

# Brokenness

by Zac Poonen

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*True discipleship requires brokenness, humility, and a willingness to be weak, so that God can work through us and bring forth fruit for Him.*

**Duration:** 1:05:01

**Scripture:** Genesis 32:24-28, Proverbs 16:18, Matthew 6:33, 1 Corinthians 8:1, 2 Corinthians 12:7, 1 Thessalonians 5:23, James 4:5

**Topics:** "Brokenness"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of God breaking us in order to use us effectively. He uses the example of Jacob being broken for twenty years in his father-in-law's house and Moses being broken in the wilderness for forty years. The speaker highlights that even though believers may have great knowledge and gifts, without being broken by God, their lives will be wasted. He encourages listeners to embrace the circumstances God allows in their lives and to become weak before Him, so that His power can be released through them.

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## Transcript

I thank God for the liberty I've had these last two days, and I've felt that where I have liberty, that means there's been responsive hearts open to the voice of the Holy Spirit. I want to read a verse first in James, in chapter four, and verse five. It says, He jealously--do you think the scripture speaks to no purpose?--He, that is God, jealously desires the spirit which He has made to dwell in us.

When God made man, He breathed into him and made him a living soul, and man became a trinity of spirit, soul, and body, we read in 1 Thessalonians 5.23. It's referring to that spirit in this verse, that spirit that He made to dwell within us. He jealously desires that. That means just like a husband jealously desires the love of his wife so that she loves no one else, our heavenly bridegroom jealously desires the spirit within us.

He's speaking here about, in the previous verse, about adulteresses who are friendly with the world, and it's in that context He says this. If that woman loves another man, she's an adulteress. An unmarried woman is in a different position.

She's not committing adultery against a man because she's not married to a man. One who is not married to Christ cannot be an adulteress. The heathen, the godless people, they're not adulteresses.

They're married to the world, they're faithful to the world, they're married to money, they are faithful to their husband. But when one claims to be married to Christ and then has other loves, then he or she is an adulteress. And it's in that context that the Holy Spirit says He jealously desires that spirit within us, that it might be exclusively His.

When someone asked Jesus what was the greatest commandment, He said the greatest commandment was to love God with all our heart, soul, strength and mind. And when I love God with all my heart, how can there be place in my heart for anyone else? It's not possible. And that's the first commandment.

Second, no one can say he's a disciple of Jesus if he hasn't come to this place. I find the trouble with Christianity, in every place I've been, is that people have trusted in Jesus, they have not become disciples. They have not understood that to be a disciple one must hate father, mother, wife, children, brothers, sisters, possessions, and one's own life.

What does that mean? It means that in my place, in my heart, there is no place for all these. Because if I love God with all my heart, there is no place in my heart for father, mother, wife, children, brothers, sisters, possessions, or my own self and its interest and its reputation and prestige and all these things. And Jesus said to His disciples that they were to go into all the world and make disciples, bring people to this place where they have no place in their heart for their father or mother or wife or children or brothers or sisters or their possessions or their own dignity or prestige or reputation.

Then you made them disciples. And when people make converts, it's like making the legs of a table. And you make another convert, you make another set of legs.

Think of a carpentry shop with thousands of legs, no completed table. That's a condition of a lot of churches. Here and there you see one completed table, one disciple.

And does this mean that we will not respect our parents or love our wives? I've discovered that when we make people disciples and they love God with all their heart and do what Jesus said, that there is no place for any of these in their heart, they respect and honor their parents more. They love their wives far more than they would if they loved their wives without loving Christ with all their hearts. The human love is dependent on response.

I love a brother, he loves me. If he is good to me, I'm good to him. And you love your wife, she responds.

Divine love is not like that. Divine love is different from human love in this one way, that it requires no response. God loves, and even if there is no response, He continues to love.

So when a man loves his wife more than he loves Jesus Christ, there are going to be times in his life when his love for his wife will cool and not be as fervent and warm as at one time. There will be ups and downs, depending on the response of the wife. But when a man loves Jesus Christ with all his heart, and there is no place in his heart for his father, mother, wife or anyone, he will love his wife steadfastly.

He will never, never be bitter against his wife 365 days of the year. He'll obey that commandment, it says in Colossians 3, Husbands, be not bitter against your wives, because he's filled his heart with the love for God. That's what it means to be a disciple.

When someone says that they were hurt by what someone else said, that's because they love themselves. One who loves Jesus with all his heart can never be hurt by anything anyone does, by

anything anyone says, by anything anyone doesn't do or does not say. It makes no difference.

He overcomes because he loves Jesus with all his heart. And this is why God allows various circumstances and situations in our life to remove from our heart love of other things and people, which pollutes our heart and which prevents us from being disciples. He seeks to break us and make us weak through circumstances and situations so that we become small.

When we come to Christ and we receive him as our Savior, all of us are big people. And the work of the Holy Spirit is to reduce us, to bring us down to zero. That's God's way.

And I believe that's the most difficult thing that he finds to do with most believers. It was easy for him to create the universe. He could speak a word and it was created.

And it was easy for him to remake that spoiled earth in Genesis chapter one, resolve with a spoken word. And even to forgive a man's sins, it's the work of a moment. Person comes to him and the Lord speaks the word, your sins are forgiven.

But to break that man or woman so that he is weak in himself and depends on Christ for his strength, that takes years even for Almighty God. But until God can do that work in us, the full measure of his power cannot be released through us. It's like the ointment that was inside the alabaster vial.

When that woman brought it into the house, there was a tremendous, a very powerful perfume. It says that perfume cost three hundred denary. One denary was the wages for one day.

So three hundred denary, if you exclude the holidays, is the wages for one year. How much do you earn in one year? That was the cost of that perfume. But no one could get the scent of it in the whole house until that vial was broken.

When it was broken, it says the whole house was filled with the odor of that ointment. I believe it's like that. Many of us have received Christ, perhaps most of us here.

That valuable, expensive perfume is inside this earthen vial, but the scent doesn't come forth, because the man is not broken, the woman is not broken. That is what God seeks to do with us, to break that strength of man which is within us. I think of Moses in the Old Testament.

He was such a capable man, so gifted. There he was, Pharaoh's palace, trained in the best academies in Egypt, powerful, capable, and he had a desire to serve God, and he was willing to identify himself. The Bible says he thought that the Israelites would recognize that he was the one chosen to deliver them, but he wasn't ready.

He was too strong. He was too full of the knowledge that he had acquired in Egypt, and God had to take him for forty years into the wilderness and teach him something else, to be broken, to have no confidence in himself. He put him in difficult circumstances.

He had to live in his father-in-law's house. Have you ever lived in your father-in-law's house and had to work for your father-in-law for one year? It can be pretty humiliating, and he had to work for forty years. That's enough to break any man.

God did that with Jacob many years earlier. He kept him for twenty years in his father-in-law's house, and broke him. God's ways are different, but God has to arrange circumstances in our life where our strength

is broken.

I've seen many, many believers. They're so gifted, just like Moses, so full of knowledge of the Bible. You brothers and sisters, I presume, have listened to all those hundreds of messages that are on those tapes there.

What a lot of knowledge you have! What is there in the Bible you don't know? You know everything. You need more knowledge? I don't think so. You can listen to those tapes.

All the knowledge is there. But with all that knowledge, my brothers and sisters, if God doesn't succeed in breaking you, I'll tell you, you'll waste your earthly lives. Yes, you can do a certain amount of good.

A lot of people do a certain amount of good, but God's full purpose can be fulfilled only when He succeeds in breaking a person. Whether it takes twenty years or forty years or sixty years, I pray that you'll be broken. A broken man is a tremendous vessel of weapon in God's hands against the enemy.

That's the most difficult thing God has to do. You can know when you're broken. You won't feel hurt when people say things or do things.

You don't feel it because you're broken. You don't feel insulted. You don't weep any tears for yourself.

Jesus never shed tears for Himself. He was a broken person. Do you know that when we break bread, we're not just admiring the death of Jesus or appreciating the death of Jesus? That bread which is broken, we break and eat it ourselves.

What am I saying? I'm saying, Lord, like You were broken on earth, I want to be broken. If I don't want to be broken, when the bread comes to me, I should admire it, pass it on. That's all.

But I don't admire it and pass it on. I take part in it. I'm not just admiring the brokenness of Jesus.

I'm saying, Lord, I want to go that way. There are two spirits operating in the world, only two. One is the spirit of Lucifer.

The other is the spirit of Jesus Christ. And they work in two totally different ways. Right from the beginning, the spirit of Lucifer was one that wanted to exalt itself.

He wasn't happy with all that God had given him. He was filled with pride at his beauty, his knowledge, his wisdom, his ability. And he wanted to go up.

And that was the origin of sin. Sin came through a created being wanting to go up above others, wanting to exalt himself and have others underneath him. If sin came that way, salvation had to come in the opposite way.

That one who was equal with God gave up that equality and came down. Never forget, all your life, these are the two spirits operating throughout the world. The spirit of Lucifer always wanting to go up in the spirit of Jesus Christ.

He wanted to come down. Down, and it wasn't enough that he became a man. It says he became like a slave.

It was the job of slaves in those days to wash people's feet. And that was the place he took at the end of his life. Always underneath.

He came below everybody so that he could serve everyone. He identified himself with the least and the lowest. He became nothing to demonstrate to us the way God manifests his life.

And the glory of God was seen so beautifully through him because he was nothing in himself. To be humble like Jesus means to be nothing so that God can be everything. Jesus lived on earth allowing his father to be everything in him.

The Holy Spirit had full possession of his spirit. He never loved his mother more than his God. He said, who is my mother? Who is my brother? That's what we are to say today.

Who is my wife, children, brother, sister? These who hear the word of God and do it. And he took that place of nothingness and the spirit of God could work freely through him. He has given us an example.

And these two spirits are working all the time. Even in the church. Anything, whenever you are tempted to exalt yourself above another brother, identify that spirit.

Why did Jesus say, don't be called rabbi or father or any title? Why do people want titles today? Reverend, pastor, doctor, right reverend. It's all with the purpose to say, I'm a little above you. It's right in the church, this spirit.

Always I want to show, I'm a little better than you. I can pray better than you. I can preach better than you.

Look at the results of my ministry. See what God has done. I'm a little better than you.

See how I brought up my children. Look at them. Godly.

Better than you. We don't see the spirit of Lucifer in all these things. That's the problem.

We think God is delighted because we've got knowledge, we've got a ministry, we've got a godly family, we've got so many things. But underneath it all is a self-congratulation. There's a feeling I've done it.

I've made it. I've followed the laws. I've kept God's word.

And here I am. God's all the time trying to break us. He's trying to make us small.

He's trying to make us nothing. That's what hinders the manifestation of His glory. We're not willing to be broken.

That was the problem with Moses. He was so capable. Just like many of us, we're gifted, able.

God said, you're not fit. You're not fit for my work. If I use you, you'll get the glory.

I've seen through the years how God's lifted up people, used people who are not esteemed in the eyes of men. Paul says to the Corinthians, you know your calling. Not many among you are noble or wise.

God has chosen the foolish things. God has chosen the weak things. God has chosen the things that are despised, so that those things which are big may be brought to naught, so that finally no man will be able to boast in God's presence.

God's ultimate goal, my brothers and sisters, is that no one will be able to boast in His presence. No man will be able to stand in heaven and say, I did this. And if that thought is in us, that's what hinders God from fulfilling His purpose to us.

And that's why Paul had to remind the Corinthians, what have you got that you didn't receive? Can you think of anything? Everything is the result of God having given it to you. When the Apostle Paul, we read in 2 Corinthians chapter 12, was in danger. Even the Apostle Paul, now if any of us sit here and think, well, we don't need this, we've heard this, we're beyond all this.

Well, let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall. I want to tell you, the Apostle Paul was in danger of being influenced and led by the spirit of Lucifer. He says that, 2 Corinthians 12.

He says, to keep me, the last part of verse 7, to keep me from exalting myself. You say, Paul, were you in danger of exalting yourself? You who had such a revelation of Jesus? He says, yes. I love the honesty of this man.

He was a humble man till the end of his life. He knew he could fall away. He knew he was in danger of being puffed up because God had used him.

God had given him revelation. God had given him, used him to write scripture, to raise the dead, to establish churches. He was the greatest Apostle of his time.

He'd been caught up to the third heaven. And he was in danger of exalting himself. The better it goes with us, the better it goes with our ministry and our business and our families, the more we are in danger of exalting ourselves.

Do you think a family that's got one or two godless children who are out in the world is in danger of exalting themselves? They're on their face. They know they're nothing. They know they're failed.

Do you think a man whose business is going, having problems all the time and is in financial difficulties is in danger of exalting himself? No. He's on his face. We're in danger when everything's going well.

When everything's going well with our business, with our family, with our life, we're healthy, we're strong, we've got knowledge, we're in a good church, we're living a comfortable Christian life. That's when we're in danger of exalting ourselves. That's when we're in danger of the spirit of Lucifer lifting us up and our not even knowing it.

And God's all the time trying to break us so that that life within us can be released. Jesus said, if a grain of wheat does not fall into the ground and die, it will not bring forth much fruit. It will remain alone.

This is the way that the Lord has shown for us in the New Covenant, to fall into the ground every day, to be unseen, unknown. Like that grain of wheat buried under the ground, trampled on by men, misunderstood, rejected, despised by men. Living quietly before God's face, that grain of wheat puts its roots into the ground.

No one sees it. Only God. Men walk over it, doesn't matter.

But it's putting roots into the ground and it brings forth fruit for God. This is true Christianity as Jesus taught us. And that's what He's seeking to do with all of our lives.

And all the different circumstances He arranges for us. The difficult circumstances, the health problems, the financial problems, the difficulties with our children, the rebellion in our homes, are all designed by Him to bring us on our face before Him. So that we become nothing.

So that He can reduce us. So that He can release His power through us. For we read it's when the rock was smitten that the waters began to flow.

It is the will of God that rivers of living water could flow through us in many directions. When I was a young Christian, I knew the word. I was in a good church.

I knew my sins were forgiven. I was baptized in water and I was regular in fellowship and I was, I mean externally anyway, I was trying to live a clean life. But one thing was missing in my life.

Power. I knew that. I had the answers.

I had the theology. But I didn't have power. And the assembly I went to, they taught me that well you got everything when you were born again.

So they convinced my mind that I got everything when I was born again. But when I looked at my life, it didn't look as if I got everything. And I came to that scripture which said, He who believes in me, out of his innermost being will flow rivers of living water.

I didn't feel my life was like that. I felt so often my life was dry. And if I wanted to get something out to bless others, it was like, I don't know whether you've seen hand pumps.

We have hand pumps in some places in India. It was pumped, connected to a well and you pump and pump and some water comes out. That's how it was with my life.

It certainly wasn't a river. And I began to seek God. I said, O Lord, You said if anyone believes in You, out of his innermost being shall flow rivers of living water.

This He spoke about the Holy Spirit who was not yet given. It was going to come on the day of Pentecost. He is speaking about that outpouring of the Holy Spirit which when a man receives, it will be like rivers of living water flowing out through him.

And I was very young. I didn't know what to do. The church I was in didn't believe in such things.

I heard of a Pentecostal church. Never been there. Didn't know what these things were.

And I went there. And there the pastor told me to repeat something and there was a lot of noise and all that and I watched their lives. I didn't see much in them that drew me to Christ.

And I came back. I'm not criticizing them. I don't want to criticize anyone or judge anyone.

I just said that, I'm just saying that what I saw that those days there didn't draw me to Jesus. I came back to my room and I said, Lord, that's not what I want. I'm not looking for noise.

I want what Peter, James and John got on the day of Pentecost. That's what I want. Real power.

What Jesus said, when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, you shall receive power and you shall be my witnesses. Not power that comes out of my own ability, my temperament, my knowledge. I didn't have

that.

I was a shy, reserved type of person. I knew if I got power I could serve God. Knowledge alone was not enough.

Understanding was not enough. Theological correctness was not enough. I want to say to you my brothers and sisters, you probably have a lot of knowledge, your doctrines are all correct.

But if you don't have the power of the Holy Spirit, you'll never be able to fulfill God's full purposes. And as I sought God, alone, because I was disappointed with what I went looking for, God showed me how Jesus received power. When he was baptized by John the Baptist in the river Jordan.

He was already a holy person when he was 25. 26, he was holy when he was 1, 2, 3, 4. And yet we read in the river Jordan, he who was a son of God, he who had never committed a sin in his life, he was holier than any of us sitting here. Any of us.

He who had perfect fellowship with the Father for 30 years. When he walked on earth as a man, it says, as he went into the river, it says in Luke chapter 3, he prayed. It doesn't say that in the Matthew 3 version.

But it says in Luke 3. You read that. It says, as he was baptized, he prayed. And it doesn't tell us there what he prayed for.

But we can find out. Because Jesus' prayers were always answered immediately. That's how we know what he prayed for.

He prayed for something. But it says, as he came up out of the water, this Holy Spirit came upon him. And he didn't become holier.

His 31st year was not holier than his 29th year. But he began to serve the Father with an anointing that was not there before. Now he could do the things the Father wanted him to do.

I want you to turn to Acts chapter 10, verse 38, which says, what happened when the Holy Spirit came upon Jesus. See, I say this because to me, Jesus Christ is my example. He is my substitute who died on the cross.

And he is my example. My examples are not found in Pentecostal charismatic Christianity, when I look for the baptism of the power, the anointing of the Holy Spirit. It's found in Jesus.

And it says, God anointed him, Acts 10, verse 38, you know Jesus of Nazareth. God anointed him with the Holy Spirit and with power. What was the result of God anointing him with the Holy Spirit and with power? He went about doing good.

Rivers of living water started flowing out through him. He was blessing people. The words that came out of his mouth blessed people.

Helped them. Corrected them. Lifted them up.

And where people were under the grip of Satan, he delivered them. Delivered those who were oppressed by the devil. We are surrounded by people who are oppressed by the devil.

Perhaps you have children in your families who are gripped by the devil. That rebellion that you see in your son or daughter, that's a devil. Rebellion came from Satan.

He was the first person who rebelled in this universe against authority. All rebellion is from Lucifer, from the devil. And there is someone perhaps in your home or in your locality under the grip of Satan.

How are we going to help them? Well, if we don't want to help them, just want to live a little holy life by ourselves, we can forget about this. If Jesus, if all he was interested in was living a holy life on earth, he did not need this anointing. He lived for 30 years.

He could have lived another 30 years without this. But he came to help others. And it says, when the Spirit came upon him with power, he delivered people because God was with him.

God was with him. And he set people free. We are not called to impress people.

We are called to help them. We are called to deliver them. And what the Lord showed me at that time was that the Spirit came upon Jesus when he allowed John to baptize him, to put him in the water.

And this is the word that came to my heart from God, that that baptism of Jesus, he was symbolically accepting death to himself. He was symbolically saying, I am willing for other people to push me down and crucify me. I'll accept it.

I remember very clearly, 35 years ago the Lord spoke to my heart and said, if you will walk this way, you will always have my power upon your life. But the day you think you have come to the place where you no longer need to walk this way, my power will depart from your life. I've never forgotten it.

I want to walk this way all my life. The way of death to this proud, wretched self-life that I've inherited from Adam. Death to it.

That which elevates me above other human beings, that which makes me think that I am better than my brother or sister, that which makes me happy that everything is ok with me and my family and judges other people when things are not right with them, that it's quicker to judge than to have compassion on a brother who is struggling or suffering. That's the life of Adam. We think because we've kept the laws and we've done everything right, it's gone well with us.

And we don't realize there's an air of pride about us. There's a strength about us which God is seeking to break. And around us is suffering humanity.

Perhaps in our own church, people who feel inferior to us because we give them that air of accomplishment and superiority and awe them with our Bible knowledge and so many other things that giving them the impression of someone very spiritual. Yeah, God had to break Paul. And so he gave him a thorn in the flesh.

We read in 2nd Corinthians 12. It's a very interesting passage in 2nd Corinthians 12, 7. Because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations for this reason, twice in that verse, he says to keep me from exalting myself. What was he exalting himself? What was he in danger of spiritual pride for? What was the cause of that spiritual pride? Success in the spiritual realm.

It wasn't success in business. It wasn't success in scientific research. It was success spiritually in his life.

That's the most dangerous pride of all. Spiritual pride. Because it's gone well with us.

It's gone well with our ministry. We haven't fallen like other preachers. No one in our family is unconverted like some of the other homes.

Praise God. But these things have a tendency to bring about us, bring in us a certain air. I mean, we don't consciously talk about these things, but there's a little, there's an air of it which a spiritual man can discern.

God sees it. It's the air of, see how good it is. And it's not the spirit of Jesus Christ.

It's not the spirit that draws sinners to Himself. It's the spirit that draws holy Pharisees like ourselves to us. And it's very easy, my brothers and sisters, for a church to become a bunch of holy Pharisees who are very thankful that it's gone so well with us, our doctrine is all right, and look at those poor sinners, and look at those other people who are still struggling, sitting out there and sitting out there.

Well, if they followed the laws like we did, it would go well with them. Jesus never came like that. And we won't be like that either if we are broken.

God wants to break us, humble us. And He tries so many times, but we don't allow Him. He won't force it.

It took 40 years for Him to break Moses. But what a difference when He was broken. When He was 40 years old, strong, capable, He thought He could deliver Israel.

And it says with His fist, He hammered one Egyptian and killed him. Moses must have been a very strong man to kill a man with a blow. And He thought, I can deliver the Israelites.

Well, how long do you think it would have taken Him to kill all the Egyptians one by one like that? That would have taken many years. God took him out in the wilderness and broke him. Make him an old man with leaning on a cane.

And this mighty orator, he's looked after sheep so long that he can't even speak now. And the Lord said, I want you to go back and be the leader of the Israelites and speak to them. He says, Lord, I can't speak.

And he's not acting humble. He really feels incapable. He says, please send somebody else.

And again He says, please send somebody else. I'm not capable. That's the type of man whom God is looking for.

The man who really feels, Lord, I'm not the man. I'm not capable. I'm nothing.

I'm no one. And who really feels that. It's a dangerous thing to have success in our ministry.

We may not have fallen into adultery like other preachers or run after money like other preachers. But it's something worse than adultery. And making money in the name of Christ to be proud.

To think I'm someone. To sit back and congratulate myself. To think that, see what God has done.

I think of that time when Nebuchadnezzar looked out at Babylon which he had built. And he said, boy, see what I've built. That spirit is found in a lot of Christians.

Something they've accomplished. It may be a ministry they've accomplished. That is their Babylon.

Praised, it may be a person they've brought to Christ or a lot of people they've brought to Christ or people they've delivered from demons or whatever it is. Maybe going up to the third heaven like Paul. God had to give him a thorn in the flesh.

And it's called here a messenger of Satan. Now we would think that if a messenger has come from Satan, God would definitely deliver us from him. But no.

God can use these messengers of Satan. I personally think it was a sickness that God gave Paul. And he who could heal the others, he couldn't heal this.

And he was struggling with it. And he prayed three times, Lord, take it away. And the Lord said, No.

Because I have to make you weak. And it says here, we are talking about this power. It says in verse 9, The Lord said to me, My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in your weakness.

The weaker you are, the more my power can be released through you. The more you are broken, the more those rivers of living water will go through you. If you want just the people to admire you because you are a great spiritual holy person, well, that's another thing.

But if you want rivers of living water to go that you can help those weak people, those struggling people, those people out there discouraged, depressed, that you can help them, then you got to be broken. You got to realize you are nothing. Therefore, I have to give you this.

And Paul was conscious of this sickness, or whatever it was, every day. He hasn't told us what it is. It could be anything.

Sometimes it could be a person who is a constant thorn, never seem to, person never seems to be free from it. There are husbands who have wives like that, who are a thorn in the flesh. Wives who have husbands like that, who are a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan, harassing them, troubling them.

They pray, nothing seems to happen. Well, you must continue to pray, of course. But meanwhile, listen to this word.

The Lord says, My grace is sufficient for you. In your weakness, My power can be manifest. You who are in that condition, you look at somebody else's home and you say, how happy they are, husband and wife and children, all happily following the Lord.

But it's not so with me. Here I have this difficult family situation. You know, brothers, sisters, God's power can be released through you.

Perhaps more than from that happy family. Because you are broken. If you allow God to break you, if you have no complaints, you say, Lord, I am only a vessel.

You can shape me as you like. I am not jealous of that other person. You are a potter.

You have a right to take a lump of clay and make it a beautiful vessel. And one like me, not so beautiful. That's your choice.

I have no choice. I have no complaints. I am not in competition with anybody.

I am not here to show that I am more spiritual or a better person or my family is better or my life is better or my preaching is better. No. Let me be the last.

Let me be the least. But Lord, let Christ be seen through me. Let people be drawn to Jesus when they see my life.

You are jealous for my spirit. My spirit must be fervently in love with Jesus. Yeah? What a tremendous privilege if you can allow God to break you and humble you.

God had to do that with Paul. And he says, once I realized this, he says, I stopped complaining about this thorn. Have you stopped complaining about whatever thorn you have in your life? I want to tell you this, dear brothers and sisters.

God doesn't treat all His children alike. Now, I am not saying He is partial. But He treats them in the measure they respond to His workings.

That's what I mean. He will do the same for you that He did for another. But if that other person yielded more to the potter, God would be able to make a better vessel through him than you.

So that's what I mean when I say God is not able to do the same thing through everyone. God is trying to break you. You know, this potter picks up the clay and there is a hard lump in it.

He wants to use it. He crushes it, but it doesn't break. Then he has to put it aside.

If, when difficulties come into your life, instead of seeing the sovereign hand of God who has allowed that, you say, this man did it. Or that woman is the cause of my problem. Or this person, the other person.

And you don't see, it's not people. It's Almighty God who is trying to humble you. Almighty God is trying to break you so that power can be released through you.

So that rivers of living water can go through your life. I thank God for the many, many situations in my life where He has broken me, humbled me. Are you bothered that people call you bad names? Oh, how terrible you say.

What people said about me. Do you know what Jesus said? He said in Matthew chapter 10, verse 25, If they have called the master of the head of the house Beelzebul, how much more... Beelzebul means the prince of devils. How much more the members of his household.

Are you a member of his household? Has anybody called you a prince of devils? Jesus said here. Are you greater than the head? How many of you will say that you are greater than Jesus? Greater than the head of the home? Jesus said, If they have called the head of the home Beelzebul, how much more the members of his household. And when people call you such names, you are not to feel sorry for yourself.

Oh no! Jesus said, When they say all kinds of evil against you, that's the one time you should be jumping for joy. He said leap for joy. There is one place where Jesus said, You are permitted to jump for joy.

And that is when people say something evil about you. Because that's to break you. It's to make you nothing.

You know the names people have called me in the last 30 years. Devil, son of a devil, spirit of the devil, the whole trinity. And antichrist, terrorist, false teacher, heretic, diatrophies, cult leader.

I am a member of Jesus' household. And I say, Well Lord, I know, I need these thorns in the flesh. If I don't get them, I'll be puffed up.

I thank you. Cults have taken me to court and sued me for exposing them. OK.

Jesus was dragged to court. I have to go there. I have to be humbled.

I have to be humiliated. I need to be broken. I need to become small.

So that, Paul says, So that the power of Christ may rest upon me. That's the way to God's power. When I'm weak, then I'm strong.

You know why we don't get victory over many sins? We think, Oh, I'm so weak. I've heard people say, Oh, Brother Zach, I'm such a weak person. I just lose my temper like anything.

I get angry and I yell and I can't control my tongue. I'm weak. I say, Brother, sister, whoever it is, you're not weak, you're strong.

That's why. Think of a person who's lying in a hospital bed, sick, cursing the nurses and the doctors and the food's not good enough, the treatment's not good enough. Next day, he gets a bit weaker and he's not shouting so loudly.

Next day, he gets still weaker. He's still complaining, but not so much. Then the time comes when he's got tubes in his nose and mouth and everywhere and he stops complaining altogether.

When did he stop complaining? When he was weak or when he was strong? When he was weak. When he was strong, there he was angry, giving his opinion about everything under the sun. It's when you're strong, you got an opinion about everything.

You got an answer for everything, got an opinion of everything. Complaints, this is not right, this is not up to the mark, that's not good enough. It's not because you're weak.

You're strong. And God's trying to make you weak. And when you become weak, you get victory.

I think of Lazarus, when Jesus heard that Lazarus was sick. He really loved him. In fact, they didn't even say Lazarus was sick.

The message they sent him was, Lord, the one you love is sick. They knew he'd understand. And it says, when he heard that Lazarus was sick, he decided not to go there for some time.

What was he waiting for? Spiritually, I see the application like this. Jesus wanted to manifest the tremendous resurrection power in that home in Bethany. But it could not be manifested as long as Lazarus was strong.

He was sick, but he could still speak. He could still complain about perhaps Mary and Martha not taking care of him properly or not providing. You know, people can be very grumpy when they're sick.

Very demanding. And then gradually, Lazarus becomes weaker, and Jesus is still waiting. He still doesn't go.

Finally, he can hardly move his head, but he can still move his little finger perhaps. Jesus says, still got some strength left in him. Finally, he comes to the place where he can move nothing.

He's dead. And just to make sure, he waits another four days. He says, now we can go.

Now this chap has got no strength left. And then he raised him up. You get the message for yourself? You're waiting for the Lord to come.

You're praying, praying, praying. And the Lord says, no, I'm not coming. You know what he's waiting for? He's waiting for you to become weak.

You want a ministry? You want to do this? You want to show that you can do this, that and the other? The Lord will wait. Well, you can do so many things in your own strength, sure. There are thousands and thousands of preachers going out there, preaching in their own abilities, not in the mighty power of the Holy Spirit.

So, the Lord waits. He waits till we become nothing. You see, in the Gospel of John, in chapter 21, the apostle Peter, he had been a failure as an apostle.

Three times he denied the Lord. And so he said, well, I can't be an apostle anymore. That's finished.

But there's one thing I can do. That's fishing. So he says in John 21, I'm going fishing.

And some others go with him. And the Lord says, okay, go. Let's see what you get.

And he discovers, with all his attempts, he gets nothing. He tries and he fails. He tries and he fails.

I don't know what time they went out. Maybe 6 o'clock in the evening, 10 o'clock, 12 o'clock, 2 o'clock in the morning. Not one fish.

And finally, he comes to a zero point. Lord, I'm a failure. Even as a fisherman.

And that moment, the Lord comes. He says, cast your net on the right side. And he never caught such a catch in his whole life.

What was the Lord waiting for? The same thing the Lord's waiting in your life. You know why He's allowed all those failures? Many people have asked me, Brother, why is it, it takes so long to get victory. I try, I'm sincere.

Again I fall. Again I fall. See, you're not weak enough.

God wants you to fall. Fall. Fall.

Fall and fall and fall and fall. Till you say, Lord, I cannot make it. If you got victory too soon, you would look down on others who were defeated.

You would be proud of your victory. That would be a counterfeit holiness. Genuine victory, genuine holiness, is that which does not despise any sinner.

Does not despise a backslider. Does not look down on another believer in the church. Does not exalt itself for victory.

Recognizes, I could never have made it. It's God's grace. And even today it's God's grace that keeps me.

That's the message. Even in that story of Jesus filling the boat with fish. That's how He fills us with the Holy Spirit.

And makes rivers come out through us. I believe that God is seeking to break us. I think of the, you've heard of the atom bomb.

That small little thing called an atom which is so small that you can't even see it in a microscope. Which God created. When it is split, when it's broken, it's such tremendous power release.

They use it to give electricity to a whole city. And it's like a message God is saying through that. It doesn't matter how small you are, how weak you are, you can be like an atom.

If you will let me break you, all the strength of yourself, and all the pride in your beauty, and the pride in your Bible knowledge, and the pride in your holiness, or whatever it is. If you will let me break you that you recognize yourself to be nothing, and allow me to completely possess your spirit, that you have no more interest in your making money, or becoming big in the world, or being accepted in the church. And it's enough for you that I am satisfied with your life.

If I can break you and make you small, tremendous power can be released through your life. Just think my brothers and sisters, if all of us allow God to break us, and we never complain today against the circumstances God allows in our life to break us. We say, Lord, that's you.

I am willing to be broken. I am willing to let somebody crucify me. Because I believe that from it there will be a resurrection.

If we die with him, we shall live with him. If I surrender myself, Jesus surrendered himself to the depth of the cross, God raised him up. That's the way of power.

It's the way of life. May God help us to go that way all our days. Let's bow before God.

There is no need for a single person to go away from this room discouraged tonight. God is one who understands your situation completely. He is not looking for the capable, and those who have done everything right, and never made a mistake, and accomplished things, and have got knowledge and ability.

He is not looking for such. He is looking for the weak. He is looking for the foolish.

He is looking for those who are despised by others in the church. He is looking for those who say, Lord, so many things wrong in my life. He is waiting for you to submit to him, and say, Lord, break me.

I humble myself. I want to keep my conscience absolutely clear. I want to be broken.

All the pride, whether it's pride in natural qualities, or abilities, or spiritual qualities, or abilities. Lord, break me. Humble me.

Help me to realize that I am less than the least of all the saints. That apart from the grace of God, I am nothing. Forgive me, Lord, for the pride, for the spiritual pride that's polluted my soul.

I want to walk the way Jesus walked all my days. I want to be broken so that the power of God's Spirit can be released through my life. The Word of God comes to lift us up and to set us free.

Go forth, this spirit of faith in the love of God that surrounds you, that desires to bless you far beyond what you have ever experienced so far. He doesn't want your life to be dry. He wants it to be fresh.

Allow Him to break you every day. And leave it to Him to decide when He is going to set you free from those pressing circumstances. Leave it to Him.

Say, Lord, You know how long I need to be under these pressing circumstances to be broken, crushed, so that Your fragrance can come forth from my life. Heavenly Father, I pray that there will be a change in many lives from this day. A real permanent change.

Not an emotional, superficial, shallow thing, but a real deep breaking. Lord, have mercy on us. Help us.

Break us. Let Your power be released through us, we pray. That people in this church can be blessed through us.

That people around in the community can be blessed. That from our midst, rivers of living water can flow in many directions. We humbly ask in Jesus' name.

Amen.

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