

(Christian Leadership) Faith to Fulfill All of God's Will

by Zac Poonen

Faith is not just about being holy or good, but about trusting God and depending on Him, and surrendering everything to Him is the secret to a life of rest.

Duration: 1:26:15

Scripture: Psalm 90:12, Proverbs 3:5-6, Joel 3:10, Matthew 11:28, John 5:3, John 17:10, 1 John 5:3

Topics: "Christian Leadership", "Gods Sovereignty"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of trying and failing in order to learn valuable lessons. He draws parallels to the Israelites who tried and failed for fifteen hundred years before God sent his son, Jesus. The preacher explains that Jesus waits for us to come to the end of ourselves before intervening in our lives. He also highlights the story of the man at the pool of Bethesda, who tried for thirty-eight years to be healed but always missed the opportunity. The preacher concludes by urging the audience to surrender everything to God and to maintain a good conscience and humility.

Transcript

I want to speak this morning about faith. In my own life, this is something that I couldn't understand for many years, in the earlier part of my life, and even in the earlier part of my Christian life. I wanted to get an answer from the Word of God, because I saw this verse in Hebrews 11 and verse 6, which said, without faith it is impossible to please God, for he who comes to God must believe that He exists and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him.

So that verse taught me that whatever else I may do, however holy I may be, however loving, everything else, if I didn't have faith, I couldn't please God. That's something we need to think about seriously. Many of us perhaps secretly congratulate ourselves that we are not living in sin, we are good, we are kind and loving, but without faith it is impossible to please God, whatever else you may have.

I think I must have first asked Jesus to come into my heart when I was about thirteen. I don't know. I don't know the date I was born again.

It's not important. It's good if you know it. Some people know it.

But it's not a test of whether we are spiritually alive or not. I say that for the encouragement of those who are not sure of the date of their new birth. I say, it's not by remembering your birthday that you determine whether you are alive or not.

Well, if you remember your birthday, that's good. But if you don't, that still doesn't prove you are dead. We have lots and lots of people in our country who don't even know the year they were born, even physically.

But I was not sure. I asked Jesus to come into my heart. Did he come? I don't know.

At the next meeting I would say again, Lord, come into my heart. And it wasn't just once or twice. Over the period of six years, I must have asked Jesus to come into my heart more than a hundred times.

And I was never sure. And I was like a plant tossed about in the wind. God had mercy on me.

One day when I was around nineteen, I read this verse in John 6, 37. Him that cometh to me I will never cast out. I saw there were two parts in that verse.

One, what I had to do, which is very simple, come to him. The other was his part to receive me, not to cast me out. And in that moment I saw what a terrible sin unbelief was.

I was saying, I have done my part, but Lord, you have not done your part. That is unbelief. The Bible speaks of an evil heart of unbelief.

Now we would think of an evil heart of adultery, or an evil heart of murder, or hatred, or wickedness. That's why I said in the beginning, we can congratulate ourselves if we don't commit these sins. But there are many, many Christians who don't commit these sins, who have an evil heart of unbelief.

They don't believe that God keeps his word. When we confess our sins, 1 John 1, 9 says, if we confess our sins, he is faithful and righteous to forgive our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. There again, there is my part, there is God's part.

My part is to confess my sins. His part is to forgive me, cleanse me from all unrighteousness. And when I go and confess that sin again to God and say, well Lord, I did that.

And then I go a third time, and a fourth time, confessing the same sin. I have an evil heart of unbelief. I don't believe that God did his part.

I am doing my part. I am faithful. God is not faithful.

That's why it's evil. Unbelief is insulting God, telling him to his face that he's a liar. I confessed my sin and you didn't forgive me.

I came to you and you didn't accept me. It's not true. That's why it's such an evil thing.

When I murder somebody, I'm not saying God is a liar. If you commit adultery, you're not saying God is a liar. You tell a lie, you steal, you're not saying God is a liar.

But when you don't believe God's promises, you are saying God is a liar. And that's the greatest sin of all. And that's why Jesus rebuked his disciples seven times for unbelief.

I counted it once in the scriptures. I never see him rebuking them for anything, even when they were arguing at the Last Supper, who was to be the greatest. I mean, if I was there and I was in Jesus' place, I'd say, oh no, after three and a half years of teaching you, still you fellows are seeking who's to be the greatest.

He was gentle. He said, well, you know, in the Gentiles, they seek to be lorded over others, but it should not be so among you. He was so gentle for something which I would have reacted so strongly against.

But when they did not believe him, when there was a storm, or when he had given them authority to cast out demons in Jesus' name and they encountered a man with a child demon-possessed and they could not deliver him. And times like that, he said, how long shall I be with you, you people of unbelief? Why is it you couldn't trust me? Do you know when Jesus reacted strongly? Whenever he saw unbelief, whenever he saw people calling God a liar, whenever he saw people who appeared to be so holy, so good, but they wouldn't trust God. And there are lots of people sitting in Christian churches like that, congratulating themselves, they're so holy, they're so good, they don't steal, they don't do any harm to anyone, they're always very kind when they speak, but they don't trust God.

Can you believe that Jesus is rebuking you for unbelief perhaps this morning? Well, I thank God that day, when I read John 6.37, I was around nineteen and a half, and I said, Lord, I have come to you so many times. Today I'm going to believe you've accepted me. And I dropped an anchor that day, and my ship has never drifted for forty-one years.

And if any of you are sitting here confused, particularly children growing up in godly homes, many of you have probably asked Jesus to come into your heart many times. I want you to drop an anchor today. If you've come to Jesus, he has not cast you out.

There are no conditions. You are to come just as you are. That's the only way we can come.

He doesn't ask us to improve ourselves before we come. Just as you are. And the worse you are, the quicker you need to come.

It's like if a man has an accident on the road, say, let's take you to the hospital. He doesn't say, no, let me change my dress, let me clean myself up a bit, and then go. No.

Just as he is. And the worse he is, the sooner he needs to go to the hospital. Just as he is.

That's how hospitals receive people. They don't wait there until they are dressed up and had a bath and things like that. No.

Just as they are. And that's how we come to Jesus. And it's his job to clean us up, to give us a new heart.

But he can't do it if you won't trust him. If you won't believe what he says, him that cometh to me, I'll never cast out. And then years later, after I was born again, and I started serving God, I felt the need for power.

And I began to seek God for power. Now the Bible says, whatever things you pray, if it is according to the will of God, we have the assurance that he hears us. And whatever things you pray, Jesus said, believe that you receive them, and you shall have them.

Now there are many, many things concerning which we don't know the will of God. We cannot ask for them with certainty. You're interested in marrying someone, you don't know whether that's God's will.

You can't ask for certainty saying, God give me that boy or that girl. You don't know whether it's God's will for you to buy something for your home or buy a house itself. Many, many things we don't know God's will.

But there are certain things we know God's will definitely. It is God's will that we should have our sins forgiven. There's no doubt about that.

It is God's will that we should all be filled with the Holy Spirit. That is God's will for every single child of God. It's not for some spiritual elite class of believers.

It's for everyone. And one of the ways in which the devil prevents people from seeking to be filled with the Holy Spirit and saying, you're not yet ready for that. When will we be ready? We'll never be ready, or you're not yet worthy.

Do you think a day will come when you'll be worthy to receive the Holy Spirit? Impossible. You'll never be worthy to receive the Holy Spirit anymore than you'll ever be worthy to receive the forgiveness of sins. So I thought God to be filled with the Holy Spirit, and I couldn't believe that God had answered my prayer.

And I would pray again. And that went for a number of years like that. There are two conditions to have rivers of living water flowing from us.

Only two. John chapter 7, verse 37 and 38. Jesus, on the last day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out saying, if any man is thirsty, that's condition number one.

Let him come to me and drink. I can't come to Jesus if I'm not thirsty. And there's a, there are different types of thirst.

For example, I may say, well, I'd like to have a glass of water right now. Yeah. But if a glass of water costs \$10,000, well, well, I don't think I'm that thirsty.

But supposing I've been traveling in a desert for a number of days without water, and my body's drained out, and I'm about to drop dead. And somebody offers me a glass of water for \$10,000. I'll say, please give it to me.

I'm ready. Any price, all that I have. That's the type of thirst.

Not the first type of thirst. The second type of thirst is what Jesus is speaking of here. That's the reason why many people are not filled with the Holy Spirit.

They are not willing to pay any price, do anything. They pray, yeah, Lord, that's a good thing. I'd like to have, I'd like to be filled with the Holy Spirit.

It's like saying, well, yeah, I wouldn't mind having that ice cream. But if it's not given to me, never mind. I'm not going to die if I don't have it.

And that's the way a lot of people pray. Well, Lord, fill me with the Holy Spirit. Nothing happened.

Okay. I've got to get on with life. It's not everything.

God never answers prayers of such people because he sees they're not thirsty. They're not desperate. This is not the most important thing for them in life.

Yeah, it's one of the extra things like the ice cream at the end of the meal. You won't die if you don't have it. And when we treat the Holy Spirit like that, we never experience His fullness.

Because God sees whether you value Him. Whether we value. So that's now condition number one.

We've got to thirst. And the second thing Jesus said here was we must believe. Again, faith.

He who believes in me. Verse 38. As the scripture has said, from his innermost being shall flow rivers of living water.

In the Old Testament, they couldn't experience this from the innermost being. It says the Spirit of God judges. 634.

Clothes, Gideon. It was like a dress. You could take it off and put it on.

It wasn't part of a person's being. David was anointed, but he said, take not thy Holy Spirit from me. It was a dress that could be taken off.

It was on the outside, clothed with the Spirit. But now something new was going to happen in the New Covenant. This Spirit that clothed people for years in the Old Covenant would now come inside.

And from the innermost being would flow rivers of living water. And this he spoke of the Spirit, which those who believed in him were to receive. For the Spirit was not yet given in this way.

Because Jesus was not yet glorified. And then some years later, just like in my experience with being born again, a time came when I came to the point where I could believe. And I said, Lord, I believe.

You've heard my prayer all these years. I want to believe that you've granted my request. You've filled my heart with the Holy Spirit.

And faith was born in my heart. And my life would never mean the same thereafter. And it's continuous.

There is no once-for-all experience that guarantees that we're going to walk with God forever. That's a big mistake a lot of Christians have made. We need to take up the cross daily.

Luke 9, 23. In Proverbs chapter 8, it says, Blessed is the man who watches daily at my gates. We need to listen to the word of God.

God, every word that God speaks to our heart every day. We need to be filled with the Spirit daily, continuously. So, therefore, we need to have faith continuously.

We are to live by faith. Just like we breathe continuously. One deep breath is not going to take care of me for the rest of my life.

Well, it's good once in a while to have deep breathing exercises, but we still need to breathe regularly if we are to live. Faith is like that. We live by faith just like we live by breathing.

Moment by moment. And when I understood a little more about this, about 20 years ago, I began to see what faith really was. It was a confidence in God and a dependence on Him.

Two things. A confidence. I can trust Him.

I can trust Him with my whole life. It's like putting money in a bank. There are banks that are not very secure.

And if you know that a bank is going to crash, you wouldn't put your money there. But if you have to put your money somewhere, you may put a little bit because you're not very sure whether that bank will survive. And you keep the rest with you.

Lots of Christians give themselves to Jesus like that. They're not sure whether this bank will crash. Do you see the insult there is there? Why is it that so many Christians do not give everything they have, they are, their time, their energy, their money, their ambitions, their plans, everything to God and say, Lord, you tell me how to live.

Tell me how to spend my money. Tell me what I must do with my life. Totally everything is yours.

Why is it the rich young ruler was not willing to give everything? He thought Jesus was a bank that might crash. Now, if I were to put it like that to you, you may say, well, I don't believe Jesus is like a bank that crashes. Do you really believe He's a bank that will last for eternity? Then why haven't you given everything to Him? Why haven't you put all your money at His feet? Have you done it? No one can be my disciple, Jesus said, who does not forsake all his possessions.

I cannot possess anything if I want to be a disciple. Now, I'm not just giving a pep talk, my brothers and sisters. I believe this is the central thing in the Christian life.

If you've missed this, you've missed everything. It's not a pep talk to just whip us up this morning to get us all stirred up and go home and say that was a good message. I hope it will change the whole direction of your life.

And if it's done that with some people, if it does that with some people this morning, I'd say, well, God's been able to accomplish what He wanted to say this morning. And that is to get you to surrender every single thing in your life to Him. That's the way you prove that you've got faith.

I can trust this bank. I can put every last penny into it, and I know they will take care of it better than I can do it myself. You know why we have so many fears, anxieties, worries? If I had five hundred thousand dollars in cash with me and I had the option to put it in a bank or keep it at home in a town which is riddled with crime, and I'm not very sure of this bank, so maybe I keep fifty thousand there.

I give my type to the bank. And you understand the application. And I keep four hundred and fifty thousand by myself under my pillow at night.

Do you think I'll be able to sleep properly that night? Or any night? There's crime, there are robbers, thieves. I won't be able to leave my home. I'll be worried.

I'll be anxious because I couldn't trust the bank. But if I put everything there, I can sleep peacefully, let the thieves come. Let them come when I'm not at home.

That is the secret. That is the secret of a life of rest in God. We who believe enter into rest, we read in Hebrews 4. We who have put all our money into the bank, we are at rest.

We who have given all our children to God, we are at rest concerning even our children. God will take care of them. God will determine everything concerning them when they are sick, when they're healthy, when

things go wrong, when things go right.

It doesn't matter. We are in the bank. That's what faith means.

In fact, what a wonderful offer it is when the secure bank of heaven says, give everything to me, I'll take care of it. Why do you want to try and safeguard it yourself? When we think we can plan our life better than God can plan it, what does it mean? That means I don't have confidence in God. I don't believe that he can plan my life better than I can plan it myself.

What fools we are. The unbelieving Christian is like that. He thinks he can make a better deal with his life than what God can.

He thinks he can find a better wife than God can for himself. He thinks she can find a better husband, she thinks, than God can. What a fool such a person is.

Is it really true? Do you know everything about the future? You don't even know what's going to happen this evening. Leave alone the future. And here is someone who knows the whole future.

Every little trap the devil has laid out for you, every little problem that can arise, everything that's going to happen from now till all eternity, and he says, let me plan your life for you. And we hold it back. What fools we are.

What fools the vast majority of Christians are. You know, there are people who, nowadays, who invest people's money, investment experts. And there are people who've got a lot of money who don't know how to invest it in a way that'll get good returns.

They give it to these investment experts. And usually, if they're not very sure, they'll just give a little bit and see how much he makes out of that. But if they're confident, this man's done a good job for so many people, he's trustworthy, he'll give everything.

Now, can you give your whole future into God's hands like that? Can you put all your money in God's hands and say, Lord, you are the greatest investment expert I've ever known. And all the money I have, all my property and all my savings and all my money, I want to lay it all at your feet. Not 10%.

That was old covenant. All that I have, and I want you to tell me how to spend it. How much should I spend for my home? How much should I spend for my family? How much should I spend on so many things I need? He's not going to make us starve.

He's not going to make us live in a slum. He knows. He's given us, the Bible says in 1 Timothy 6, 6, 17, he has given us richly all things to enjoy.

God is not a spoilsport. God's given us many things to enjoy, but he will tell us to invest it in a wise way, in a way that'll bring returns for all eternity. The best way we can use the money God has given us on earth.

I want to say a word here. You know, the Bible says in 1 Timothy 6, we brought nothing into this world and we can take nothing out. Therefore, that's why everything belongs to God.

There is a verse in 1 Corinthians 10, 26, which says, the earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof. And the fullness thereof means everything that the earth contains. Sometimes we don't understand that clearly.

The earth is the Lord's and everything in it. That means all the gold and silver in the world is the Lord's. All the money is the Lord's.

It's not mine. When I came to the world, I brought nothing. When I would go out, I can't take anything out.

You know, that's why the Lord doesn't allow us to take anything out when we leave this world, because we brought nothing in when we came in. It's like if we, if we go with our little children to somebody's house, and those people in that house are kind enough to let my little boy play with all their toy cars and other toys over there. And if one of my boys, as they're going out, puts a few of those toys in his pocket, well, if I'm a good father, we go out of the door, we check up the pockets before we leave.

And I say, well, son, when we came to this house, we didn't bring anything in our pockets. And when we leave, we've got to leave with empty pockets. These folks allowed us to play with these things while we were here, but now we got to leave them behind.

That's exactly what God says when every man dies. When you came into this earth, your pockets were empty. You didn't have a thing.

You didn't have a stitch of clothing on you. And now you're leaving. You've got to leave everything behind.

What you can take with you, though, is your character. What you have allowed the Holy Spirit to work in you during your lifetime, the goodness, the forgiving nature, the unselfishness, the mercy, the purity, that's yours. You can take it with you to eternity.

But all the other things were only a loan. I hope you remember that. That every single thing, you may think that's your property.

No, it isn't. It's God's. He's loaned it to you.

And he says, give it to me and I will make maximum use of it. And if you trust him, he will give everything to him. Everything.

Lord, my time, my energy, my money, even my body, everything is yours. You can do what you like with it. That is faith.

I remember hearing the story of a doctor here in the United States many years ago. I think it was the early part of the century, perhaps, Dr. Walter Wilson. He was once in a meeting where he heard someone speaking about being filled with the Holy Spirit from Romans 12, verse 1. Now, that's not the usual verse people take when they talk about being filled with the Holy Spirit.

Because Romans 12, verse 1 speaks about, present your bodies a living sacrifice to God, which is your reasonable service or spiritual service of worship. And the preacher said in that meeting that, who is it who wants your body? Not God the Father, he's in heaven. Not God the Son, he already has a body.

It's the Holy Spirit who wants your body. Every part of your body. The Holy Spirit's in the world and he's looking for people's bodies.

So give your body to him. So this man went home, Dr. Wilson, and he laid on the floor. And I don't remember his exact words, but he said something like this.

He said, Lord, I'm going to take you seriously. He was already a born-again Christian. And he lay on the floor and said, from the crown of my head to the sole of my feet, I give myself to you.

Every part of this body in a sacred transaction, I hand it over to you. Eyes, ears, hands, legs, everything. Now, Lord, you can do what you like with this.

You can take this body and send it as a missionary to Tibet or lay it on a bed with cancer. It's not my body anymore. You can send it to Greenland or blind the eyes.

It's not my body. It's yours. I have no more right over this body.

And he meant it. Now, we can repeat the same words. It may not mean it, but he meant it.

And God filled him with the Holy Spirit and power. He never spoke in tongues or anything, but he was filled with the Holy Spirit and power. And his life was transformed from that day.

He's written a book. I think the title of it is The Romance of a Doctor's Visit. He was a medical practitioner.

And God used him to lead many, many people to Christ. But that was how he received the Holy Spirit. But that was how he received the Holy Spirit.

You know, the Holy Spirit, one of the things the Lord showed me about the Holy Spirit is there's a difference between spirit-filling and demon-possession. The Spirit never possesses people. He fills people.

You never read about spirit-possessed people in the New Testament, spirit-filled people. And you never read about demon-filled people. You always read about demon-possessed people.

And there's a difference between being filled with the Spirit and being possessed with a demon. When a man's possessed with a demon, he has no control over himself. He does things which the demon's got total control of his body.

And in a sense, the man's not even responsible for what he's doing. He doesn't know what he's doing. He's saying things and doing things which are under the control of a demon.

But not when the Holy Spirit fills a person. The fruit of the Spirit is self-control. And you have more control over yourself when you're filled with the Spirit than you had before you were filled with the Spirit.

And that's a test I give to people. I say, well, whatever experience you had, if you found you couldn't control yourself, that probably wasn't the Holy Spirit. There are people who say, well, I began to blabber something, I couldn't stop.

Well, that was certainly not the Holy Spirit. Because if it was the Spirit, you could stop. You see, every gift of the Spirit is something over which we have control.

The Spirit of God fills me and I begin to teach the Word of God. I don't say, well, I don't know when I'm going to stop. I don't know, maybe 3 o'clock this afternoon or 6 o'clock tomorrow morning, I can't stop.

It's not like that. The Spirit of the Prophets is subject to the Prophets. And I can stop when it's time to stop.

It's not beyond my control. The fruit of the Spirit is self-control. And a spiritual person will be the person who has maximum control over his tongue, control over his temper, control over his eyes, control over what he does with his hands and every part of his body.

But provided you've given your body to him. If you haven't given it, he won't control you. He's a, Holy Spirit's a gentleman.

He's gracious. He says, I stand at the door and knock. If you open that area of your life to me, I'll take it.

And a lot of Christians are like people who have allowed Jesus to come into one part of their life. Our home is like a, our heart is like a 1,000-room house. Have you seen these hotels at night, these huge hotels? Many, many.

And you know the rooms that are occupied at night? They've got lights. And a lot of other rooms are empty. When we can look at our home, our heart like that, with 1,000 rooms, and you ask Jesus to come into your heart, and he's come into one room, that's all you allowed him to come into.

Has he come in? Yes, he has. But has he got control over every room in your house? No, he hasn't. That's the fullness of the Spirit, to let him into every room.

Lord, every room. Can I come into your library and throw out some books? You may, you may not want it. Can I come into your finances room and look over your accounts and your income and expenditure and your tax papers? And can I look through all that? Well, he won't come in if you won't let him.

You just want him to come and give you forgiveness of sins? You've got one little room lighted up in your house? Fine. Can I come and control your eating habits? Can I come and control your sleeping habits? Can I come and control the clothes you're wearing? Can I look through your wardrobe and see what type of clothes you have? How many you have? And why you have these type of clothes? Can I control you a little bit there? And you say, no, Lord, just we'll treat you like an honored guest. Just stay in the guest room and we'll give you a good meal.

And don't come poking your nose into all these other things. Oh, do we respect him? Of course, we respect him like an honored guest to whom we'll give the best room in the house and the best food. But we don't want him poking his nose into these other areas of our life.

And we pray, Oh God, fill me with the spirit. You won't be filled with the spirit in a hundred years. Yes, you can go.

You can go to some church where they'll give you a little experience and you think you've got something. You've got nothing. Don't be fooled by all that.

There's a lot of that type of deception going on in Christendom today. This is the way to get it. Confidence in God.

I can trust it. I can put all my money into that bank. I can trust him with every part of my body.

Here is a verse which the Lord showed me. 1 Corinthians chapter 6 and verse 13. The last part, it says, the body is not for immorality, but for the Lord.

And the Lord is for the body. Did you get that statement? The body is for the Lord and the Lord is for the body. If your body is totally for the Lord, the Lord will be totally for your body.

That includes even healing and health. I'm not saying we'll never get sick and die. I'm saying that as long as God wants me to live on earth, if my body is totally the Lord's, the Lord will take care of my body.

From sickness, accidents, cancers, everything. If the body is for the Lord, the Lord is for the body. Otherwise scripture is not true.

Problem is that a lot of people have not given their body completely to God. They want to use their eyes to look at and read what they want and they say, Lord, please be for my body. No.

If the body is for the Lord, the Lord is for the body. They want God to use their tongue when they get up to speak in the meeting, but they don't allow him to use the tongue the rest of the time. It's not possible.

If you want God to use your tongue in the pulpit, it's got to be his 24 hours a day, 365 days of the year. Then he'll be with you in the pulpit as well. The body is for the Lord and then the Lord is for the body.

Every part of us, he can take care of it. This body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, it says in verse 19. So that's what we need to do.

You know, in the Old Testament, when they offered a burnt offering to God, there were many types of offerings, five of them, but the burnt offering was a picture of total sacrifice. That was Romans 12.1, what you read in Leviticus chapter one, the burnt offering. And you couldn't take a bullock and put it on the altar like that.

The Lord said, cut it up, cut it into pieces and make sure every piece is on the altar and then the fire will fall. That's how it was. I can't go to God and say, Lord, here's my body.

Cut it up. Then you understand it. Say, Lord, here are my eyes.

I never want again to read anything that you don't want me to read. I don't want to look at anything. I don't ever want to look at a picture for the rest of my life, which you will not want me to look at.

Here are my ears, Lord. I don't want to listen to anything that you will not listen to. Here's my tongue.

I never want to say anything in future that you and I can't say together. Piece by piece, here are my hands, laid on the altar. When the last piece is on the altar, the fire will fall.

Sure. Sometimes we say, there are people who say, we are tearing. Well, it's not you who is tearing.

God is tearing for you to put that last piece on the altar, that's all. Because the moment the last piece is there, the fire falls. He will baptize you in the Holy Spirit and fire.

It's confidence. It's based on confidence in God. I trust God.

I can trust this bank 100%. That'll take better care of my body than I can take care of it myself. That'll get better care of my finances than any investment banker or any investment expert in the world.

That can take better care of my future than even my own dad trying to plan my future. God can plan everything. I believe God's got a plan for our life.

He's got a blueprint up there in heaven, but He doesn't show it to those who are not hungry and who've not given everything to Him. And even when they do that, He shows it to them day by day, page by page. He doesn't give them the whole book.

But that's the best way to live. Moses prayed in Psalm 90, the one Psalm of Moses that is in the Bible. He said in Psalm 90 verse 12, Lord, teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts to wisdom.

Teach us, Lord, that we've got so few days on earth, it's like having very little money. You know, people who've got plenty of money can throw it around. But people who've very little money, and I've seen lots of people in India like that, and we have to, in the church, we have to teach them how to live within that income.

And then we teach them, cut out this, cut out this, cut out this, and you can live without debt. So teach us to number our days means the man recognizes, Lord, I'm not a rich man. I've got maybe 70 years, 80 years.

That's it. Very little. I'm a poor man.

I've just got few days on this earth. And I want to be very careful. I can't afford to waste money like people think they're going to live for a thousand years or 10,000 years.

I don't have a thousand years. I've only got 70 or 80. I've already wasted so many of them.

I've got so few left. Now, Lord, the few little bit that's left, I, teach me to apply my heart to wisdom. There are many things I can do with these few days.

But there are only few things that will count for eternity. Help me to invest my life in a good way. And I don't know, Lord, there are a lot of things I may do, which I may think are good.

I may discover 10 years later, it was an absolute waste of time. And I can't afford this trial and error method. It's too late in life to try this trial and error method, to go for some new experience somebody's talking about there.

Some other church is talking about some other experience there. I don't have time to waste with these trial and error methods. Lord, I want you to plan my life.

Every detail, I give you my word. You tell me to do it and I'll do it. Tell me to stay, I'll stay.

Tell me to go, I'll go. I have no choice. In any part of the world, I'm ready to go at any time.

My life is yours. My future is yours. My time is yours.

My energy is yours. My money is yours. My family is yours.

And even if there are tears in my eyes, there's blood on that plow, I'm not going to look back. That's what God's looking for. When we give ourselves to God like that, there's a beautiful verse the Lord showed me once in John chapter 17, the secret of Jesus' life.

I believe this is the reason why Jesus lived such a fulfilled life on earth. The most wonderful life that anyone could ever live. He wasn't rich.

He didn't have a big house to live in. He was one of the poorest people in Palestine. But no one ever lived on this earth a more fulfilled, fulfilling, satisfying life than Jesus did.

It was a life of faith. That means a life of total confidence in His Father. Total.

Without any hesitation or reservation. John 17 verse 10. There's a little sentence here which sometimes we read through John 17, you may have missed it.

John 17 and verse 10, it says, All things that are mine are thine, and all that are thine are mine. That's wonderful. What an exchange.

All that is mine is thine, Father, and all that is thine is mine. Don't go the way of 10% and say, Lord, 10% of mine is thine and 10% of yours is mine. I don't want that.

All that is mine is thine. What do I have? I have a certain amount of money. I have a certain number of years ahead of me on this earth.

I have health. I have strength. I have a house.

I have children. I have so many things. All of that.

Make a list of your possessions. Forsake them all. You'll be a disciple.

All that is mine is thine, and then all that is thine is mine. It's an exchange. And you see the folly of so many Christians in not making that exchange.

I think of myself like a beggar woman, a beggar woman, sitting on the roadside, and we see many of them in our country with a little tin can, and I've got maybe two or three cents in it. That's all I have. Even the man who's got millions in heaven's eyes, it's nothing.

Two or three cents. And here is this wealthy, handsome prince who comes by my way, Jesus Christ, and says to me, I want to marry you. I want to give you everything I have.

If you'll give me everything you have in that tin can. And I say, well, Lord, let me think about it. Three cents.

You mean you want all three cents? Yes, I want all three cents. Can you imagine this foolish beggar woman? And the interesting thing, the wonderful thing is he still waits. He doesn't say, okay, if you don't want to forget it, I'm giving you such a good offer.

No, he waits. And he waits year after year, patiently. When will we have wisdom? When will we say, Lord, teach me to number my day? And say, Lord, it's unbelievable.

The gospel is unbelievable. That he'd give me everything he has for my two cents. And what fools we are to say, I want to pray about it.

I want to think about it. Do you have confidence? You don't have faith. You can be a very good person, a very kind person, a very helpful person, and not pleasing to God, because without faith, it is impossible to please God.

If you don't have confidence in Him. If you have confidence, you'll say, all that is mine is dying. And he will say, he'll always do his part.

All that is his will be mine. Every blessing in the heavenly places will be mine. The Lord's asking me to give the little things that he gave me in any case, back to him.

He's just testing me. That's all. He doesn't want it.

He owns the heaven and earth. What does he want with my petty millions? My body, he's got hundreds of bodies, but he still asks for me, because he wants to make my life so rich, and so useful, and so fruitful, so that when I stand in eternity at the judgment seat of Christ, I'll have no regret, because I have total confidence in God. There's a little poem I read many, many years ago, which says something like this, when I stand at the judgment seat of Christ, and he shows me his plan for me, the plan of my life, as it might have been, and I see how I checked him here, how I stopped him there, and I would not yield my will, will there be grief in my Savior's eyes.

Grief, though he loves me still. And it goes on to say in that poem, I quote it in that book of mine, Finding God's Will, I stand there, stripped of everything but his grace, and I bow my uncrowned head, and I look back over the paths I cannot retrace now, sit down forever. He would have me rich, but I stand there poor, stripped of all but his grace, while memory runs like a hunted thing, down the paths I cannot retrace.

Think of it. We're going to stand there one day, and our memory will run over the years we lived, the places we would not yield our will. When he told us to humble ourselves and go and apologize to someone, we stood on our pride, and that day we will see the years of our life which were wasted, that restitution we would not make, that self-justification where we stood on our rights, and what we missed for eternity, and we'll never be able to live our life again.

And it goes on in that poem in the last verse to say, Lord of the years that are left to me, I give them to thy hands. Take me, break me, use me to fulfill the pattern you have planned. And that's why I say it's wonderful if you young people can be gripped by that now, before you waste all your life, to have confidence in God, to put everything into that bank of heaven, and say, Lord, it's worth it.

I'm so thankful as I look back over 40 years of my life, as far as I can remember, from the time I gave my life totally to Jesus, I never sought for money. I said, Lord, I want your will, because I know your will is the best. I want to do your will.

Many times I've made mistakes, I've blundered, I've slipped up, but when I knew something was God's will, I'd say, I don't care how many people misunderstand me, I don't care how many churches throw me out, I'm going to stand for your will, and I've never regretted it till today. I want to say to you, I want to recommend that part to you. I'm not saying that after one or two years, I'm saying that after 41 years.

That's the best way to live. The Apostle John, the age of 95, after having walked with God for 65 years, writes these words in 1 John chapter 5 and verse 3, his commandments are not a burden. Think of that testimony from a man who's walked with God for 65 years, saying, none of God's commands are a burden.

I was so happy to keep all of them. The devil's always been going around saying to people, well, it's a burden, to obey God, it's a burden to obey God, it's a burden. Oh, you can't keep all the commandments, that's a burden.

And then Jesus lived on earth and proved that the devil was a liar, that it was not a burden to obey God. It was a burden, it was a burden not to obey God. Come to me all you who are burdened and heavy laden.

That my yoke is easy, my burden is light. And throughout these 2000 years, God has wanted living testimonies in all parts of the world who will prove to the world and to the principalities that God's commands are not a burden, that his commands are the best for us, that God can find people on earth who will give everything to him so that he can give everything of his to them. Total confidence in God, that is faith.

But it's more than that. Faith, I also said, is dependence upon God. See, I have confidence in God, this is the thing God showed me about 20 years ago, and I've written it in a book called Secrets of Victory.

Faith is the leaning of the whole human personality upon God in absolute confidence. Just what I said just now, his perfect wisdom, he can plan my life better than anyone on earth can. His perfect love, he loves me so completely, totally, I don't have to doubt him, I can leave everything in his bank, and his almighty power.

God's power is so sovereign, it controls all the events of my life, all the people who've got to deal with me, they're all controlled by God. You know, I could never think of living a life of victory if it were not that God's almighty power promises me that he will never allow me to be tempted beyond my ability. There's a wonderful promise like that in 1 Corinthians 10, 13.

So if the devil is planning a massive temptation for me, God tests it out first. Is he able to bear it? Not yet, so he filters it. It won't come to me.

And the temptations I faced last year, if they had come to me 25 years earlier, I may have fallen. It was too much for me. It's like you wouldn't allow a little child to carry a heavy suitcase.

If we are traveling and we've got many pieces of luggage, we distribute the luggage according to the ability of each child. Well, that little child can carry a little, small little bag perhaps, and the older one can carry something heavier, the older one still heavier, and the strongest one can carry the heaviest suitcase. That's how God is.

He will never allow us to be tempted beyond our ability. That's what it says in 1 Corinthians 10, 13. But in every temptation, he will make a way of escape for me.

Either that is true or it's not true. If those of you are not familiar with that verse, I encourage you to turn to 1 Corinthians 10, verse 13. It says in the middle of that verse, God is faithful, and there it specifically says, God is faithful to ensure this, that you will never be tempted beyond your ability.

But with every temptation, he will provide a way of escape. That means every temptation can be overcome. I don't have to be trapped there.

Temptation is like a mouse trap, which the devil's got for me. There's a bait there, and like a foolish mouse, I go in and I bite the bait and I get trapped. But there's a way of escape.

I don't have to fall in that temptation. I don't have to be trapped. The Holy Spirit will warn me.

When I have to turn to the left or the right, they turn away from there. There's a temptation there. If you're sensitive to the listen to the voice of the Spirit, there's a way of escape in every single temptation.

Otherwise, God is not faithful. It says your God is faithful. And that's why we can boldly proclaim that sin will not have dominion over us.

Because we're under grace. Because God's almighty power will ensure that it doesn't go beyond my ability to bear. Sometimes people say, well, if we follow these Christian principles and we always turn the other cheek and never retaliate and never take revenge and never sue the fellow who's trying to sue me, people will take advantage of you, they say.

People will just treat you like a doorman. That's true, if God is not almighty. I agree fully.

I'd be scared to obey those commandments if my God were so small that he couldn't control those people. But if my God is almighty, what do I have to worry? I faced some tremendous pressures from people who hated me and wanted to harm me in many ways. And I'll give you my testimony.

In 60 years, nobody's ever succeeded in harming me. All things work together for my good. For my very best.

Because I have a big God. Sometimes I sit outside and look at the stars and I think, boy, what a huge universe. Massive stars.

I read in a science book once that there's one star, which is so big, listen carefully, which is so big that the entire solar system, that means the sun, moon and star, earth and the planets, can all rotate inside it if it were hollow at the correct distance. You know how big the solar system is. Millions of miles.

And that's the diameter of this one star, which is so far away that it looks like a little speck. This massive universe that God runs and has run for millenniums and thousands of years. And in the midst of this massive universe is a small little speck called the earth.

A little speck of dust. And on that little speck of dust are still smaller specks of dust like you and me. And this small little person has got a problem.

Another speck of dust is trying to harm it. Or 25 specks of dust are trying to harm it. And this person's God cannot help him.

It must be some other God. I sit back there and say, oh God, what a fool I am to think that any of these is a problem big for this huge almighty God who is running this universe. I would encourage you sometimes to sit outside and meditate and say, what is man? How great my God is.

What is there that he cannot handle? That difficult person, a thousand difficult people, a million difficult people. Sometimes my faith is so strong, I say, Lord, I can handle the whole world. Let all six billion people stand against me.

I can handle all of them if you are on my side. And the Lord says to me, all you got to do is keep your conscience clear. Never have anything on your conscience between you and me and between you and your fellow being.

Always do more if you are in doubt. I remember once when I had to return a certain amount of money when I was converted and I was baptized, the Lord told me to make restitution to the government of taxes that I cheated the government on. And I was calculating at that time, it was about three or four months of my salary that I had to return at that time.

And I was thinking now, how much is it, Lord? I'm trying to calculate all the taxes I owe back and not sure whether it's one thousand rupees or one thousand two hundred rupees. I wasn't sure. Is it a thousand rupees I have to pay back or a thousand two hundred rupees? And you know how human nature is.

When we are in doubt, we take the lower amount and say, OK, let me pay back a thousand rupees. And that day I was reading Numbers chapter five and I read in Numbers chapter five that if a man commits a sin and is guilty, verse seven, he must confess his sin that he has committed and he must make restitution in full and add twenty percent and give it to him he is wrong. It was so exact.

The Lord said not one thousand, add twenty percent and make it one thousand two hundred and give it back. I gave it back. It was a large amount of money for me then.

It was about four times what I was earning and I was earning a good salary. It was about four months salary. But if I hadn't done it then, I would have not had God with me.

I'd have been dragging a chain for thirty eight years and wasted my life. Always err on the side of doing more rather than less. Of giving more rather than less when you're in doubt.

Zacchaeus didn't want to make any mistake. He said, I'll give back four times what I took interest in everything calculated so that nobody ever feels that I cheated him. And Jesus said, salvation is coming.

And the second thing the Lord said to me was, keep a good conscience. That's one. And second, always humble yourself.

Always humble yourself. Because I give grace only to the humble. And that's what I've sought to keep before me always.

Never to compare myself with other people because that's easy to get puffed up that way. To compare myself with Jesus and then we have no problem being humble. You know that the reason why God can't support some people is because they're proud.

And you know how pride comes here. You don't go to school. Children go to mostly home school, but in India there's no home schooling.

Everybody goes to school. And I use this illustration from school. I said suppose a child studying in a school gets 15% in mathematics.

Can he come home rejoicing and happy saying, mommy I came first in the class? I said, yes he can. If all the others in the class got 5% and 2% and 3%, the one who got 15% came first. How does pride come? I mean 15% is very poor mark, but he's still proud.

Because pride comes by comparison. Lord I thank you I'm not like other men. They got 3%, I got 5%.

Okay, now you take that same child and put him in another school where everybody's getting 90%, 95%, 98%, 100% and suddenly he becomes humble. How is that? Humility comes by comparison also. So that's the answer.

All the pride there is in any human being whether pride of good looks or pride of intelligence or pride of spirituality or pride of the way he prays or the way he preaches or Bible knowledge or anything, always comes by comparison with other people who are inferior to him in looks or intelligence or preaching ability

or Bible knowledge or everything. Always by comparison. How shall we be humble then? Very simple.

Looking unto Jesus. Lord I want to keep my eyes on you. I want to compare my Bible knowledge with yours.

I want to compare my preaching ability with yours. I want to compare my healing ability with yours. I want to compare my anointing with yours and I want to compare my looks with yours and I want to compare everything with you.

You'll never have a problem with pride for the rest of your life. But when you turn your eyes away from Jesus like Peter when he turned his eyes away from the Lord and he's walking on the water you know what happened. He sank immediately.

Didn't even take a second. That's when we begin to sink. When our eyes are off the Lord.

Dependence upon Him. That's the way of faith. Looking unto Jesus.

I see that looking unto Jesus is just another way of saying have faith. That's what faith is. Looking unto Jesus.

Dependence upon Him. In absolute confidence in His wisdoms. Perfect wisdoms.

Perfect love. His almighty power that controls the people who come into my life. That controls the circumstances of my life and makes everything work together for my good.

That is God's will for that's the way He wants us to live. I think of two miracles. In fact all the miracles that Jesus did teach this principle but I just want to point out two in John's gospel.

The first and the last. In John chapter two it says there was no wine at this feast. I mean they ran out of wine and then we read here that Jesus was there in the midst of the servants.

He's usually found among the servants and He told them to fill those six water pots with water and then He told them to carry it out and give it to the servant. Now Jesus could have filled those water pots with wine. He could have converted the air into wine.

Don't you think so? Would that have been more difficult? Those empty water pots He could have just filled them with wine but then He would have done the miracle all by Himself and that's just not His way. He always wants to use man and so He gives them a part to do. You fill the water pots with water I'll turn it into wine.

You do the easy part and I'll do the difficult part. That's God's way and they do the easy part and He turns it into wine and they go out serving and those people don't know that Jesus did this miracle over here. It was only water.

By the time it came to them it was wine. That's the way to serve. It's not difficult to serve the Lord.

He never asks us to do more than we can. He tells us to do the easy part. Many times I cannot think the number of times in my life when I've got up to speak and I said Lord it's only water but by the time people get it it's wine.

It's wine and they don't know that I didn't produce it. They don't know that I just went with a little water to Jesus and He turned it into wine and gave it to people. It says here they did not know where it came from.

Verse 9 But the servants knew and I know even if you don't. It's so easy to serve the Lord if you have faith. But if you don't have faith.

If the servants say well what's the use of filling it with water. What the folks need here is not water they need wine. If they had gone under that argument nothing would have happened.

When we don't have faith. When we can't say Lord I trust you. It was the same in the feeding of the 5,000.

Don't you think Jesus could have produced loaves from nothing. Don't you think He could have produced fish from nothing. But no.

He takes that little boy's lunch packet and says give it to me son. And lets you and I do a miracle here. And He multiplies the loaves.

That's all we got to do. We have only so little and we give it to Jesus and He can feed multitudes. Rivers of living water.

And I can imagine that little boy went home that day and said mommy I and Jesus fed 5,000 people today. Notice the order. I and Jesus fed 5,000 people today.

That's the way human beings are. I've often thought what is it to serve the Lord. It's like if I'm carrying a big table from one room to another and my little 3 year old boy comes and says Daddy can I help you.

I'll never say no. I say sure son. Come and hold that little corner.

And he holds that little corner and I'm carrying the table across to the other side. And he's so happy. And he goes home and says mommy I and Daddy carried that table to the other room.

When people boast about what they've done for the Lord and how many souls they brought to the Lord. Well they've gone here and they've done this and that and the other. It's never forgotten.

But it's so easy really. When all that little that we have, our two cents we give to Him. All that is His is ours.

Now coming to the last miracle. John chapter 21. That was the last miracle Jesus ever did on earth and He was teaching them a lesson there.

He was telling them. He was teaching them. It was a picture of life under the law.

New covenant and old covenant. It's old covenant and new covenant there in that last miracle. There we read the disciples saying you know Simon Peter says verse 3 I'm going fishing.

He's the one who's just denied the Lord and he says well I tried being an apostle. I'm a failure there. I denied the Lord.

But there's one thing I can do. I've been a fisherman so many years that the field I can if I'm no good as an apostle I'm pretty good as a fisherman. I'm going to go fishing.

You know all of us have got certain strong points and that's the point at which God wants to break you. In Peter's case it was his fishing. I don't know what it is in your case.

But that was Peter's attitude. Well even if I'm no good as an apostle I'm pretty good as a fisherman. And the Lord from heaven says okay go ahead and try.

And they tried. Eight o'clock no fish. Ten o'clock no fish.

Twelve o'clock no fish. He's never had a night like this. He's learning about the new covenant here.

He didn't know that. Two o'clock no fish. Four o'clock no fish.

Four thirty. We better give up. And they turned their ship to go home and there they see Jesus standing on the beach.

He always comes at that point when we have come to the end of ourselves. That's what the law teaches. It says in the Old Testament when the men of war who came out of Egypt in the wilderness, the men of war had all died to the last man.

Six hundred thousand of them. Then he took them into Canaan. You understand the principle there? The men of war, every last one has to die.

And that took, it took two years for them to go from Egypt to Kadesh Barnea where they were in the borders of the promised land and then it says they wandered for 38 years. Till every last man of those men of war died. God said, now you're ready.

Now all the men of war have died. All the strong fellows are dead. All the experienced warriors are all dead.

Ok, now you're ready to go in. Kill these giants and occupy Canaan. It's the lame who take the prey.

That's what the scripture said. Let the weak say, I'm strong. Let the poor say, I'm rich.

Because of what the Lord has done for me. That's God's way. And so he waits till they come to an end of themselves.

It's like that other man. You know, in the pool of Bethesda we read, there was another man lying there. You know for how long? Anyone knows? 38 years.

Exactly the period they wandered from Kadesh Barnea. It's the picture of life under the law. He lay there for 38 years in the pool of Bethesda.

He tried every time to jump in when the angels stirred the water, but he always missed it. Somebody else got in before him. Maybe after the 10th year he said, boy, I'm going to try harder next year.

Till somebody else got in. By the time it came to 38 years, he stopped trying. He said, I'll never make it.

And then Jesus comes to him and says, do you want to be made whole? He says, Lord, I've got no man. You don't need any man. You just need me.

And he healed him. What is the message in all these things? You have to come to that zero point, to the end of yourself, where your confidence in your own ability is gone. Where your dependence on your own strength is gone.

Abraham. Sarah probably couldn't produce a son, but Abraham could. So he did.

Ishmael caused problems for God's people for 4000 years. Right up until today. And then a day came, I think, when even Abraham's ability was gone.

Then God said, okay, now I'll give you a son. When Abraham was 86, Ishmael was born. At that time it was difficult for him to get a son through Sarah.

By the time he was 100, it was impossible. And then it was done. There are three stages in God's work.

Difficult, impossible, done. So if you're in the difficult stage, you've got to wait a little longer, till you realize this is impossible. Then it'll be done.

Till you realize you cannot get into the pool, even if you try for another 10 years. And then the Lord says, do you want to be made whole? Do you want to live a life of victory? And that's what the Lord says here too. Who said Jesus didn't have a sense of humor? He said, well boys, you got any fish? He knows the answer.

No. He said, okay. Cast your net on the right side.

He doesn't say, just wait, I'll do a miracle, I'll make the fish all jump into the boat. You've got to do your part. Who said man doesn't have any part? If sanctification was all God's part, you know all of us would be perfect.

Why are we not perfect? If it was all God's part, it certainly can't be all God's part. Then we've got to blame God for all our unsanctified life and behavior. It's not all God's part.

We have to do a little part. We have to give our five loaves and two fish. We have to fill the empty water pots with water.

We have to cast the net on the right side. We've got to do something. It's very little.

The miracle is His, but we've got to do something. We've got to take up the cross. He's not going to put it on our shoulders like the Roman soldiers do, put it on Simon of Cyrene's shoulder.

He never forces a cross on anyone. Roman soldiers do that. He says, if any man will, let him take up the cross.

That's God's will. We've got to do our little part. It's so little.

It's like that little child of mine holding the corner of the table. We're co-workers with Jesus. What an honor.

I just held the little corner of the table and he calls me a co-worker, a partner. It's unbelievable. I give my little two cents and he says, you and I are partners from now on.

He with his millions and I with my two cents. I can't understand how anybody won't be a wholehearted Christian. I can't understand how foolish believers are.

I mean, I can understand why the unbelievers are foolish. Their eyes are blinded. But what about believers who say their eyes are open to see Jesus? You haven't seen Him.

You haven't seen Him. You haven't seen how wonderful He is. You haven't seen how loving He is.

You haven't seen how wise He is. You haven't seen how almighty He is. I want to say this, my brothers and sisters.

Have you come to the end of yourself? Have you come to the place where you say, Lord, I tried, tried for victory and I failed? Don't think that was a waste of time. That was also part of your education to teach you that you cannot make it. That human strength cannot make it.

You know, if God gave me victory over, let's say, anger, very quickly, what would happen? I would be proud. It would be like God pulling me out of a ten foot pit called anger and my falling into a hundred foot pit called spiritual pride. Is that victory? That's not victory at all.

The most difficult thing for God is to give a man victory and keep him humble at the end of it. And in order to accomplish that, God allows us to be like these people who went catching fish. We try and we try and we fail.

Why didn't Jesus come at 6.30 the previous evening? Why did He wait till 4.30 the next morning? Was it because He thought they may make it? No, He knew right in the beginning they wouldn't make it. But they had to learn a lesson and you have to learn a lesson too and I have to learn it too. We have to try and fail and try and fail.

That's what the Lord taught the Israelites for 1500 years. They tried and they failed and they tried and they failed. He said, OK, in the fullness of time God sent His Son.

In the fullness of time God sent His Son there to the seashore to fill their boats with fish and in the fullness of time He will come to you as well. When? What is that fullness of time? When you come to the end of yourself. This is not a pep talk.

This is not theory. It really works. It's true.

But I have to come to the end of myself. That's when I experience the power of His Holy Spirit. When I'm weak, then I'm strong.

But I have to become weak first. My strong point, you may say, well, I can't do this, but I can do this. God says, OK, go and try.

I can't be an apostle, but I can fish. OK, go ahead and try. He'll make us fail.

If He loves you, He'll make you fail and fail and fail and fail till you come to the end of yourself and then He'll fill your boat with fish. That's God's way, brothers and sisters. He's on your side.

I want to say one last thing. God is always on your side against Satan. Please remember that.

No matter how deep you have sunk into sin, no matter how much you have backslidden as a believer, God is on your side against Satan. Even if you have sinned, you have been disobedient, you have been rebellious, if there's somebody here like that, I want to say to you, God is still on your side against Satan.

He wants to help you through.

Think of this. Supposing your 12-year-old boy is a very, very naughty, rebellious, stubborn, naughty boy who's been disobedient all his life and one day he's been especially disobedient and he won't listen to you and he bangs the door and goes out of the house. And then a little later in the yard, you hear him screaming and you go out and you see him standing there with his back against a tree and a cobra, one of the most poisonous snakes, standing with his hood up ready to sting him.

What will you as a mother say? Go and sting him. Sting him. He deserves it.

He's been rebellious, he's been stubborn. Sting him to death. Which mother will say that? Anybody here? Which father will say that? Do you think God is worse than you? You've been stubborn, you've been rebellious, you've disobeyed Him all your life.

You've banged the door on God and gone out and now you're in trouble. God's better than your father or mother. That mother will take a stick and kill that snake and bring you back in and that's what God wants to do.

He's always on your side against Satan and He'll try till the day you die to bring you to this glorious life of faith but you have to do your little part. You have to say, Lord, I trust you. You're the best bank I can give, put everything I have in and I want to do it this morning.

Will you say it? Let's pray. It's time for you to take a decision but I don't want to pressurize you into it. Jesus said, sit down, count the cost and if you still value your two cents, keep it.

But if you think this is the most fantastic exchange program you've ever heard in your whole life, say, Lord, what a fool I have been. So many years of my life wasted when they could have been years of rich, fruitful service to other people which I could have spent building the church, glorifying God. Dear Lord, take every part of me from head to foot, my eyes, my ears, my tongue, my hands, my feet, my passions, my future ambitions, my money, my property.

It's all for your kingdom. Nothing for me. It wasn't mine to begin with.

You gave it to me as a loan. I thought it was mine like a fool. I realized it's all a loan.

My body is a loan from you. I give it back to you, Lord. All that I have and all that I am, this moment in a sacred transaction, I lay it on the altar.

Send the fire, Lord. Consume it. Burn it up.

Send the fire of heaven upon my life. Fill me with the Holy Spirit. Baptize me in fire and keep me glowing till the end of my days.

Keep my vision on the things that are unseen, that are eternal, that I might live for that all my days. Lord, in this simple act of surrender, I give myself to you and I believe the transaction is done. As I have sincerely offered myself to you, I believe you have done your part.

I have confidence in you. I want to live the rest of my life leaning upon you, looking at you, not looking at others, looking at you, walking in your footsteps. Help me, Lord.

Lord, answer the prayer of those who are sincerely crying out to you this morning. You see hearts, you see longing hearts, thirsty hearts, who would be willing to pay anything for the living water. Please fill with your Holy Spirit.

Answer by fire from heaven, without emotion perhaps, but with a deep work inside the heart. With or without emotion, we leave it to you, Lord. But do a deep work of setting people on fire today.

We ask in Jesus' name. Amen.

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