

Coming Out of Babylon

by Zac Poonen

God's glory departs from a church when leaders misuse God's gifts, engage in idolatry, or prioritize personal gain over serving God, but He promises to return His glory to a church that is built on His plan and where leaders are humble and holy.

Duration: 58:25

Scripture: Malachi 1:10, 1 Corinthians 11:16, James 4:4-5, Revelation 17:5, Revelation 18:4, Revelation 19:2

Topics: "Separation From World", "Church Purification"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the need for a pure and holy church, contrasting it with the corrupt system of Babylon. It highlights the dangers of backsliding, divisions, politics, money-driven motives, and the misuse of spiritual gifts in churches. The call to 'Come out of Babylon' is emphasized, urging God's people to separate from worldly influences and seek a genuine, spirit-led relationship with Christ. The ultimate goal is to be part of a pure virgin church, devoted to Christ and free from the trappings of the world.

Transcript

So, we want to continue our study, why another church? And we were looking, first of all, at 1 Corinthians, let me begin with that verse again, in chapter 11. In the first century, in that church in Corinth, the church planted by the Apostle Paul, where he spent one and a half years instructing them. Sometime after he left, the church had backslidden.

The elders could not control the direction of the church. It's like a bus that had gone out of control of the driver. And there was one family, called the family of Chloe, that realized that the elders couldn't do much about it, so he wrote to Paul, and that's how we got 1 Corinthians.

You read that in chapter 1. And then Paul says in 1 Corinthians chapter 11, verse 16, I hear that when you come together as a church, there are divisions. Now why were there divisions? There were divisions because some people were not happy with the direction the church was going. They were not happy with the way the elders of the church were leading the church.

And so, they couldn't cooperate with everything that was going on. And they were probably meeting together in their home during the week or something like that. And then Paul says, there have to be factions among you so that those who are approved may become evident.

And if the church in Corinth continued to go in that backslidden way, and one day the Lord removed his presence from that church, then those who were overcomers in that church would form another church. Why another church? Because the leaders of the first church wouldn't stick true to God's Word, wouldn't stick to God's standards, wouldn't preach holiness, wouldn't tolerate sin, wouldn't allow the world to come right in. That's why another church.

And the same thing we considered in the five churches in the book of Revelation chapter two and three, how if the elders did not take the rebuke that came from the apostle John, those five churches, some of them would have left. The overcomers would have left. And then the Lord himself would have left that church and gathered together with the overcomers that had been two churches.

Why another church? Because the elders would not listen to the rebuke of the Holy Spirit. It says in each one of those seven churches, he who has a year to hear, Revelation 2, 11, and a number of times thereafter, let him hear what the Spirit is saying to all the churches. That means what is spoken to the church in Ephesus is a warning to all the churches throughout 20, 21 centuries.

Beware, if you leave your first love, the Lord will remove his presence from that church. The lampstand will go and then some others will gather around the name of Jesus who came to save his people from their sins and they would meet there. If the elder in Pergamum, you see the elder in Pergamum, Revelation 2, 12, himself was not a person preaching the prosperity gospel.

But he says there in verse 14, there are some who hold this teaching of Balaam. The teaching of Balaam, as we saw last time, was to make money through preaching. When God gives us a gift, it's meant to serve other people.

It's not meant to make money for ourselves. It's not meant to make honor for ourselves. When God gave Jesus an anointing in the time of baptism, the devil came and said, Why don't you use that power now to make bread for yourself from the stones? And he said, No, I will not use the power God gave me to get something for myself.

But he did use that power to feed 5,000 people with bread later on. And that's the temptation that comes to many people. When they're anointed by God, God gives them a gift.

And it's a tremendous power we can have. We can make money with that gift, whether it's preaching or singing. We can get honor with that gift.

We can get authority over people. We can make people serve us. We can do all types of things for personal benefit.

And Christendom is full of people, elders, preachers, pastors, bishops, archbishops, et cetera, the whole lot of them, who use the power and authority God gave them to get personal benefit. It's a misuse of the anointing of God, and God withdraws his presence. The gifts remain.

Before the devil became the devil, God gave him gifts. But when he withdrew the anointing, the gifts remained with the devil. That's why the devil has supernatural power.

So why another church? Because people misuse God's gifts for themselves and begin to make money for themselves through preaching the gospel, get honor for themselves, draw people to themselves. When it came to the church in Thyatira, we saw in chapter 2, verse 18, here was a case where a woman began to

take over the church. I've seen this in a number of places where they have uncontrolled prophesying.

Many women who want prominence seek to become prophetesses and turn out to be Jezebels who try to control the church. Sometimes the wife of the pastor becomes an assistant pastor, even though the Bible says a woman is not called to leadership in the church. God has given man the headship of the church.

The very reason why a woman covers her head in the meetings of the church is to say I'm submission to the man. All that disappeared. And gradually the spirit of Jezebel began to take over and then God has to move out and start a church which is true to his word.

In chapter 3, verse 1, we saw another church in Sardis, a hypocritical church, one that is living on a name. Maybe God did work many years ago and living on that name. Maybe three generations ago somebody, mighty man of God was there, but three generations later the whole church is backslidden.

And like the Jews said to John the Baptist, our father is Abraham and John the Baptist said don't boast your father is Abraham. And there are churches today that boast in their leader who founded that church. They don't have the spirit of the leader.

The leader knew God. The followers just know the doctrine. Why another church? Because God is not building a church around doctrine.

Jesus said this is eternal life. Then they might know thee the only true God in Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent. So the church is built around people who know God, who have eternal life, and not those who are living before the face of men.

Like it says in chapter 3, verse 1, who have a name that you're alive, but you're actually dead. Most Christians seek for a name that they are spiritual. Most Christian leaders seek for a name that they are spiritual.

And they use all types of gimmicks and eloquence and jumping and shouting and all that type of stuff to try and get a name that they are spiritually alive. But the mark of spiritual life is not jumping on the platform. It's not shouting or yelling into a microphone.

It's a holy, humble life. Humility is the mark of life. Holiness is the mark of life.

And so we see here in chapter 3, that's the problem with this church. And then the fifth church, which is in a backslidden condition, is a church in Laodicea. And of course this one is a proud church.

Why another church? Because the leader has become proud. And the moment a person becomes proud, he gets into fellowship with Satan. And Satan was cast out for his pride.

And the church is cast out. And God begins again. So these are the reasons, you see, in all these cases, if the elders did not respond to the warning, you see, God doesn't throw away a church or move His presence out without warning.

He always warns. He warned Israel before He withdrew His glory from them. In the Old Testament, there's a picture of this in the book of Ezekiel.

In Ezekiel, Ezekiel is the one prophet of Israel who was in Babylon. And we saw that Babylon is a picture in Revelation 17 of false Christianity, as opposed to Jerusalem, the true Christianity. And so this Old

Testament story of Israel going to Babylon and coming out of Babylon teaches us why another church.

Because Christendom went to Babylon, God pulls out from Babylon in the Old Testament a remnant. Not all the people came back. A whole lot of Israelites found it much more comfortable to be in Babylon.

But in the book of Ezra, God lists the number of people who came out, came back to Jerusalem, and built the temple. A picture of those who come out of corrupt Babylonian Christianity and build another church for the glory of God. And in Ezekiel, we read God revealing to Ezekiel how there was hidden sin and idolatry among the leaders.

In the minds of the leaders, there was all types of sin going on. Let me show you one example. It says here, the Lord, Ezekiel 8, verse 7. The Lord brought me to the entrance of the court.

And when I looked, there was a hole in the wall. He said, Son of man, now dig through the wall. In other words, go inside and see what's happening in the minds of these leaders.

Dig through the wall. It looks wonderful on the outside, all painted up and all. Go and see the wicked abominations that are going on in there.

This is talking, it's a picture of what goes on in the minds of leaders. And there were all types of beasts and distasteful things and idols. It was idolatry.

And standing in front of them were the 70 elders of the house of Israel. And they were burning incense. And he said to me, verse 12, Son of man, do you see what the elders of the house of Israel are committing in the dark? Each man in the room of his carved images.

That is in their mind. That's idolatry in the mind of the leaders. It's not visible on the surface.

The number one idolatry is the idolatry of money and honor. And so what happened? The Lord reveals to Ezekiel, that's the reason why the glory departs. And you see here in chapter 10, verse 4. The glory of the Lord went up from the carob to the threshold of the temple.

Threshold means the gate, the entrance. The glory which is on top of the temple moved slowly. It wasn't a sudden departure.

Slowly it moved to the gate. I believe that this is what is happening in the five churches in Revelation. The glory had departed from the center of the church to the door.

And the Lord was giving a final warning to those five churches in Revelation saying, are you going to repent? I point out your sin. If you have a year to hear what the Spirit is saying, listen. But they wouldn't listen.

And then we read finally, verse 18. Then the glory of the Lord departed from the entrance of the temple and stood over the cherubim. And when the cherubim departed, they lifted their wings and the glory of God hovered over them.

And like that, the glory departed. It was slow movement from the most holy place to the threshold, that is the entrance, and then slowly moved away. And the Lord says, that's the reason why you people are in Babylon.

Because all types of sins, and the leaders never took action against the sin. Like I was saying in Pergamum, the leader himself was not preaching the prosperity gospel, but he was allowing some people to do that type of thing, and he didn't have control over them. That happens in many churches, where the elders don't have control over what some young people are doing, or what some people are propagating.

It's like a bus driver who's given over the control of the bus to the passengers, and they drive it hither and thither wherever they like. Many churches are like that, where the pastor, poor man, is dependent on the salary that the board decides to give him, he can't offend the rich people, and so many things like that. And so he's got to please all the rich people, and therefore he loses authority.

It's one of the greatest tragedies in Christendom today. A pastor controlled by the money of rich people sitting on the board, and the rich people are usually the most carnal people in a church. And the pastor dare not correct them, because they'll throw him out, and look for somebody else who will listen to them.

What a pity that Christendom comes to that state, where a man's supposed to stand as a servant of God, and he's actually a servant of some board of rich people. Do you think God will tolerate that? That a man stands up there in his name, and he's not interested in pleasing God, or telling people what God wants to hear. He's interested in telling them what everybody else wants to hear.

So that's how the glory departs. Then we read in chapter 40 onwards of Ezekiel, is the new covenant. It's all symbolic language there, and in symbolic language we see finally, the glory of God is in chapter 43, verse 2. Why another church? Here God is building his church again.

The first church, the glory's departed, and God's forsaken it. It's become Babylon, but God's not going to leave himself without a witness on the earth. And we read in chapter 43, verse 2, the glory of the Lord of God of Israel came from the way of the east, the way it had gone.

It came back because he found a few men, like Daniel, Ezra, Zerubbabel, Joshua the high priest, Haggai, Zechariah, and later on Nehemiah, and other godly men who didn't want the comfort of Babylon, and moved to Jerusalem and sacrificed, and wanted to build a pure testimony for Christ, for God, to prepare the way for the Christ, the Messiah. And it says the glory of God finally, verse 4, chapter 43, verse 4, came into the house by the way of the gate. It's wonderful.

I don't know why you're excited when you see this. Praise the Lord that God's going to raise up another testimony for his name, where his glory will be there. The reason God's glory departs from many a church is because he never gives his glory to another person.

God gives us everything but his glory. He'll give us his power, he'll give us his wisdom, he'll give us his blessing, he'll give us even his nature. But Isaiah 42, verse 8 says, My glory I will never give to another.

And when man touches the glory of God, glory of God departs. When man begins to use his ministry, whether it's preaching or singing or music or whatever it is, when he uses it to draw people to himself and takes the glory to himself, God departs from that church because his glory he will not share with another. Or when God sees that a church, instead of depending on the Holy Spirit, begins to depend on money and music and psychological gimmicks, the glory of God departs.

Because that's an insult to the Holy Spirit. It's almost like saying to the Holy Spirit, we don't need you, we can do this with money, with music and with all our psychological tricks. And of course, a lot of superficial prayer and fasting to put a religious whitewash on all these earthly tactics.

Glory of God departs. But God raises up another church where the glory of God comes back, where the leaders have understood what it means to build a church where God is glorified, where Christ is exalted. Then he says in verse 10, as for you, son of man, describe this, let me paraphrase it, describe this new covenant church to my people so that they may be ashamed of the church they have built so far, of their iniquities, and let them compare what they have with my plan which I have given in my word.

You know, it's like if somebody built it, if Moses built a tabernacle which is not at all according to God's plan, God's glory would not have come upon it. You read in Exodus chapter 39 and chapter 40, about 18 times I think you find this phrase, as the Lord commanded Moses, so he did it. As the Lord commanded Moses, so he did it.

As the Lord commanded Moses, so he did it. Built the tabernacle, and then it says the glory of God came upon that tabernacle. When we do things according to God's plan, God's glory will be there.

So it says show the people of Israel my plan, and if they are ashamed of all that they, this is very important, if they are ashamed of all that they have done, then make known to them the design of the church, what the new covenant church is really meant to be. Now I'll tell you why so many people don't understand the new covenant church. It's because they are not ashamed of their sin.

Because it says here so clearly, if they are ashamed, if they are ashamed of their sin, look at the number of people today who get angry every day and they're not ashamed of it. They go to sleep peacefully at night after lusting after women and their thoughts during the day, even though Jesus spoke clearly against these things, as unrighteousness and money matters, they still lies, their yes is not yes, their no is not no. Okay, they slip up, but the sad thing is they're not ashamed of it.

It's not because of their sin, it's because of their sin and they're not ashamed of it. God doesn't show them the plan. And then when somebody goes according to the plan, they call him a heretic.

That's a false teaching, that's a false church. Who are the people saying it? Are they godly, humble people, who don't love money? Far from it. Who are the people who criticized us for 30 years? Look at their lives, look at their family lives, look at the way they brought up their children, look at their attitude to money, look at all the reports they sent to America to get money.

These are the people criticizing with no holiness, no godliness, no preaching on overcoming sin, no anointing, no revelation. And many of these preachers now go to our CFC website to get points for their sermons after calling us heretics. No revelation.

God is against such prophets. God is against such preachers. You read in Jeremiah chapter 23.

It's an amazing chapter. You read Jeremiah chapter 23 and you'll see the reason why the church goes astray because leaders have gone astray. Let me read a few sections from the message translation.

Verse 17, Jeremiah 23. They preach their sermon titled Everything will turn out fine to congregations who have no taste for God. Their next sermon is Nothing bad will ever happen to you.

To people who are set in their own ways. It's almost like a prophecy of what's happening in the 21st century. But have any of these preachers bothered to meet with me, the true God? Have they bothered to take in what I have to say or listen to me and then lived out my word? No.

Verse 22. If they'd only bothered to sit down and meet with me they would have preached my message to my people and then they would have got them back on the right track and gotten them out of their evil ruts. And then it says here in verse 28 They swap dreams with one another.

Everybody's competing with the other to see who has had the greatest dream and a vision of this and a vision of that and some lady will get up there and say I got a vision of this and some young fellow will get up there and say I got a vision of this. They swap dreams and visions with one another and they feed on each other's delusive dreams and visions and trying to distract my people from me just as their ancestors were distracted by the no-God Beal. They are distracted from the true God by money and the love of money which is the equivalent of Beal in the New Testament.

Elijah said worship Jehovah or Beal. Today we say Christ or money. Make your choice.

You can't serve both. Jesus said there are only two masters. The two masters in the Old Testament were Jehovah and Beal.

And Jesus said in Luke 16.13 the equivalent of that in the New Covenant is God and money. There were Israelites who worshiped Jehovah sometime, Beal sometime. There are Christians today who worship Christ sometime, money the other time.

How do you know which God you worship? You can find out by what you think about most in your mind. If you think more about Jesus than about money you are a worshiper of Christ. If you think more about money than about Christ no matter which church you go to, even if you come to this church, you are an idolater.

An idolater is mind. You know you saw that in Ezekiel 8. What all was going on in their mind? The idols were in their mind. So Jeremiah warns against that and the Lord says finally to these people in chapter 23 and verse 30.

I am against those preachers who steal my words from other preachers. Have you ever heard that? God says I am against them. The Bible says He is against the proud and He is against preachers who steal sermons from other preachers without any anointing, without any revelation.

They are only doing it for honor. They listen to a message, they go to some, read some book, and they preach that. They are living it out.

No wonder God wants another church. Why another church? Because He doesn't want all this second hand manna that doesn't come from heaven. And the Lord says finally in verse 32.

I've had it with all these preachers who get their sermons second hand from each other. Yes, I've had it with them. They make up stuff and then they pretend it's a real sermon of theirs.

Yes, I've had it with these preachers who preach lies that they dream up, spreading them all over the country, ruining the lives of my poor people with their cheap and reckless lies. I've never sent these preachers, never authorized a single one of them. They do nothing for this people.

Absolutely nothing. And He goes on further in verse 36. They don't go around pretending to know it all saying God told me this and God told me that and thus said the Lord.

I don't want to hear all that anymore God says. Only the person I authorize speaks for me. Otherwise my message gets twisted as it's happening right now.

And then finally in verse 38. But don't pretend that you know all the answers yourself and talk like you know it all. I'm telling you quit saying God told me this and God told me that and that kind of talk.

This happened 2,600 years ago. It's happening all over again. There's a proverb in English that says history teaches us that history teaches us nothing.

If you can think about that. What it means is we learn nothing from history. That's what we discover.

That people don't seem to learn from the failures of others. The whole Old Testament has been written to warn the Christian church today don't make the same mistakes that Israel made. To warn Christian leaders today don't make the same mistakes that all those false prophets in the Old Testament made.

But they won't listen. Let me show you another verse. Where are these idols in people in the leaders of today? Ezekiel 14 and verse 3. It says in verse 1. Some of the elders of Israel came to me and sat down before me.

Some of the elders, leaders. And as Ezekiel was a prophet of God. He was much younger than these old men.

He was only around 30 years old. But he was a prophet. The Lord said to him, Son of man, these men have set up idols in their hearts and put right before their faces the stumbling block of their iniquity.

He was not speaking about external idols. He was speaking about idols in the heart even in the Old Testament. How much more it is in the New Covenant.

This is what leads finally to Babylon. So I want you to turn now to Revelation chapter 17 where we read of this Babylon. Chapter 17 and 18 are a description of Babylon which is going to be destroyed.

It's a picture of the false church. And I'll show you why it is a picture of the false church. In chapter 19 you read about the bride of Jesus Christ getting ready for the marriage of the Lamb.

That's the contrast. And she's called in chapter 21 Jerusalem. In Revelation 17 he says I'll show you.

Come, I'll show you the judgment of the great harlot. Harlot means prostitute. If a man is married to if a woman you know we're supposed to be the bride of Christ.

If you're married to A a girl is married to brother A and he fools around, she fools around with B she's a prostitute. She's devoted more to B than to A she's a prostitute. That's how harlotry comes.

But if she's married to B and is with B all the time then she's not a prostitute. Isn't that clear? Okay. A is Christ.

B is money. I told you that. Jehovah and Baal.

A person says I'm engaged to Christ but he's more interested in money. What do you call him? Harlot. Prostitute.

But a person who's married to money like the people in the world they're not prostitutes. They're true to their husband. They don't claim to be married to Christ.

You need to understand what harlotry is. No non-Christian can ever be a harlot according to this. It has to be a Christian who claims to be married to Christ but his devotion is to what would you think if your wife claims to be married to you and is more interested in another man than the neighbor or something.

Wouldn't you call her a harlot? It's exactly what the Bible says. Now let me show you another verse that'll make it clearer. James chapter 4. Why another church? Because God doesn't want a harlot to be the bride of Christ.

And so when the church goes the way of harlotry some people come out of it and form the bride of Christ. James chapter 4. He's talking to beloved brethren. You know you see that many times.

Chapter 2 verse 1. My brethren. Chapter 3. My brethren. Many times.

My beloved brethren. What does he tell my beloved brethren? Chapter 4 verse 4. You adulteresses. How do you like that? My beloved brethren you adulteresses.

Don't you know that friendship with B the world is hostility towards God. A. That's how you become an adulteress. Here is God and here is the world.

And the world includes mammon, honor, so many things. And the God of this world you know Jesus himself said is the devil. The Bible says Jesus came not only to save us from sin but to save us from this world system.

In the Old Testament there was no such thing as being saved from the world because nobody had any understanding of what the world system was. There was no conflict with Satan in the Old Testament. They only fought with human beings in the Old Testament.

They had no understanding of the supernatural world. That came to light only after people received the baptism in the Holy Spirit. Until people are baptized in the Holy Spirit they are unaware of the supernatural realm that is all around us.

And even when many were baptized in the Holy Spirit when the devil sees that these fellows are going to become a threat to me he dilutes them. He makes them compromise, leads them astray here and there and they suddenly come down to the realm of earth again which has happened to the vast majority of people who say they speak in tongues. I mean if you watch Christian television you'll see that perhaps 90% of the people who keep on asking money from poor people are those who speak in tongues.

It amazes me. They claim to be better than those other people who are not baptized in the Holy Spirit. If you are baptized in the Holy Spirit you should be more free from the love of money than others who are not baptized in the Holy Spirit if it is the Spirit of Christ.

But if it's not the Spirit of Christ, if it's a counterfeit you'll love money more like all these people. This counterfeit, people ask me how do you know a counterfeit gift? I say show me a healer who doesn't ask people for money like Jesus, the apostles. They never ask people for money.

These are the two gods. Babylon is centered around money and the world and honor and position and all that. And where a servant of God, where a preacher, an elder is interested in that, he will only build

Babylon when he's seeking his own honor.

You adulteresses, don't you know that friendship with the world is hostility toward God? For anyone who wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God. How many people believe this? If I become a friend, not worldly people. God loved the worldly people.

He loved the filthiest sinners on the earth. He came to call the sinners. But this world system, if anyone loves this world system he cannot, he not only can't love God, he's the enemy of God.

Beloved brethren, don't become enemies of God. Let me show you another verse. This is the burden of James.

In 2nd Corinthians chapter 11. Paul uses this language. Verse 2. I'm jealous for you with a godly jealousy for I betrothed you to one husband so that to Christ one day I might present you as a pure virgin not as a harlot.

And when people go into harlotry God's servants pull out some people so that they'll be a pure virgin for Christ. But I'm afraid, Paul says, like the serpent deceived Eve by his cleverness your minds, it's always in the mind. If your mind, it's a question of where your mind is.

Your mind can be led astray from simple, pure devotion to Christ your bridegroom slowly led astray into something else. That's how Babylon is formed. But then the person who comes and preaches will preach another Jesus who is more interested in making you healthy and wealthy than in making you holy.

In fact, he doesn't make you holy at all. He just makes you healthy and wealthy. Well, a lot of businesses in the world can make you wealthy and a lot of hospitals can make you healthy but they can't make you holy.

Jesus does something which no human being can do. You know, I always think of people who say that Jesus makes us wealthy. Do you know that people of other religions say the same thing? Our dear Muslim friends say Allah is the true God because they say, look at all the oil he's given us.

All the nations come begging to us for oil. Allah has made us wealthy. All the sheikhs of all those Gulf countries and others, extremely wealthy.

Islam, they say, has made us rich. The richest businessmen in India worship the goddess Lakshmi, Hindu goddess of wealth. They say Lakshmi has made us wealthy.

Christian preachers today say Jesus has made us wealthy. Now, some confusion here. Is it Allah who makes people wealthy or Lakshmi who makes people wealthy or Jesus who makes people wealthy? And I'll tell you one thing.

If you look comparative wealth, I think Allah has probably made people more wealthy than the Christian preachers and Lakshmi also. But Christian preachers are way down in wealth. Jesus doesn't seem to be doing a very good job of making wealth compared to all these people.

Why? Is this Christianity? Healthy? Jesus makes us healthy? The healthiest people in the world, by the way, are not Christians. And there are enough sick people in the charismatic Pentecostal churches that preach healing as much as in any other church. We must not live in a world of delusion.

It's devotion to Christ, whether I'm rich or poor. It's devotion to Christ, whether I'm sick or healthy. That's the thing which makes us a virgin, it says here.

Otherwise, we drift away with the very clever tactics of Satan using language that convinces our mind. Satan is a great psychologist. He studied man for 6,000 years.

He's influenced the great teachers of psychology. And Christians go and get degrees in psychology too. And they imagine that they are mouthpieces of God.

That's how deception comes. And they preach another Jesus. And they receive, it says here, another spirit.

Verse 4. Some other spirit. A spirit that doesn't make them holy, that just makes them babble in tongues. Counterfeit tongues.

90% of the tongues I've heard is counterfeit. I can sense in my spirit, this is not Holy Spirit. This is just somebody repeating three or four syllables back and forth.

Don't be fooled by that. Genuine tongues is a language. I mean, even if you don't know Chinese, if you see somebody speaking Chinese, you can make out he's speaking some language or any other language in the world.

If a person is speaking, he's not just babbling two or three syllables back and forth. What a disgrace and a dishonor to the name of Christ to call that speaking in tongues as if the Holy Spirit is such a hopeless, useless spirit. It just makes people mutter two or three syllables back and forth.

That's not speaking in tongues. I've spoken in tongues for 34 years. It's a language, brother and sister.

It's a language, just like any other language, English, Tamil, Malayalam, any other language you speak to God. Don't be fooled by all this nonsense going on in the world today. Another spirit and a different gospel.

Not the gospel of the glory of Christ, but some other gospel. See, it says here in chapter 4, the gospel, the gospel is called in chapter 4, verse 4, the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. The gospel is that I can partake of that glory of Jesus Christ and become like Him.

That gospel is not preached. Some other gospel. Why another church? Because God wants a church that will preach the true gospel when there are so many counterfeits going on.

God wants churches to lead people to the genuine baptism in the Holy Spirit that will free people from the love of money, that will free people from sin, that will free people from the world, that will make them frighten the devil instead of the devil frightening them, that will give them authority over Satan, that will make them build godly homes, and that will prepare the people like John the Baptist prepared people for the second coming of Christ. Let's turn back. The verse in Malachi first.

Malachi chapter 1. I told you the Old Testament history is a picture of Israel's decline. They started out in great power in the days of Joshua and declined. Sometimes a prophet would come and lift them up and they would go down in the dumps again.

Now that God would raise up a prophet, they'd go down in the dumps again. Then he'd raise up a prophet, they'd come out a little while and go down in the dumps again. Few people would respond.

And finally Malachi was the last prophet and the Lord says, I've finished with you all. Christendom's history has been like that. Started out with great power in the acts of the apostles just like the book of Joshua.

Decline, decline. And now and then God would raise up a man, a prophet, who would lift up people. A few would respond and would come up for a while.

Then the prophet would die. And the denomination he started would sink because his followers didn't know God. They just held on to the doctrine.

And they became prosperous and became Babylon in a little while. Then God raises up somebody else. And his movement mows along for some time.

And then he dies. And then it's down in the dumps again. And then God raises up.

This has been the history of Christianity always. Every spiritual movement rises, raised up by a man, then declines over a period of years. And God has to raise up something else.

It's always been like that, a death and a resurrection. And that goes into death, another resurrection. And that movement goes into death, another resurrection of a small group.

It's been like that. That's why we have so many churches. They are needed so that those who are approved of God will always be manifest so that God will always have a witness on this earth, a true witness.

It may be a small one, but it will be a pure one. Somewhere here and there, there will be a light that's shining for God as a pure virgin for Christ. So in Malachi, God says, He says a time is coming.

I will not accept. He says first of all in verse 10, You don't waste your time kindling a fire on my altar. I'm not pleased with you.

I will not accept an offering from you. I wish somebody would shut the gates, he says in verse 10 of chapter 1. I wish somebody would shut the gates of the temple. I've had enough of all this.

I don't want any of your meetings and your services and your conferences and all this rubbish. I wish somebody would close all these things down. But do you think they closed down? Do you think they closed down the conference and the meetings because God is not there? No, they'll continue.

Because the pastors have to earn their salary. The superintendents have to earn their salary. How can you close down the church? The Lord says, I'm not pleased with you, and I will not accept an offering from you, but, now listen to this.

Israel, you think you're the only ones I'm going to use? You think I'm dependent on you just because you let me down? Forget it. I'm going to raise up another movement. This is the picture of why another church.

God rejected Israel because they failed. God started with what we call the church today. The same thing has happened in 21 centuries.

What happened to Israel happens to this church raised up by the apostles. If that declines, God pulls out another thing. He says, I'm going to have, from the east to the west, verse 11, my name will be great among all the nations, and in every place, a pure offering is going to be offered to me, and my name will

be great.

When we started this church 34 and more years ago, in our little house with just a few families, that's the verse that we started with. The Lord wants a pure offering. Not a big offering, a pure one.

Israel was big, but it wasn't pure. The Lord says, I've had enough of all of you. I want a group coming out of this.

You know the first church was a group that came out of Israel. Peter, James, John, Paul, Matthew, all those fellows. That was why there was another church.

It came out of Israel. And when this thing and the apostles died, and all these things they started became like old Israel, something comes out of that. A few years, 50 years later, that becomes all corrupt.

Something comes out of that. That's how it's been. But always God is seeking for a pure testimony.

Like Paul says, I'm jealous over you with a godly jealousy, because I want to present a pure virgin to Christ. And that's why he spoke to them, and labored with them, and corrected them, and urged them, and rebuked them, and tells them in 1 Corinthians 4.20, shall I come to you with a rod? I'm not interested in all your words, he says. The kingdom of God is not in words, but in power.

John the Baptist came preaching the kingdom of heaven is at hand. The church is supposed to be the kingdom of heaven. On the day of Pentecost, heaven came down into the hearts of 120 people.

And they were supposed to be a heavenly people. The Holy Spirit lifted them up in their spirit into the heavenlies, like it says in Ephesians 2, and seated them there. That didn't happen until the day of Pentecost.

But along with Christ in their spirit, they sat there, seated with Christ in the heavenlies. And they lived there until it became a mixed multitude pretty quickly. In chapter 6, they start grumbling about food.

There's partiality. The Jewish servers would give more food to the Jewish widows and less food to the non-Jewish widows. Partiality.

Complained about food. Are these heavenly people? How quickly they descend to earth. So we see also in the church, many places, it starts with great power.

And pretty soon the devil comes in and corrupts it with the world. But the Lord is then going to look for another pure offering. In every nation, the Lord will look for a pure offering.

Revelation chapter 17 again. Yeah, one more verse before I go on, and that's in James. You know, we saw that you adulterers and adulteresses in chapter 4 verse 4. I want you to see the next verse after that.

Beloved brethren, chapter 4 verse 4, you adulteresses, friendship with the world is enmity towards God. Whoever wants to be a friend of the world will be the enemy of God. Do you think the scripture speaks to no purpose? He jealously, ah, the same word that Paul uses.

I have a godly jealousy to present you as a pure virgin. He jealously desires our spirit which he created to dwell in us. He wants that spirit to be unpollutedly his.

He's speaking about our spirit, not the Holy Spirit. He desires the spirit that he has made to dwell in us. That spirit that was dead, that was born again to life when we were converted and received Christ.

He wants that jealously for himself. It's like a husband who has a pure, you know, there's a pure jealousy. Paul speaks about that in 2 Corinthians 11, a godly jealousy.

A husband tells his wife, Darling, I want you to be mine, exclusively. I don't want you to ever think of another man. Is that demanding too much? Every husband wants that from his wife.

Jesus Christ wants that from his bride. I want you to think of me and never there'll be a rival to my affection in your heart. He jealously desires our spirit.

Now we turn to Revelation 17 again and we see Babylon. Babylon is called the great city. Verse 5, Babylon the great.

11 times in Revelation Babylon is called great. The mark of a hallowed church is human greatness, bigness, mega church, great church, big church, great building, great music, great preaching, great eloquence really, not necessarily anointed, great, great, great, great, great people. In contrast, Jerusalem in chapter 21 and verse 2 is called the holy city.

There's the contrast between a great city and a holy city. That's the contrast between Babylon and Jerusalem. A great church and a holy church.

What did we see in Malachi? Israel was a great people, millions of them. And God says, I'm fed up with you. I don't want any of you.

That is the biggest mega church of all, Israel. How many millions? God said, I'm finished with a whole lot of you. I know you've got the Bible.

They had the true Bible, Genesis to Malachi. I'm finished with you. What I'm looking for is a pure offering.

And we see here a holy city. So the true church emphasizes holiness. The false church majors on greatness.

Bigness in the world. What does that bigness consist of? We read here in verse 3. The woman was sitting on a scarlet beast. And if you read Daniel and you read the chapters here, the beast is a picture of the greatest political power.

The Antichrist. It's a mixture of religion and politics. Babylon.

In any church where there's politics, there's Babylon. In the true church of Jesus Christ, there's no politics. There's nobody trying to form one party and another party.

No. Church is not a democracy where people vote for who's going to be the elder. And people go around canvassing for votes.

That's Babylon through and through. That's politics. That's okay for the world.

Not for a church. And yet that's how even the Pope is elected. By votes.

Where do you see apostles being elected by votes in the New Testament? Where do you see elders being appointed in a church by votes in the New Testament? Nowhere. Christendom has drifted. Even many Pentecostal denominations.

The leaders are elected by votes. It's politics. Where do you hear of votes? Isn't it in politics? In democracy? The church is not a dictatorship.

No one man rule. The church is not a democracy. The church is a family.

A family which has got a father and mother and children. Babies, teenagers, grown up, who grew up to be fathers. That's the church.

And the main thing is holiness. So when a church becomes great and neglects holiness, there has to be another one. A pure virgin for Christ.

And the other thing about Babylon that makes it corrupt is money. You see in chapter 18 the kings of the earth chapter 18 First of all let me point out verse 4. There are God's people sitting in Babylon. Remember this.

We don't say that everybody who's in a Babylonian church is unconverted. But there are people there who belong to Christ who should not be there. Chapter 18 verse 4. I heard a voice from heaven saying Come out of Babylon my people.

Oh, so God's people are sitting in Babylon today. And the message from heaven is Come out of Babylon my people. Come out of that corrupt system.

Come out of a church that's not preaching holiness. Come out of a church that's living in spiritual adultery. Come out of her.

I know you're my people but come out of her. What are you doing sitting there? If you're my bride, why are you fooling around with somebody else? And then it says in verse 11 The merchants of the earth 1811. Weep because no one buys their cargos anymore.

Christianity has become big business. Haven't you seen in Christmas time commercial street people of every religion put up pictures of Santa Claus and pictures of snow which we have never seen in our whole life in India to cotton balls up there to symbolize snow and all to get. It's business.

Business. Business. Make money with business.

Jesus stickers and Jesus t-shirts and there's a lot of money in Christianity I tell you. Write books and become millionaires and produce CDs music CDs and become millionaires. It's big business, Christianity.

What happens when it all collapses? The merchants of the earth weep because nobody's buying all those CDs and t-shirts and books anymore which made their authors and singers millionaires. And the other thing that makes Babylon Babylon is music. Verse 22 The sound of harpists and musicians and flute players and trumpeters are no longer heard.

The early church never had any of these things. They had godliness. They never attracted people with music or money or psychology.

They attracted people by their message of godliness devotion to Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit. So when Christendom drifts in the direction of Babylon, God says Come out of her my people. One person here, one person there, one person here comes out and those five or six people meet together and form another church.

Why another church? Because they heard God's voice saying Come out of her my people. Chapter 19. Do you know this is the first time in the New Testament the word Hallelujah comes? Christendom is full of people who shout Hallelujah.

Now let me tell you all of you, the first time in the New Testament the word Hallelujah comes they never say an empty Hallelujah. Today's Christians say empty Hallelujahs. Here they always say Hallelujah because.

Hallelujah because of this. Hallelujah because of that. When I say, when I hear somebody say Hallelujah, I say what for? Because of what? The first time Hallelujah comes in the New Testament is Revelation Chapter 19 and read it.

Hallelujah because he has judged the harlot. Verse 2. Hallelujah because Babylon is destroyed. Is that why people are singing Hallelujah today? They're sitting in Babylon and singing Hallelujah.

And the people and the elders said yes Amen. Verse 4. Hallelujah. They also said Hallelujah.

And they say finally in verse 6 Hallelujah because the Lord our God Almighty is finally reigning in the church. No longer the harlot. Now let us rejoice and be glad because the virgin is coming forth, that pure church.

Verse 7. As a bride ready to marry her Lord. This is the end. We are moving towards brothers and sisters.

He who has a year to hear let him hear what the Spirit is saying to the churches in these days. Beloved brethren you adulteresses know you not that friendship with the world will make you an enemy of God. Come out of that.

It's not a question of one particular denomination. You can sit in this church and be part of Babylon in your spirit. If it were just coming out of some church and joining some other church that would be easy.

It's not. It's in your spirit. Idolatry as we saw is in our mind.

We have to get out of it in our mind in our spirit. God devilishly desires our spirit. It's not just that we take our body and put it in a seat in some other building.

In our spirit. He who has years to hear let him hear. Let's pray.

Heavenly Father we beseech you that you will stir us in our hearts until we respond wholeheartedly to your loving long suffering call. Bring down our pride. The pride we have in our understanding and in our mind and thinking that everything is okay.

Bring us down before you Lord. Help us to recognize where you're moving by your spirit in these days and to be there. To be a pure virgin church for you on this earth.

We pray in Jesus name. Amen.

Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/lfcMjYD2U38.mp4>
Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/zac-poonen/coming-out-of-babylon/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net