

God Wants to Fill You with His Holy Spirit

by Zac Poonen

This sermon emphasizes the importance of seeking the fullness of the Holy Spirit in our lives. It highlights the need to endorse God's promises with faith, especially in areas of assurance of salvation, boldness in preaching, and love towards God and others. The speaker shares personal testimonies of how seeking the Holy Spirit transformed his life, leading to a deeper love for God and others, and a genuine pursuit of holiness.

Scripture: John 6:37, Romans 5:5, Romans 5:5, Hebrews 8:10, 2 Corinthians 1:20, Galatians 3:14, Matthew 7:7, Matthew 7:11, Hebrews 10:5, Psalms 40:8, Psalms 40:8, Ephesians 5:18, Ephesians 5:20, Ephesians 5:21

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Description

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Transcript

Brothers and sisters, I'd like to turn you to the first two promises in the New Testament. When you finish with the pages of the Old Testament and turn to the Gospel of Matthew, it begins with two promises and it's important for us to look at those promises because that's how the New Testament begins and both of these promises are very controversial subjects in Christendom today. My own conviction is that very few believers experience in their life the first two promises in the New Testament.

There are many promises in the Old Testament that God will make you wealthy, heal your sicknesses and he will defeat your enemies and he'll do many wonderful things on earth for you. No promises about heaven or about a change of your character. And the sad thing is the vast majority of believers, when they accept Christ, they are more taken up with these Old Testament promises.

And even many who claim to be in a new covenant church are still occupied with the old covenant promises of blessing and healing and earthly needs and they rejoice in God providing their earthly needs, etc. So let's turn seriously to the promises in the New Testament. Number one, Matthew 1 verse 21, the last part it says, you shall, this is what the angel told Joseph, you shall call his name Jesus and here is the promise.

He will save, not forgive, he will save his people from their sins. Of course he'll forgive, but forgiveness is an Old Testament promise from Psalm 103. A thousand years before Jesus came, David said, bless the Lord, O my soul who forgives all your sins.

So that's not something new. But the new thing is here, that after forgiving our sins, he will save us from our sins. There's a lot of difference between being forgiven of something we have done and being saved from doing that same thing again.

That's how the New Testament begins. And you know, in a couple of pages, the New Testament goes into the Sermon on the Mount, where it says we should not be angry, we should not lust after women, we should not love money. And boy, how in the world can we keep it? Most believers don't even attempt to keep it.

But if you start with this promise that he will save you from your sins, you don't have to try and save yourself from all those things. Many people are trying to save themselves from anger, save themselves from lusting after women, save themselves from anxiety and save themselves from many forbidden things, save themselves from murmuring and complaining. You'll never do it.

You won't do it in 100 years. Even if you do it, it'd be like an external cleansing. But when Jesus saves, he saves from within, he will save you from your sins.

So that's the first thing we need to remember that Jesus primarily came to save us from every single wretched sin that our flesh makes us commit. And now the next promise is, how is he going to do it? The first is a promise that he will do it. And the second promise is how he's going to do it.

Again, it's not a question of what we do. In the old covenant, it was what man does. You must not murder, you must not steal, you must not cheat, you must not covet after your neighbor.

And I'm sorry to say many, many Christians, even in our new covenant churches, CFC churches, when they listen to a command in the New Testament, do all things without murmuring and complaining. Be anxious for nothing. Rejoice in the Lord always.

They take these commands in the same spirit as the old covenant commandments, thou shalt not commit adultery, thou shalt not steal. And they seek with their own strength and stride to try and keep it. And the honest believer will acknowledge that he miserably fails.

He cannot keep them. He may keep one or two here and there, but more than 90% of them he cannot keep. Or if he does keep them, it's just a little externally before the eyes of men, they don't keep it in their heart.

Now, if you're fed up with that type of hypocritical life, where you are only doing these things on the outside and getting a good reputation before men, if you're fed up with that and say, Lord, I'm fed up with getting a reputation before men for being a holy new covenant Christian, I want reality inside, then the Lord will show you that he came to save you from your sins. And here is how you'll do it. The second promise in the New Testament is Matthew chapter three, verse 11.

This is so simple. And some of you children listening, I hope you will listen also because Jesus came for children too. This is not just for grownups.

The last part of Matthew 311, John the Baptist says, Jesus will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. That's the second promise in the New Testament. Baptize is a word which is not understood by many.

It's a Greek word, which means immerse. In 2000 years ago, if a Greek person spoke about dipping his hand in water, he'd say, I baptize my hand in water. It's a Greek word, which means I immerse my hand in water.

He will immerse you in the Holy Spirit and fire, just like water baptism. You're immersed completely in the water and taken out. Jesus will immerse you in the Holy Spirit and fire.

And here the Holy Spirit is pictured like fire. John the Baptist said, I can't do that. I'm only a man.

I can baptize you in water. Jesus will immerse you in the Holy Spirit and fire. There are people who come to me, Brother Zach, will you lay hands on me so that I can be filled with the Holy Spirit? I say, like John the Baptist, no, I can baptize you with water, but only Jesus can baptize you in the Holy Spirit and fire.

Go to him. He'll do it. So these are the first two promises.

And when you read them, you know, like everything else in the New Testament, when the Lord promises something, if you earnestly seek for it, the Lord will show you how you can have it. If you're careless, you read a promise like that and say, oh, well, okay. If he wants to do it, let him do it.

You'll never experience anything. There's a law in the Bible, which is mentioned in the Old Testament and the New Testament, and I never get tired of repeating it. And that applies to being saved from sin and being immersed in the Holy Spirit's fire.

And that law is, in Jeremiah 29, 13, the Lord says, you will seek me and find me when you search for me with all your heart. The way people seek with all their hearts to make money, the way people seek with all their hearts to be healed from cancer, the way people seek with all their hearts, if their child is seriously sick, go from one hospital, one doctor to another to get that child healed. They're not doing half-heartedly.

And immigrants, when they want to come to the United States, oh, how hard they seek with all their hearts to get an immigrant visa. They'll never give up. These are all examples of people who seek for earthly things.

It is possible for a man to seek wholeheartedly for something earthly. Unfortunately, Christians do not seek to be saved from sin with the same eagerness with which they sought for many earthly things in their life. They don't seek to be filled with the Holy Spirit with the same earnestness with which they seek for other things in their life, for healing, for money, etc.

Well, no wonder they never get saved from sin, and they never get filled with the Holy Spirit, except with some cheap counterfeit, which is good for nothing. And the New Testament says similar words in Hebrews 11, and verse 6, that there it says in Hebrews 11, that when you come to God, you must first of all believe that He exists. That's easy.

But then Hebrews 11, 6, it says if you come to God, you must believe another thing, that He's a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him. That's the meaning of that word in the King James Version. It says that who diligently seek Him.

So when you come to God, you must believe that He rewards only those who diligently seek Him, those who seek Him with all their hearts. No wonder many Christians have never experienced being saved from sin, or being immersed in the fire of the Holy Spirit, being set on fire by God, because they're not seeking Him earnestly. They're seeking many things on earth earnestly, but they're not seeking God earnestly.

When Jesus spoke about the Holy Spirit, I want you to see three verses in John's Gospel. The Holy Spirit is pictured like water, and Jesus used three pictures of water in the Gospel of John. I want to point them out to you.

The first is John Chapter 3, where He's speaking about being born again. That's the first step in the Christian life, where you enter into God's kingdom by being born again, or born from above, like it says here, or it's also called here, born of the Holy Spirit. That's the first step.

John Chapter 3, Verse 5, you've got to be born of water and the Holy Spirit. Instead of and, you can translate that as even the Holy Spirit. Born of water, even the Holy Spirit, because Jesus used the Holy Spirit, water, as a picture of the Holy Spirit.

And this is like, you know, the psalmist said in Psalm 116 and verse 13, I will lift up the cup of salvation and call on the name of the Lord. A heart is pictured like a cup that I lift up to the Lord, and the Lord fills that cup with water, with the Holy Spirit. That's the first step.

I'm born of the Spirit. The Spirit takes over whatever part of my life I yield to Him. Then Jesus, when this is to be born of the Spirit, we're a cup of salvation.

Then in John Chapter 4, it goes to a second stage, and that is, Jesus said to the woman of Samaria at the well, whoever drinks of this, John 4, 14, the water that I give to Him will become in Him a well of water, springing up to eternal life, like a spring of water. So the first was a cup of water. It's very little.

And the second stage is a spring or a well of water, springing up and giving us more and more of God's eternal life. So the first stage, the Holy Spirit brings us to new birth. It's like a cup.

But then He leads us to the next stage, where the cup becomes like a well, which satisfies all my needs. A cup can only satisfy my need for a little while, but a well is endless. People use, if they have a well in their house, they can keep on drawing from that well for a hundred years.

It satisfies every need of water in that house. Water is used for many things, and everything is from the well. This is how it was in the olden days.

So this is stage two, where the Holy Spirit comes in, satisfies every need I have in my life. Need to overcome whatever is pulling me down in my life. Helping me to overcome.

Spring of water, springing up. And the third picture Jesus used is in John chapter 7, where He said, He who believes in me, verse 37, John 7, 37, if anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink. You see the same principle again.

You've got to be thirsty, otherwise don't come. Whom did Jesus invite to come to Him? If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me. Or in Matthew 11, 28, He said, come to me those who labor and are heavy laden.

Or I could paraphrase it as, come to me those who are sick and tired of their defeated life, who are fed up with that defeated life, come to me. The same thing here. Thirsty, fed up with that defeated life.

Do you fall in that category? Fed up with a life that looks nice on the outside, but inwardly defeated in the thoughts, in the hearts? Are you fed up with that? There are very few people, most Christians, as I said, are satisfied with a good external testimony. And they don't realize. They're just being hypocrites.

Because man looks on the outward appearance and God looks in the heart. And they see corruption in their heart, which all the people in that church don't see. And they're satisfied.

Do you think God will ever meet with such a person? Not in a hundred years. Because they are satisfied with this double life, one before God and the other before men. And they're happy that men think highly of them.

There's no thirst in them for this inner life of being saved from sin within. If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me. And from his innermost being, rivers of living water will flow.

So it started with a cup, then a water, then a well, and then a river, and then many rivers. So cup is just for my salvation. Well is just to satisfy my own needs of the Holy Spirit ministering to me.

But a river is where God makes me a blessing to hundreds of people. And that river can flow from you. It says here one river will become many rivers.

How many believers experience this? How many believers even come to stage two of having the Holy Spirit satisfying every need in their inner life? They don't even get there. And very few get beyond that to rivers flowing in many directions, blessing people. Is this for some special type of believer? Is this only for preachers and those called to full-time Christian work? No.

It says it is for those who believe. He who believes in me. Are you one of those who believe in Jesus Christ? Then this verse 38 is for you, my brother, my sister, my dear young boy, young girl.

If you believe in Jesus Christ, it's for you. He who believes in me. Can be a little child.

You believe in him. And you say, Lord Jesus, I want a life where my life is a blessing, not to one or two people, but to many people. Not with my own effort.

A river is not pumped. Nobody pumps a river. It flows by the work of God.

It's not by my struggling, struggling, struggling. It's a life flowing out from us. My dear brothers and sisters, this is the fullness of the Holy Spirit promised to every believer.

He who believes in me. It was not possible in the Old Testament. It says here, this verse 39, John 7, the spirit was not given in this way until Jesus was glorified.

In the old covenant, the spirit only came upon people, anointing them for a service, never came within to flow out from the innermost being. Now, the other thing I want to show you is about this river, you know, in the, you know, the Bible begins with the river and ends with the river. It says in Genesis 3 in Eden, there were four rivers.

And in Revelation 22, when you come to the end of the Bible, it says there's a river of the water of life flowing from the throne of God. So river is a picture of the Holy Spirit right from beginning till the end of the Bible. And this particular, it says here, as the scripture has said, John 7, 38.

I want to ask you brothers and sisters a little question. If you have been a believer for more than three or four years, and you've been reading the Bible, I want to ask you whether you meditate on the scriptures, or you just read, ease your conscience, read 10 verses or one chapter, close the Bible and go. But you'll never make progress in your Christian life that way, because the Bible says, it's only Psalm 1, it's only the one who meditates on God's word whose life will prosper.

So others will not prosper. It's one of the first things God taught me. I was converted 61 years ago.

And one of the first things that happened to me, I got a hunger for God's word. You know, that's the mark of a healthy baby. When a baby is born, it cries.

And it's trying for milk. And 1 Peter 2, it says, we must desire the sincere milk of the word of God like newborn babies. And if you hear or go to a house and see a newborn baby crying, you know, definitely it's crying for milk.

It's not crying for anything else. And if it doesn't cry, there's something wrong with that child. And that's one mark of a really good new birth.

There's a cry for the milk of the word of God. It came to me, nobody taught me to read God's word. I found when I was born again, Christ came into my life.

I had a hunger to read the Bible. And read and read and understand it and cry out. It was exactly like a baby crying for milk.

And I wasn't a preacher. I wasn't reading it to preach anywhere because I didn't get any opportunity to preach. I was reading it for my feeling, my own soul.

And if that has not happened to you, my dear brother, sister, go to God again and surrender your whole life to him and say, Lord, give me a genuine new birth where I will be born again and really cry out like a healthy baby. Maybe you are born again, but maybe you're like these premature babies born when they are six months in the womb and they can't speak. They can't cry.

They're to be kept in an incubator. Lots of believers are like babies who should be kept in an incubator, not for two or three months, but for 20 years, because there's no hunger, no thirst for the word of God. I'm not saying they're not born again, but they are born again, babies who should be in incubators and they should have got out of it 20 years ago, but they're still there.

Well, it's not too late to rectify the situation. Cry out to God now and say, Lord, give me a hunger and a thirst for God's word, not to ease your conscience. Oh, I read my Bible today.

That's not why a baby, that's not the way a baby asks for milk. It's not to ease his conscience and say, oh, I cried for milk today. No, that's a tremendous need in that baby.

I want milk. I want milk. How many times a day? So what I was saying is that when you read a verse like this, as the scripture says, from his innermost being will flow rivers of living water.

I want to challenge all of you, my dear brothers and sisters who are listening to me. I'm sure many of you have read that verse many times or heard it. Can you tell me, because it says here, Jesus said, as the scripture said.

Do you know where the scripture says that? Jesus was quoting the Old Testament. So when you read a verse like that, do you have a desire to find out where does it say that in the Old Testament? The mark of a serious Christian studying God's word and say, I want to find out where it says that. The mark of a lazy Christian is, okay, it's all right, let me go to the next verse.

It must be saying it somewhere in the Old Testament. You know, God doesn't reward such people. God told Adam, by the sweat of your brow, you will earn your bread.

You got to perspire to earn bread from the farm. And you got to perspire studying God's word to earn bread from God's word. That's God's law.

Let me tell you where it is. That scripture is in Ezekiel 47, where Jesus speaks about this river flowing out from the innermost being. And here the human being is pictured like the temple of God.

You know, the body is the temple of the Holy Spirit. And here it says in Ezekiel 47 about a temple. And from that, underneath the door of that temple, a trickle of water comes out.

I don't have time to pause here. You just read it in your own time, the first 12 verses. It begins like a trickle.

And then the water is reaching up to the ankles, and then up to the knees, and then up to his hip. And finally became a river in which he could swim. That's for the fullness of the spirit.

And you know what happens when a person swims in the water, his feet are removed from the earth. Up to that point, his feet were touching the earth, up to the ankles, up to the knees, and up to the hip. But a time came when the feet were removed from the earth, detached from earthly attachments, detached from earthly things, detached from earthly loves carried by the Holy Spirit in the direction the Holy Spirit wants you to go.

That's the picture of rivers of living water here. That's what God wants to do in your life, in every life. Every one of you listening to me, if you're born again, I want to tell you that is God's will for you.

Every boy, every girl, every man or woman who surrendered to the Lordship of Jesus Christ, I want to say to you in Jesus' name, Jesus wants to fill you with the Holy Spirit. That's not a special privilege for some people, it's for every single believer. And let me now turn to John's Gospel, where Jesus, just before he went to the cross in John 14, he spoke to his disciples some of the most important things that he wanted to say.

John's Gospel, chapter 14, he said in verse 15, John 14, 15, if you love me, you will keep my commandments. One sentence, but before we go to the next verse, think of what those commandments are. Don't get angry.

Don't ever get angry. Anger is in the heart. Ecclesiastes chapter 7 says, anger is in the heart of a fool.

Anyone who's got anger in his heart, the Bible calls him a fool. Not me, the Bible calls him a fool. And when it comes out of his mouth, Jesus said in Matthew 5, verse 22 onwards, that the man is in danger of going to hell.

That's one commandment. The other commandment is, you must not lust with your eyes after any woman. That's another sin that can take you to hell.

Jesus said, you must love your enemies. Other commandments like that, those commandments are so difficult. And so immediately the question comes within us when Jesus says, if you love me, keep my commandments.

You say, Lord, I love you, but I can't keep your commandments. I want to. Do you want to? Well, then the Lord goes to the next verse.

I will ask the father and he will give you a helper. A helper for what? The previous verse, a helper to help you keep the commandments. I love that.

When Jesus spoke about the Holy Spirit to his disciples at the last supper, he spoke about the Holy Spirit as one who's going to help them to keep his commandments. That's why I wanted the Holy Spirit. And that's why you should seek the Holy Spirit too, to help you keep God's commandments, which you can't keep without his power.

And that is, he said in verse 17, the spirit of truth. And the next thing the Holy Spirit does is make us children who have a father. It says in verse 18, I will not leave you as orphans.

Without the Holy Spirit, we are like orphans. Christians who are not filled with the Holy Spirit act like orphans. How will this need of mine be met? What about that need of mine? What when there's a pandemic going on? Will I get hit? Am I going to be the next person going to be hit with this sickness, anxiety and fear? Do you think Jesus ever lived with that type of anxiety and fear? Do you think if Jesus walked on this earth today, he would live with that type of anxiety and fear? Oh, will this hit me? Will this touch me? I'm sure he'll be cautious.

He won't tempt God. Because we read once where when the Pharisees were trying to kill him, John chapter 7, verse 1, he didn't go there. There's no virtue in going to a place where people are trying to kill you.

Jesus wasn't trying to show his bravery in some way. When the devil told him to jump off the roof of the temple, saying the angels will protect you, Jesus said, I'm not going to tempt God like that. No, we must be careful in avoiding sickness.

That I agree. But we're not to live in fear and anxiety. Definitely not.

No, it's perfectly all right to wear masks and to keep a social distance and all, but not to have fear or anxiety. Not at all. It's because people are orphans.

They don't have a father in reality. Or if they do have a father, he's in some distant country. Imagine a person, a young boy, who's got a father living in some other country, 10,000 miles away.

You ask him, his son, have you got a father? Yeah, I got a father. Do you ever see him? No, I don't see him. But he sends me letters now and then.

But when you're in need, is he there to help you? No, he's 10,000 miles away. That's how a lot of God's children are. You ask him, have you got a father? Yeah, I've got a father.

Where is he? He's in millions of miles away in heaven. He sends me letters in the Bible, but if I have a need, oh, I sent a message to him, but I don't know whether he'll come to help me. These are orphans.

Jesus said, I will not leave you as orphans. We're not supposed to be orphans. We have to behave and live as children of an almighty father who runs this universe and who loves us so much that he gave his only son to die for our sins.

So there you see Jesus spoke about the importance of the Holy Spirit right there. Then I want to show you another passage. You know, I'm convinced that almost all sins that we commit come out of insecurity.

Insecurity. Insecure. Orphans are insecure.

Why do orphans fight back so quickly? Why do they get angry and fight back? I've seen with orphans, they're like that. You can't blame them because they never had the love of a father or mother. And I find a lot of insecurity in Christians.

And that's what makes them sin so easily. That's what makes them criticize, backbite, speak evil of others, try to show that they are better than others, all because of insecurity. And insecurity is the characteristic of an orphan.

And to all such Christians, I say, brother, sister, I say this to you lovingly, you need to be filled with the Holy Spirit. That's what Jesus said to his disciples. Here's another passage, Ephesians 5 and verse 18.

Ephesians 5, 18, it says, be being filled with the spirit. That's the one verse which says that we must continuously be filled with the spirit. That's the meaning here is the present continuous tense.

Be being filled with the spirit. And when you are filled with the spirit, one of the results will be in verse 20, you will always give thanks for everything, for everything that happens in your life. You will give thanks because you know that your heavenly father is controlling everything.

If you're not giving thanks for everything that comes across your life, believing that God is working it for your good, I'll tell you what you need. You need to be filled with the Holy Spirit. And going on from there, you will learn to be subject to one another.

Verse 21. You will not try to boss over people, any Christian who tries to rule over others. He hasn't understood the spirit of Christ.

It says, giving thanks for everything, be subject to one another in the fear of Christ. The picture is here of a body. You know, the Christians are members of a body of which Christ is the head.

And do you know that in this body, every member is subject to the others. For example, if my stomach wants some food, it can't take that food from the plate. It is dependent on the hand taking it.

And the hand is dependent on the mouth opening and swallowing it and the digestive system taking over. And that's what supplies food to the whole body. And then the body needs legs to go from here to the table where the food is.

Every part of the body needs the other. It needs the eyes to see what you're eating. We need ears to hear what people are saying.

We need a tongue to speak. Every part of this body is dependent on another. Be subject to one another in the fear of Christ.

When you have understood the body of Christ, when you recognize that you're not the head, you are one part of a body. One part of a body. I often say, Lord, maybe I'm like a little finger, or like a nail on this finger.

Okay, I'm quite happy to be that one nail on the little finger. That is Zach Coonan. I'm quite happy to be that.

I can fulfill one ministry. When somebody feels scratchy, I can scratch them, save them from getting itched. And to me, that is the ministry of the Word of God, encouraging them.

Yeah, that's it. Nails can do that. Every part of this body can fulfill a ministry.

But it's subject to the others. But I cannot be, a nail cannot live by itself. It's subject to the others.

And when you're filled with the Holy Spirit, you will very easily be subject to others who have a ministry that you don't have. And you won't be trying to show off that your ministry is more powerful than others, or you can preach better than others. These are all orphans.

Orphans are always trying to show, I prayed better than that person in the church. Do you ever do that? When you're asked to pray in public, you try to pray better than somebody else. When you're asked to share something, are you competing with somebody else to show, oh, you can share better than another person? Are you disturbed when people quote somebody else's message, but not yours? Orphan, orphan, orphan.

Ask God to deliver you from being an orphan and to be secure in your Father's love. So when we are filled with the Holy Spirit, we're subject to one another and then our family life is transformed as well. Ephesians 5 verse 22 onwards, where wives are subject to their husbands and husbands loving their wives.

You know how difficult it is to have that type of a family relationship, husband and wife doing exactly what it says in Ephesians 5 verse 22 to 33. Read Ephesians 5, 22 to 33. Very, very few Christian families can testify to that.

What does it prove? They're not filled with the Holy Spirit. If they were filled with the Holy Spirit, they would be able to live that life. And fathers bringing up their children in the discipline and instruction of the Lord, again, the result of being filled with the Holy Spirit.

Ephesians 6 and verse 4. Or resisting the devil and resisting him and standing against him and overcoming him. Ephesians 6 verse 10 onwards, again, the result of being filled with the Holy Spirit. So many things in Scripture in the New Testament are dependent on this Spirit-filled life.

I want to turn now to Matthew chapter 5. I'm just trying to show you where, how this comes up in all of Jesus' teachings. Matthew chapter 5. Matthew chapter 5, 6 and 7, you know, are the Sermon on the Mount, the chapters which are the Sermon on the Mount. And you know, this is perhaps the most difficult commandments that Jesus spoke anywhere in the Gospels.

In fact, anywhere in the New Testament. What a high standard. He said in Matthew 5 that the righteousness of the Pharisees, Matthew 5, 20, was the law, but yours must go way beyond that.

1 John chapter 2, verse 6 says, if you say you abide in Christ, you must walk as Jesus walked, with the same values that he had, the same relationship that he had with the Father. When you read a command

like that in 1 John chapter 2, verse 6, what is your immediate reaction? It could be, ah, that's impossible, forget it. Or, yeah, these are all idealistic verses.

Nobody can ever reach there. You have that approach to God's word. You will never, never fulfill God's will for your life.

Jesus said, if you love me, keep my commandments. Don't say the Bible is the word of God, if you're not willing to take it seriously. I tell people, if you think some command in the Bible is impossible for you to obey, be honest.

Take a pen and scratch it out, and you'll find a lot of verses you have to scratch out of the New Testament. I would not scratch out even one of them. I'd say, Lord, wherever I've not achieved it, I'm aiming for it.

One day I'll climb that mountain, but I'm not going to sit back and say that's a mistake. Don't be a hypocrite. Don't say the Bible is the word of God, and then not take it seriously.

Would you believe that there's a law in this country? For example, you drive cars in the United States, and you drive on the right side of the road. Well, you don't drive on the left side of the road, saying I can do what I feel like. We submit to the law in the country.

Why don't we come to God's word like that, and say, Lord, this is your word. I want to take it just as seriously as the laws of the country. Yeah.

So when you go to Matthew 5, 6, and 7, take it seriously. And if you take it seriously, I'll tell you what will happen. When I began to take it seriously, by the time I came to Matthew 7, verse 6, where all the commandments are, it starts in Matthew 5, verse 3, and ends in Matthew 7, verse 6, all the commandments.

I say, Lord, how in the world can I keep this? And the answer is given in the next verse, Matthew 7, verse 7. Ask, and it will be given to you. What should I ask? I should ask for a good gift, verse 11, from my heavenly Father. Matthew 7, verse 11.

And what is that good gift? When you compare Matthew 7, verse 11, if you being evil know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give good things to those who ask Him? Lord, what is that good thing? I compare it with Luke 11, and verse 13, same verse, but there it says, if you being evil know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him? Aha. So that's the answer to keeping the Sermon on the Mount. And then come to the end of that sermon, it says, ask, what should I ask for? Ask for the greatest good gift that your Father can give, that is the Holy Spirit.

Ask, and will your Father deny? If you being evil know how to give good gifts to your children, your child asks for bread, will you give him a stone? If he asks for fish, will you give him a serpent? If you ask the Father for the Holy Spirit, will He give you some other spirit? Impossible. So all these things Jesus is saying in order to bring faith within our heart that our God is a loving Father who desires to give us the very, very best. So I've been just trying to show you all these different passages.

And it's not only to bless our own life. There's a verse in Galatians chapter three. I don't know whether you're familiar with the verse.

Verse 13 and 14, it says, Christ became a curse for us on the cross. We all know that Christ died for our sins on the cross. Romans six says our old man was crucified with him on the cross.

But I rarely ever hear anybody teaching that Christ became a curse for us on the cross. Have you heard anybody preaching on that? Christ became a curse? Maybe some people do, but it's rare. Have you thought about it yourself? Jesus Christ became a curse.

You know what a curse is? Cursed by God. It's the worst possible thing to be accursed by God. Even the world understands a curse is a terrible thing.

And it says in Galatians 3.13, not that Christ took a curse, that itself would have been a great thing, because Christ became a curse on the cross. That's why he had to be crucified. Because there was an Old Testament word which says, only one who hangs on a tree is accursed.

So Jesus had to hang on a tree. He could not die in any other way to be saved from our sin, because he had to become a curse to remove the curse, which is upon us. Christ became a curse.

But that's not the end of the story. He became a curse, not just to remove the curse from us, but beyond that, in order that we might become a blessing. In order that, Galatians 3.14, the blessing of Abraham might come to us.

And by the way, do you know what the blessing of Abraham is? You go back to Genesis chapter 12 and verse 2 and 3. You read there that when God called Abraham, he told him two things. I will bless you, and make you a blessing to all the people on the earth, to all the families of the earth. The blessing of Abraham is twofold.

Let me repeat it. God says, I will bless you, and I will make you a blessing. Not you will become a blessing.

That's different. I will make you a blessing. There's a lot of difference between me trying to make myself a blessing to others, which is a lot of what a lot of Christians try to do, and God making me a blessing to others.

I can't make myself a blessing. I can make myself a nuisance to other people sometimes with my foolishness, even if I try to be a blessing. But when God makes me a blessing, it will really be a blessing to others.

So that's the promise of Abraham. I will bless you, God says, and you will be a blessing. So those are the two things.

That means, first of all, God will bless me, deliver me from sin in my life, and bless me with all the need I have spiritually in my life to be free from anger, and bitterness, and murmuring, and gambling, and from lusting, and love of money, and every wretched thing that draws me away from God. And secondly, he will make me a blessing to others. Not only the well that satisfies my need, but rivers will flow from me to bless thousands of others.

Why can't you believe that God can use you to bless thousands of others? It depends on your faith. Do you believe God can do it? I will make you a blessing. And how does he do it? Galatians 3.14. Read it.

Through the promise of the Holy Spirit. There again, we come to the Holy Spirit. How is God going to bless you? Through the Holy Spirit.

How is he going to make you a blessing to others? Through the Holy Spirit. So let me now turn to Hebrews in chapter 8. I'm trying to show you how the New Testament is full of these amazing promises. Everything relating to the Holy Spirit.

Family life, bringing up children, overcoming Satan, being a blessing to the families of the world. Everything. Being free from insecurity.

No longer being an orphan, etc. Now we come to Hebrews chapter 8, which is the New Covenant. And in the New Covenant, it says, first of all, Hebrews 8, it says, I'll make a new covenant with you, which is different from the Old Covenant.

Hebrews 8, verse 8 and 9. The three parts of the New Covenant I mentioned, beginning with verse 12, I'll be merciful to their iniquities and I will remember their sins no more. Step one, a complete blotting out of our past sins through the blood of Christ and not only forgiveness, God says, I will not remember all the evil things that you've done in your past life. It's not only cleansed, brother, sister, you little children, you do something wrong.

If you ask Jesus to forgive you, Jesus says, I'll not only forgive you, I won't even remember. I won't keep in mind that you did that last year or that you did that yesterday, because you asked me to forgive you. It's gone.

I will not remember. What a wonderful promise. That's number one.

Second, verse 11. You will know me personally, not through somebody else. It's not that a preacher has to introduce you to me.

I will be your father. That's the second blessing of the New Covenant. All will know me personally.

Even a two-year-old child can know his father directly. He doesn't need a secretary. You don't need to go to God through a pastor or a preacher or through anybody else.

Go directly. He's your father. Even if you're born again today, how the father will pick up a newborn child? He's your father.

You can know him personally. Then you say, why is God appointed teachers? That is just like you have school teachers. There's a need for teachers to teach the Bible, but you don't need a teacher for you to know the father.

Knowing the father is different from knowing God's word. Teachers are appointed not to be a secretary between you and the father, no, but to teach you the word of God, principles of scripture. But knowing the father is your privilege from the day you are born again.

Claim it. Father, I want to know you personally. And here's the third one.

The third part of the New Covenant. I will put my laws, verse 10, in their minds and write them in their hearts. You know, the Old Testament, the Old Covenant law was written on two tablets of stone.

God wrote it with his finger. And in the gospels, the finger of God is called the Holy Spirit. I don't have time to show you that verse where Jesus once said, if I cast out demons by the finger of God, and the other gospel, it says, I cast out demons by the spirit of God.

Putting those two verses together, we see the finger of God is the Holy Spirit. So when God wrote this, when it says in the Old Testament, God wrote the Ten Commandments on two tablets of stone with his finger, that's the Holy Spirit. And the same finger is now going to write on two tablets of stone inside us, which are the two tablets, mind and heart.

And with his finger, with the Holy Spirit, he writes in our mind first, giving us a desire to do the will of God. What is the will of God and a desire to do it? But desire is not enough. So he writes it in my heart as well, where he gives me the ability to do it.

Wonderful. Thank God he writes it in my mind first, showing me what his will is, and giving me a desire to do it. And then as I cry out and say, Lord, I want to do your will, I'd like to do your will, but I can't do it.

He gives me the ability to do it. There were many people in the Old Testament who could, who had a desire to do God's will, but they couldn't do it. Let me give you an example.

David, we read David wrote many Psalms and one of the Psalms, he says in Psalm 40, Psalm 40 and verse eight, this is a Psalm of David. Psalm 40, this is the Old Covenant. I delight to do your will, oh my God.

I can't keep it because I only got your law in your heart. I don't have the Holy Spirit. I delight to do your will, oh God.

David had a great desire to do God's will. But when Jesus came, you read in Hebrews chapter 10, that same verse, see how it is quoted in the New Covenant. Compare scripture with scripture.

Be diligent in your study of scripture. How is Psalm 40 verse eight quoted in the New Testament? That is an Old Covenant longing. I delight to do your will, but I can't do it.

In Hebrews 10, when that verse is quoted in relation to Jesus, it says in Hebrews 10 verse five, therefore, when he comes into the world, it's quoting Psalm 40 there in verse five and six, he says there, then I have come, verse seven, not I delight to do your will, I've come to do your will, oh God, verse seven. And again in verse nine, I've come to do your will. Do you see the difference? There it was, I delight to do your will, now I've come to do your will.

The law was written in the heart as well, through the Holy Spirit, the finger of God. I praise God for such a wonderful gospel. Now what shall we do? With all these promises, every promise of God is signed by, like a check signed by Jesus Christ.

Second Corinthians one and verse 20. Second Corinthians chapter one verse 20. As many as are the promises of God, and we've heard a lot of them today, they are all yes.

They are all yes means through him, through Jesus Christ. It's like a check where Christ has signed law to be written on the mind and heart of Zach Coonan, or put your name there, rivers of living water to flow out from the innermost being of Zach Coonan, signed Jesus Christ. What do you do with that check? The bank says endorse your signature on the backside of that check and present it in the bank, and it's credited to your account.

And so the promises of God, Jesus has signed it. What should we do? We must endorse it. It's what it says in verse 20 by saying, amen.

Amen is another word which most people don't understand. For many people, amen means end of the prayer. No, amen is a Hebrew word meaning, it shall be so.

I signed at the back of the check, it shall be credited into my account. The promise of God, he will baptize you in the Holy Spirit and fire, signed my account of signature, it shall be so. Amen.

It will be true in my life. I will write my law not only on your mind, give you the desire to do my will, but in your heart, give you the ability to do my will. Amen.

It shall be so in my life. Wonderful. Be filled with the Holy Spirit, always giving thanks and everything, being subject to one another.

It shall be so. Amen. Every promise in the word is mine.

He shall save his people from their sins. Amen. It shall be so.

I'm endorsing all these checks and putting it into the bank of heaven, into my account. He will baptize you in the Holy Spirit and fire. I signed at the back.

Amen. It shall be so. Put it in the bank of heaven.

It becomes real in my life. Dear brothers and sisters, don't leave those checks inside the Bible. Take it, endorse it with your amen and take it before God and say, Lord, I want it in my life and I will not leave you until you fulfill it in my life.

Well, I will close with a personal testimony. I was born in an Orthodox Syrian Jacobite family. My father was a God-fearing, born-again Christian before I was born.

But the Orthodox Church did not emphasize the Bible, didn't even preach the new birth. But my dad used to send me to a Brethren Assembly Sunday school. And so I heard the gospel from my childhood.

But many times I would ask Jesus to come into my heart, but I was not sure whether he came. But I would read the Bible. I was taught by my parents to read the Bible and pray every day.

So when I joined the Navy, I still continued the habit of reading the Bible. And many times I said, Lord, come into my heart. I did not know whether he came.

I had no indication that he had come. One day in July, 1959, 61 years ago, when I was sitting in my room in the naval base in the south of India, I opened the Bible and I read John 6. It was just my daily reading, John chapter 6. And I came to verse 37, where Jesus said, the one who comes to me, I will never cast out. And I stopped.

I can only say the Holy Spirit just made me stop. And I said, Lord, I've come to you many times. And I felt the Lord saying to me, well, I never cast you out.

My promise is there. That day, I signed on the back of that check, those who come to him, he will not cast out. And that day, I got assurance of my salvation, that Christ had come in just on the basis of God's word.

No feeling, no light, no voice. God's word, that's all. I've never in my life seen any lights or heard any voices or feelings.

These things can be deceptive. God's word can never be deceptive. I signed on John 6, 37, and I never doubted my salvation a single day in all these 61 years.

Okay. Then I started reading the Bible, and I found a lot of things I couldn't keep. And I found a lot of things I wanted to be a witness, but I didn't have the boldness to be a witness.

And I said, Lord, I want to be a bold witness for you. I want to be able to share your word with others. And I began to pray for the power of the Holy Spirit.

And people have recommended that I go to a Pentecostal church, but I went there and I heard all the yelling and screaming and people pretending to be speaking in tongues, and 95% of it was fake. It didn't impress me at all. I thought most of those pastors and others loved money so much.

I said, this is not the fullness of spirit I want. So I came back to my room and I said, Lord, what I saw there, I don't want. That's not what I'm looking for.

I'm looking for an overcoming life and to preach God's word with boldness, not to just make a big noise. And I prayed and prayed and prayed in my room just by myself. And God met with me.

I can't explain it how it wasn't any sudden experience, no feeling, no light, no, but I suddenly got boldness and liberty to preach. That's what I was seeking for. What did I seek for? Freedom and power to preach the word of God.

And I found myself at the age of 23, preaching with boldness, God's word, opening up the word and speaking for a half an hour, even to hundreds of people. It was not me. I'm not normally like that.

I never took part in public speaking in school or even in the military academy or anywhere. God anointed me with the gift to preach his word. That was the first stage.

But I continued to be, I continued faithfully for a while, but then as my preaching gift took me to many places and I became more and more famous inwardly, I became a little proud and I began to inwardly backslide in my thoughts. My external life was good, but I was defeated inwardly. Then I began to seek God for something else.

I said, Lord, it's not the gift of preaching that alone that I need. I need a pure inner life, the way Jesus wants me to live. And that was 15 years after I was born again.

I said, Lord, I want power in my inner life now. I already have the ability to preach. I want power in my inner life.

I sought God. I was defeated, frustrated. Many, many days and weeks and months prayed, fasted and prayed and said, Lord, I want a fresh infilling of the Holy Spirit.

And one day, I cannot even explain how, God just met with me. Again, no feeling, no light, no shaking of the body, nothing. Simply believed.

I said, Lord, I believe. Someone help me in prayer. And said, how can God ask you to serve him and not give you his power? I think that's right.

And I would say that to you. How can God, your father, ask you to live a holy life and not give you his power? Is that possible? Impossible. I had faith.

I had faith and I said, Lord, I believe. You have filled me. And my life changed from that day.

That was in January, 1975. That's 45 and a half years ago. And I found this is true.

From the next day, the same Bible that I had read for 16 years became like a new book from the next day onwards. I began to get revelation. Not just nice thoughts, but revelation for my life.

I began to see how, what the new covenant was. I never knew about the new covenant before that, even though I'd read the Bible for 16 years. God opened my eyes to see what it means to build the church as the body of Christ.

And how God gives us the gifts of the spirit to build this church. And then, little by little, by little, by little, my life began to make progress. My devotion to Jesus became more and more.

The Holy Spirit's given to us to fill our hearts with the love of God. Romans 5, 5 is the evidence of the fullness of the Holy Spirit. What is it? The love of God fills our heart, shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit.

People ask me, what is the evidence of being filled with the Spirit? Romans 5, 5. The love of God is shed abroad in our heart. The Holy Spirit comes and fills me with love. Three parts of it.

One, fills me with the assurance God loves me intensely. He loves you as if you're the only child of his in the whole universe. It's good for me to think of it like that, even though I'm not.

I'm one among a multitude. God you love me personally, intensely, as if I was the only one. Secondly, makes me respond in intense love for my Father and for Jesus.

The Holy Spirit makes me love Jesus. And thirdly, gives me the power to love others, forgive others, release others, and bless others. The Holy Spirit, love in three directions.

Inwardly assuring me of God's love. Upward to Jesus, the fervent love of my heart, and outwardly to other people. Romans 5, 5. That is the proof that you've been filled with the Holy Spirit.

And I praise God for that work he did in me. That is, you know, holiness is really love. Holiness is not just avoiding dirty things.

You can do all these things and you can be legally, legalistically holy. But when it comes out of love, it is pure, pure holiness. And the Holy Spirit, why is he called H-O-L-Y? Holy Spirit, to make us holy.

You can't make yourself holy, brother, sister. I've discovered that in my life. In a thousand years, I'll not be able to make myself holy.

If I do make myself holy, it'll be only on the outside, and in a way where inside is still the same. Only God can give me that genuine holiness, which is his nature. Holiness is not something I can produce.

No. Holiness is God's nature. How in the world can I produce it? God has to give it.

He gives it to the Holy Spirit. But he gives it to those who thirst. You say, Lord, I want this more than anything else in the universe.

I want it more than money, more than healing, more than being a well-known preacher, more than any gift of the Spirit. I want this love of God to flood my heart. I want your nature.

Well, I poured out my heart to you today. I don't believe any man can do justice to this amazing subject, and I don't believe I have. And I pray that the Holy Spirit will take these feeble words and challenge you to seek after God with all your heart, and God will meet with you.

I assure you God will meet with you. Let's pray. While our heads are bowed in prayer, I want to ask you to do a little cleaning up first.

Have you forgiven everybody who has hurt you? Everyone. I'm not asking you whether you remember that. You'll remember it all your life, whatever they did to you.

But have you forgiven them? Have you said to the Lord, Lord, I forgive this person, this person, this person. Have you forgiven your wife, your husband, for all the things you think that they have let you down in? Your relatives, your mother-in-law, your brother-in-law, have you forgiven them? If not, do it now. Secondly, have you asked forgiveness from anyone that comes to your mind whom you have hurt? Your wife, your husband, first of all.

If not, do it today. Call up somebody who you need to ask forgiveness from. Do it today.

Will you say, Lord, I want to seek after you. I don't want to seek after money. Give me enough money for my earthly needs, that's all.

But I'm not going to run after it anymore. I know you will take care of me. Father, deliver me from this orphan attitude I have, insecure orphan attitude.

Help me to know I'm your child. Fill me, oh Father, fill me with the Holy Spirit and give me an assurance in my heart that the Spirit of Jesus Christ has come and filled me and has made me what you want me to be. Open your mouth wide, the Bible says, and I will fill it, Heavenly Father.

I pray for those who are seeking you, who are in need and seeking you. Please help them all, Lord, to trust you today and to hold on to you, not give up until they have that assurance in their heart that you're met with them. And from this day onwards, help them, Lord, to take up the cross and follow you so that their inner capacity will increase and they'll be more and more filled.

The cup become a well and the well become a river and the river become many rivers. I pray it will be so for everyone who's heard me today. I pray in Jesus' name.

Amen. Thank you for listening.

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