our emotions. You have to deny yourself, say no to your own will.

Take up the cross means die. Here is my will, a horizontal bar. Here is God's will, a vertical bar.

And where they cross is the cross on which I have to die to my will so that I do the will of God just like Jesus in Gethsemane. That's what it means to follow him. All his life he was like that.

When he was a little child, he had to obey Joseph and Mary who were imperfect. He was perfect and they were imperfect. Have you ever had to work under a boss who knew only 10% of what you know or was imperfect and corrupt? Was that easy? Can you imagine Jesus as a little boy, perfect in every way, seeing

Joseph and Mary quarreling and not disrespecting them.

Do you believe Joseph and Mary quarreled? Do Christian husbands and wives quarrel? What about Joseph and Mary? Yeah, St. Joseph and St. Mary, they quarreled. And Jesus saw that and he would not despise them. That's spirituality.

Why did he do that? He denied his own will to do the will of the father. They spat on him, said, father, forgive them. They would call him Beelzebub and he didn't sue them for defamation.

No, he denied his own will all the time. And he's given us an example. If any man will come after me, let him take up the cross.

And it says there in Luke 9, 23, every day we receive Christ as our savior once. We get baptized once, but that full verse is not there. You go on from there, you read every day.

You have to deny yourself if you wanna follow Jesus. This is true spirituality. So I hope you've understood now a little bit of what it means to be soulful, to living in your mind and emotions, or spiritual.

Worship, go beyond your mind and emotions, thank God for all of that, into a daily life of worship, which is not always words. Our highest form of worship is sometimes in silence, living in the most holy place. My God, how wonderful thou art.

Thy majesty, how bright. Father of Jesus, love's reward. What rapture will it be? Prostrate before thy throne to lie and gaze and gaze on thee.

Do you understand that? Do you get bored living in God's presence? Why is that? Because we are living in the soul so much. In his presence, there is fullness of joy. It says in that verse at thy right hand, there are pleasures forevermore.

You will not want the pleasures of internet pornography when you're living in the most holy place. That's the way to overcome. When you have the food in the father's table, you will not want to eat what the pigs are eating, like the prodigal son.

It's no use telling them, give up the pig's food, give up the pig's food, come and eat at the father's table. Deny yourself and live in God's presence. It's one thing to be filled with the Holy Spirit right at the beginning.

Maybe some of you are filled with the Holy Spirit, but I want to tell you something I've discovered about being filled with the Holy Spirit. When you walk the way of the cross, this way of denying yourself every day. You know, when we come to Christ initially, our capacity is like a cup.

The Bible speaks about the cup of salvation. I say, Lord, fill me. He fills the cup.

But as I walk the way of the cross, the cup expands and becomes like a bucket. And he's got to fill me again. And as I continue to walk the way of the cross, the bucket becomes like a big tub.

And he fills me again. And I continue going that way of the cross, the tub becomes like a pond. And he fills me again.

And the pond becomes a river. And finally, many rivers. And then is fulfilled the scripture where Jesus said, if any man thirsts, let him come to me and drink.

From his innermost being, not from his soul, John 7, 37 and 38. From his innermost being, from his spirit, will flow rivers of living water. And that is God's will for every one of us that we should come into this life where God is able to reach down to our innermost being and make us a blessing to thousands of people around us.

I want to invite you, my brothers and sisters, to this higher life, beyond the soul, to life in the Holy Spirit. Now, maybe you haven't understood everything I said. I want to invite you.

I want to put up the slide here where we have a website where you can go to. And I want to invite you, if you want to know more about soul and spirit, to read this book. It's called Living As Jesus Lived.

Now, most people think that's impossible. I want to invite you to read that book. And there's the website, cfcindia.com. It's all free.

There are many other books and messages there. But I believe that there's a word that the Holy Spirit's saying to those who have ears to hear, hear this morning. My son, my daughter, come up higher from where you live.

Don't live at that low level. Don't spend your life eating pig's food. Come and sit at my table.

Will you count the cost and say, yes, Lord, I'm willing. This is the life I want to live in the few more years that are left before Jesus comes again. Don't miss out.

This is the time when God is inviting you. Let's bow our heads before him in a moment of silence. As you stand in the presence, or sit in the presence of God, I want to invite you to respond to him.

Start with that one area, that one small area where God spoke to you this morning and say, Lord, I want to yield there. And then God will show you the next. And the next, and the next, and the next.

And it'll be a way in which you walk. And I tell you, you will experience a glorious life such as you've never experienced till today. The Lord is inviting you to make a crucial decision today.

This is a moment of crucial decision for you. Say, Lord, I've counted the cost. This is the way I want to go.

Thank you for hearing me. In Jesus' name, Amen.

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