

Hating Sin More Than Sickness

by Zac Poonen

This sermon emphasizes the importance of experiencing the full gospel, not just understanding it intellectually. It highlights the need to cry out to God for help in overcoming sin, to seek Jesus as the solution to being saved from sin, and to actively listen to and obey the guidance of the Holy Spirit in daily life.

Scripture: Matthew 1:21, John 8:9, Hebrews 4:15, James 4:7, Isaiah 30:20

Topics: "Experiencing the Full Gospel", "Obedience to the Holy Spirit"

Description

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Transcript

Many of you belong to churches that preach the new covenant and many of you have heard me over the internet many many times and what we have majored on in our churches in the last 44 years is emphasizing the full gospel. Now that expression used by a lot of churches, a lot of people call themselves full gospel church. I've been to a lot of these full gospel churches that have not heard the full gospel because their understanding of full gospel is Jesus is savior, baptizer in the holy spirit, healer and coming king.

A lot of those people in those churches are not healed and the baptism in the holy spirit does not seem to bring holiness, something's wrong. Baptism is an immersion and it's like you're immersed in water, you come out drenched with water and if you are immersed in say jam, you come out covered with jam. If you're immersed in the holy spirit, you should come out with holiness.

Why is it not so? It's because satan has made people content with understanding a doctrine without experiencing the reality of it and many people deceive themselves that in the final day God's just going to ask him whether did you understand the doctrine of the new covenant, it's not going to be like that. So as I've looked around, I've seen so many people are excited by the fact that we're hearing some things they've not heard in other places. The full gospel begins with the name Jesus.

Very important to understand why God named his son on earth Jesus and that comes in the very first page of the new testament. So that's something we've often emphasized but I want to repeat it again

Matthew 1 and verse 21 and this by the way the new testament is full of promises but this is the very first promise in the new testament and the very first promise in the new testament most Christians have not experienced. How can we go on to the other ones? Okay forget all the others.

It's good when we sit in a church that we judge ourselves so each of you can ask yourself have you experienced the first promise in the new testament? The first promise in the new testament is in Matthew 1 21 where the angel told Joseph in the last part you will call his name Jesus. Why Jesus? Because he will save his people from their sins. So that's the question you need to ask yourself.

I call upon the name of Jesus. It means being saved from my sins. Have I been saved from my sins? So sometimes when I talk to people I ask them this question.

You call Jesus your savior right? He's my lord and my savior. So I ask them what has he saved you from? Has he saved you from anger in your home? They say no that still happens. Has he saved you men from sexually lustful ways of thinking after other women? No that also I slip into now and then.

Has he saved you from murmuring and complaining in your life? No. Okay then what has he saved you from? He saved us from hell. I said that's not what it says here.

It doesn't say you'll call his name Jesus because he will save them from hell. You haven't read it carefully. He will save them from their sin.

But they say well he forgives us and he slipped before all he forgives us. I know that. Then you must say Jesus is my forgiver not my savior.

How many people call him savior and they don't think of what they're saying. What has he saved you from? Be accurate and say he's my forgiver. He's not yet my savior.

The full gospel is that he's not only forgiver but he's a savior. And we see that throughout the new testament. I'll give you one example of it.

You remember the story in John chapter 8 where God where Jesus forgave a woman caught in adultery. It's a beautiful example of people who knew the doctrine but didn't have life. The pharisees studied the scriptures carefully and they knew there was a commandment in the old testament that a woman caught in adultery must be stoned to death.

Do you know who gave that commandment to Moses? Jesus when he was in heaven. He was the son of God. He gave that commandment to Moses.

Now these pharisees don't know that it is the same Jesus sitting there and they tell him Moses told us that this woman caught in adultery should be stoned. Of course Jesus knew that. He gave that command to Moses 1,500 years earlier.

So what do you say master? And Jesus waited. He says he put his finger he wrote on the ground. I think he was Jesus wasn't so quick to give an answer.

He waited to hear from his father and he said okay yeah that's right okay who is without sin among you be the first to stone her. And then he just left them alone and when they heard it verse John 8 and 9 they went out one by one beginning with the older ones. Finally listen to this word.

Jesus was left alone. John 8 and 9. Do you know what that phrase means? Jesus was left alone. It means that he was the only one without sin who was qualified to throw the stone because that's what he said.

He was without sin throw the first stone they all went away. Jesus was left alone. He was the one qualified to throw stones and he was the one who gave the command 1,500 years earlier to Moses.

But does Jesus throw stones? No. He didn't come on earth to stone people to death. He came to save sinners and the command given in the old testament was to put a fear of fooling around in adultery.

That's why that command was given otherwise if a strong punishment was not given people would take it lightly. You know sometimes people take the letter of the law and say we got to do that. Now if you went by that that's what the pharisees said and interestingly Jesus did not keep the letter of the law.

He was totally qualified to stone to stone that woman but he didn't. Now legalistically minded people would criticize Jesus saying you gave a command to Moses from heaven and you didn't keep it and you came on earth and said the one who's without sin must throw the first stone and you didn't keep that also. You see how legalistic people you find plenty of them in the church today also they would even criticize Jesus Christ.

Much more they'll criticize godly people. But Jesus came with not only with truth he came with grace and truth and he did not come on earth to pick up stones to kill people. He came to save people and now listen to the full gospel.

What is the full gospel? In two sentences in verse 11. Number one, I don't condemn you. That is the first part of the gospel.

You cannot proceed in the christian life if you haven't heard that from the lord. Whatever your past failure has been even if you were a prostitute like this woman, I do not condemn you. I don't know what your past has been but my brother sister you need to hear that word from the lord that your past is blotted out in the blood of Jesus Christ and I do not condemn you.

If you heard that from Jesus it doesn't matter if the whole world condemns you. That settles your past forever but that's the past. The second part of the full gospel relates to the future.

In future verse 11, don't sin again. That's the full gospel. The past I don't condemn you.

In future don't sin anymore. That's all there is in the full gospel. You shall call his name Jesus because he came to save his people from their sins.

It's everywhere in the gospel if you read it carefully. That's what he came to do and or if they earnestly sought God they'll discover that they're constantly failing. Despite desire to sin, the desire not to sin, they still fall into sin.

That's the experience of sincere believers. They hear the message that we're not to sin. Go and sin no more.

They hear Jesus saying that and they sincerely want to go that way but they find within 24 hours they have failed. So when we find ourselves failing, what are we supposed to do? When the enemy attacked a widow in Luke chapter 18, Jesus told a parable. See that story because that answers this question I'm just asking.

Luke chapter 18, Jesus told a story of a widow and the widow was being harassed by an enemy and he says she came to the judge. Luke 18 verse 3 and says, please protect me from that enemy is the devil and he's harassing believers constantly condemning them, making them fall, making them slip up, tempting them, making them trip up. What does the widow do? It's interesting that Jesus always pictured Christians as weak people.

Christians are never pictured in the Bible as giants or lions. No. Christians are pictured as having a son to go and talk to the judge.

She has to go herself. She's got no children. A childless widow.

Can you think of anyone more helpless than that? This is the picture Jesus gives of a Christian. So Christians are not supposed to be great, mighty, powerful, strong people like giants. They're helpless people like sheep and widows so that they don't depend on themselves but go to God for help.

That's the point of the story. This widow is helpless against the judge and it says the judge would not listen to her. So what did she do? She kept on pestering the judge, went to his house at two o'clock in the morning, knocked there and went to the office, his office later on during the day and kept on pestering him till it says the judge says, even though I don't fear God, Luke 18 verse 4, and I don't respect any man, he says, I couldn't care less for the opinion of any man.

See, the Lord is contrasting an unrighteous judge with a loving father. This unrighteous judge was willing to listen to the widow because she pestered him saying, protect me from my enemy. And he says, do you think your loving father will not protect you from your enemy who's making you sin again and again and again? About justice for his elect who cried to him day and night.

I think that's the secret. A lot of people who want to be free from sin, I believe they have a desire but not strong enough to cry day and night. I mean, if your child was seriously sick, so when we don't have that attitude to overcoming sin, our problem is that we think sin is not as bad as a sickness.

I think if you had, if you were diagnosed with cancer, you'd certainly pray day and night. And that's one of the things I discovered. I was also defeated even after being born again for many years in my Christian life.

Jesus was my forgiver. I would always be forgiven every day. If I died, I'd go to heaven because I confessed my sin and I was forgiven.

But he hadn't saved me from my sin. Then I saw that I have to cry day and night. So I said, Lord, I'm going to take this matter of sinning seriously.

And if I sinned in my thoughts one day and people didn't know about it, I would weep over it at night. For what? Nobody saw me. I never lost my testimony.

But I had dishonored God in my thoughts. Or if I had a wrong attitude towards someone I discovered, I was having a wrong attitude towards someone. I said, Lord, I hate that.

I want to be free from it. And I would cry out I would wet my pillow at night sometimes with my tears. I'm telling you honestly.

And I'll tell you what does it say in verse 8. He will bring an answer speedily. And I can testify. He brought an answer in my life speedily.

God's word is exact. You do what he says. He'll do what he promises to do.

His elect, verse 7, who cried to him day and night. Will he delay long? He will not delay long. He will bring an answer speedily.

It all depends on how eager you are to stop the enemy from harassing you. This widow was determined. I must stop this enemy from harassing me and taking more and more of my property.

Do you know that your soul is meant to be entirely God's? He created your soul to be entirely belong to him. But that's your property. And the devil is encroached into your soul and occupied more and more of your property which should belong to God.

That's why he made you murmur, complain and grumble and love money and be bitter against someone and gossip and backbite. Your property is getting lost. I mean if that was happening to your earthly property, you do something about it.

You go to a court and get some action taken against that guy who is occupying your property. But you don't seem to realize your soul is gradually being occupied by the devil more and more and more and more. Think of marriages that start so well with a wonderful bit of property.

Think of a marriage like a bit of property so beautiful and then you see that as the years go by in that marriage more and more the devil gets into that marriage and occupies more and more. They are fighting, quarreling, upset with each other and there's very little left after a while. Property which is supposed to be pure and holy for God has been completely taken over by the devil.

We'd never do that if it was our physical property. Oh we are careful about property. If this land belongs to me, no enemy, no neighbor dare come and occupy anything there.

But we let the devil walk right over and occupy a whole lot of our soul and it doesn't seem to disturb us. What does it teach us? It teaches us that even for Christians who call themselves new covenant Christians, who attend a CFC church, who are listening to Zak Poonen videos, even for them earthly property is more important than their soul and sickness is more serious than sin. I'm trying to give you an explanation my brothers and sisters, this question that many people ask me, why is it brother Zak, I've sought for victory for so long and I haven't got it.

Is God an unrighteous judge like this person and refusing to answer? Jesus says even this unrighteous judge answered the video. How much more your heavenly father will answer, not someone who just sends an occasional request to him, that's not what he said. See many of our prayers for victory over sin are occasional requests, but here he's crying out day and night.

As I said if your child is dying or you got cancer, you wouldn't be sending an occasional request to God. So I believe the real need is for us to see how seriously sin is destroying us and one day when Christ comes back and we see what we did with our earthly lives and how we wasted it and how much we have lost for all eternity, we'll get a surprise and I believe part of my ministry is to prevent Christians from getting a surprise in the day of judgment. I say if you listen to me, you'll get no surprise in the day of judgment.

You'll be thoroughly prepared whether you respond to it or not is up to you, but there'll be no subject that comes up in the day of judgment that I will not cover in my preaching. I'll cover it all. You can be 100% ready for the coming of the Lord if you take seriously what I say.

For example to cry day and night because you don't want the enemy to occupy what belongs to God. Here's a portion that belongs to God and it's occupied by the enemy. I'll give you an example from the old testament.

God said to Abraham, this land of you. I mean a lot of people can today also they dispute does it belong to, they say it belongs to the Palestinians, belongs to Jews. I'm not in that, enter into that dispute.

I'm not on this side or that side. I'm not a politician, but I know one thing. The Bible says the whole earth belongs to God.

It doesn't belong to the Jews or the Palestinians or the Americans or the Indians or anybody. It belongs to God and he has every right to give it to whom he likes. I mean if I'm a father and I have a whole lot of property, can't I give it to whom I like? I don't have to give some of it to my neighbor.

Supposing I give it to this son and that son and I say, hey your neighbor, I love you, but I'm not going to give you any of my land. How can he complain? It's my land. So in the same way, God owns the whole earth.

He can give it to whomever he likes and he told Abraham, this land is yours Abraham. I give it to you and to your children. Okay, if God said that, I've got no complaint against because the land was his to begin with.

It didn't belong to the Jews or the Palestinians or anybody else. It belonged to God and he decided to give something, give something like that. But that was occupied by the Canaanites for 400 years and when the Israelites came there, God said, go and drive them out and occupy the land that I gave to your forefather Abraham.

They went there and looked at that land and said, yeah, it's a beautiful land, but boy we can't fight against these giants. So they backed away and you know, they wandered in the wilderness. The Bible says God was angry with them.

Do you believe God can be angry with people? Some people think God cannot be angry with anybody. Let me show you a verse written for believers. Turn with me to Hebrews in chapter 3. In Hebrews in chapter 3, we read like this.

Remember it's written, first of all, whenever you read any portion of scripture, ask yourself, for whom is it written? Chapter 3 verse 1, holy brethren, partakers of a heavenly calling. It's like a letter written for you. You're one of the holy brethren, partakers of a heavenly calling.

Jesus is your apostle and high priest. It's written for you and me. And what does he say? He says, brethren, verse 12, take care, holy brethren, believers, born again believers, be careful that in one of you, you don't develop an evil, unbelieving heart and fall away from the living God.

You say, you mean a believer can fall away from the living God? Not only fall away, he can have an evil heart after a while, an evil heart of unbelief. You think the devil wants you to know that verse? He certainly

doesn't. And therefore, to save you from that falling away, encourage one another daily as long as it is called today so that you don't get hardened.

And that's what I've sought to do for more than 44 years, to challenge people, don't get hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. I'll tell you, all those preachers are doing that. I hope there are some.

Those are the only ones I want to listen to. And then it says, because I want to tell you this, you'll be a partaker of Christ, verse 14, only if you hold fast your assurance firm until the end, you can become a backslider before that. And then he gives you an example.

Listen to this example. You say you're redeemed by the blood of the lamb. You're baptized in water.

You're baptized in the Holy Spirit. I'm safe. That's what a lot of people say.

That's the full gospel. And OK, the Holy Spirit says, let me give you an example. The Israelites were redeemed by the blood of the lamb.

They put the blood of the lamb outside their doorposts. They were baptized in water. They went into the Red Sea and came out.

And they were baptized in the cloud, a picture of the baptism of the Holy Spirit. They had the same experiences symbolically that people who say they have full gospel have. But what happened to these people? They were rejected by God.

It says they provoked him, verse 16, those who came out of Egypt. And he was angry with these people who were redeemed by the blood of the lamb, baptized in the Red Sea, baptized in the cloud. He was angry with them for 40 years.

He's not talking about being angry with Egyptians. He's not talking about being angry with the Canaanite giants. He's talking about being angry with those who were redeemed by the blood of the lamb and were baptized in the Red Sea.

Why? Their bodies fell in the wilderness because he told them to go and possess the land and they didn't bother about it. Like he tells us, occupy that land that the devil has possessed in your life where sin rules. I sent my son to save you from sin.

Don't say you can't be saved. And you know, in that crowd of people in the Israelites, only two people, Joshua and Caleb said, yes, God can help us to overcome these giants who are pictures of sin. And they went in.

All the others perished. Don't think the majority is right. In the wilderness, when they came to the land of Canaan, first time, there were 600,000 men.

Only two people got in, Joshua and Caleb. This is written as a warning for us that you can be redeemed by the blood of the lamb, baptized in water, baptized in the Holy Spirit. And when it comes to dealing with sin in your life, the giants of sin that rule in your life, you let them rule your body.

Just like those Israelites let the Canaanite giants rule Canaan, which was meant to be for God. Your body is meant to be the temple of the Holy Spirit. And you allow those sins to rule.

Now, 600,000 people may say one thing, but you'll find two people speaking the truth today, like Joshua and Caleb. I want to listen to those two. Out of 600,000 preachers, two people will tell you the truth.

And I've heard a lot of preachers, and I believe the proportion is about like that today. Think of what all is being preached in Christendom today. It's amazing what all is happening in churches that once used to preach the pure gospel.

Yeah. The founders of some of these churches that have gone into all types of sinful practices and divorces and same sex marriages and all types of things, you know, the founders were godly men, three, 400 years ago. And if they could see from heaven today, they'd be shocked.

What's happened to this denomination that I started, the Methodist Church or other churches? And that's why in every generation, God raises up servants to proclaim the full gospel, which is, don't condemn you, go and sin no more. Or he's come to save us from our sins. Or don't let the enemy possess the land.

Occupy it for God. And it says here he was angry with them. Is God ever angry with people? He was angry with people who were redeemed by the blood of the lamb from Egypt.

He was angry with people who were baptized in the Red Sea and baptized in the cloud. But did he feed them? Oh, sure. He gave them manna all those 40 years.

And he saved them when they were bitten by snakes. He gave them water when they were thirsty. And sometimes believers can say, well, God has blessed me in so many ways.

So he must be happy with me. Aha. You think that because he blesses you materially, it's a proof that he's happy with you? Well, I can show you a lot of atheists in the world who are much better off than you financially and who are healthier than you.

They'll say, I'm blessed. I don't even believe in God. I can show you people in other religions who worship idols.

Healthy. Some of them are millionaires. If you go to the list of the world's richest people, there's an organization called Forbes that makes a list of the richest people in the world.

There's not one believer among that big list. You know that? Who are these people who are there? They're extremely wealthy. And they belong to different religions.

They say, our God made us rich. Yeah. So don't think that because God has prospered you, he's happy with you.

No. Because God's given you. Do you know the healthiest people in the world are not necessarily believers.

Health and wealth is not the mark of God's blessing. These 600,000 people, do you think they were sick? No, they were very healthy. But they died.

God is angry with them because they said, I wanted you to possess that land and you let the giants rule the land. And the Lord says, you asked Jesus Christ to come into your body. That's how you became a child of God.

You asked the Lord Jesus Christ who died for your sins to come and live inside your body. And then in that body, you tolerate all these sins. That's what God says, I'm angry.

But you see, I'm so weak. Why don't you cry out? You know that Jesus was also weak. You know, one of the great truths that the Bible teaches, which transformed my life, about 40 years ago, that's what made me understand the new covenant, was that Jesus Christ came to earth as a man without sin, of course, because he is the son of God.

He was holy from birth, but tempted just like me every day. And yet to battle and fight that temptation in order to be free from sinning. It was not automatic.

It's not like these planets where God said, okay, keep going around in circles for millions of years, and they did it. It's not that Jesus said, okay, you'll be just holy. You don't have to exert yourself.

You don't have to worry about anything. That's not how he had his holiness, because then he was not tempted like me. That's it.

I'll tell you, that's what changed my life. Turn with me to Hebrews 4 in verse 15. Hebrews 4, you know, remember this is in the context of what we are just speaking in chapter 3. What is the subject in chapter 3, which I just showed you? They did not enter into the land, verse 18, and he swore that they will never enter into this land.

And they could not enter the land, verse 19, because of unbelief. The only reason they couldn't conquer the giants was, they believed those giants were stronger than their God. Oh, that seven, eight foot giant in Canaan, boy, he's stronger than God.

We, God can't stand before him. And God said, what an insult that is, to say that that man is stronger than me. And Joshua and Caleb said, no, they are like bread for us, because God will support us.

That was faith. So then he says in this context, that let us fear chapter 4, verse 1, lest we have a promise of entering into this life, and you don't come into it. We have a promise that he'll save you from all your sins.

That's why he's called Jesus. And you don't take it seriously. We have had the good news preached to us, verse 2. The good news is that we can be saved from our sin.

But just like the word did not profit them, because they did not believe, it does not profit many believers, because they do not believe that Jesus can save them from this sin, and this sin, and this sin. Make a list of the sins that you are defeated by. Call them the giants of Canaan.

Giant number one, giant number two, giant number three, giant number four. The sins in your life are the giants of Canaan. And just like those Israelites said, boy, that guy's really tough.

He's stronger than God. God can't defeat him. That's what you're saying about that sin.

And that's where unbelief comes. Face it. That you're insulting God by saying that that giant of Canaan is stronger than God.

And Joshua and Caleb honored God by saying no. Joshua and Caleb didn't look at their muscles. No.

They said God is stronger than them. And that's what you need to say. God is stronger than that sin that's ruled my life for so long.

And therefore, I believe I can, God will help me to overcome that. So in this context, he gives us, he says, now I'll tell you a great secret. It's called the mystery of godliness in 1 Timothy 3.16. What is it? We have a high priest, verse 15, who can sympathize with our weakness.

It's put in a negative way. We don't have a high priest who cannot sympathize, meaning that we do have a high priest who can sympathize with our weakness. What is our weakness? Our weakness is not that we cannot lift heavy weights.

Our weakness is that we are knocked down by sin. You know how they say, there's an expression in English saying, you can knock that man down with a feather. A feather, you know how thin and light a feather is? Whatever man is this who, you touch him with a feather and he falls down.

He must be really weak. And the devil says, most of these men, I just send a pretty girl down their way, they're knocked out. Feather, they're finished.

Or that wife at home, some little thing goes wrong in the house, one feather and she's down, knocked out, yelling at her husband in anger. These are supposed to be Christians. God gives strength to the weak.

So it says here, Jesus came, He can sympathize with our weakness. He knows we're weak and He came with the same weak body that could be tempted to sin, but did not sin. That's a tremendous secret.

And when my eyes were opened to that, Lord Jesus, you walked on earth tempted with every single thing I'm tempted by. What was I tempted by when I was 19, 20 years old? Lord, when you were in Nazareth at the age of 19 and 20, you were tempted exactly the same way. When I started earning money, what was I tempted with? Jesus started earning money as a carpenter.

He was also tempted the same way, but he never sinned. And He was tempted in all things, verse 15, as we are, but He did not sin and said, therefore what? So what, we say. He says, so what in verse 16? So, we can come to that same throne of grace and first of all, receive mercy, which is, I don't condemn you, our past is forgiven.

And for the future, receive grace to help us. In our time of need, what is our time of need? Verse 15, when we are tempted. When we are tempted, that is the time of need.

When we are about to fall, that's the time we need grace. Like this picture I've often used of a man climbing a mountain and he slips and he's hanging on a rock and he's too proud to call for help. He says, I can make it.

No, he can't make it. It's an impossible cliff he's hanging on. Why don't you cry for help? No, no, no, I want to do it on my own.

And he falls, breaks his legs and he reaches the bottom. Then he cries for mercy, not grace, mercy. And the ambulance comes up, that's mercy, picks him up, takes him to the hospital, fixes his legs.

That's forgiveness of sins. That is also help God gives us. But grace is, while he's hanging there, Lord, please help me.

And grace comes and helps him and puts him on top of that cliff without falling. Which is better, mercy or grace? We need mercy because so many times we are so proud and we go fall down and break our legs and the ambulance is to come. The ambulance of mercy, thank God for that.

But there's a better way. That's what we preach in the full gospel. There is a better way to ask for grace before we fall in the moment of temptation.

This is very, very practical. When you're tempted, for example, to get angry, Lord, I need some grace now. Believe me, you'll get it.

If you don't believe me, try it out next time. It's really true. Or you men are tempted with some severe sexual temptation.

Lord, help me now. Maybe you're sitting at your computer and you're tempted to watch something immoral and filthy. But there you shouldn't just say, help me.

There's something else you must do. The Bible says you must run away. Sometimes you've got to run away.

That's the only way to be free from sin. See, 1 Corinthians chapter 6. 1 Corinthians 6 and verse 18. It's the only thing the Bible tells us to run away from.

Immorality. No, don't try and stand there and tackle it. Run.

Run away whenever you're tempted to immorality. Or let me show you another verse. 2 Timothy chapter 2 verse 22.

That's the other place where it says we got to run away. 2 Timothy 2 verse 22. Same thing.

Run away from sexually dirty thoughts. There's nothing else you can do. Run away.

Don't try to stand there and resist it. You're too weak. Men, you're too weak in the sexual area.

Run away. But what are we supposed to do when the devil comes? Are we supposed to run away? No. See, James chapter 4. James chapter 4 says, and verse 7, when the devil comes at you, the devil himself, I'm not talking about immorality and youthful lusts.

The devil himself. Submit to God. Verse 7 and resist the devil and who will flee? Tell me, who will flee? Not you.

When it comes to immorality, who must flee? You. When it comes to youthful lusts, who must flee? You. But when the devil comes at you, he will flee.

So who's stronger? The devil or immorality? I'll give you an old testament example. For David, who was the one he had to be more scared of? Goliath or Bathsheba? Who should David be more afraid of? Goliath or Bathsheba? Was it Bathsheba's muscles that knocked David down? No. Goliath was like the devil.

Resisted and knocked him down. But when it came to Bathsheba, he fell. Flee from immorality.

Flee from youthful lusts. Recognize your weakness. If you do that, I tell you, you can live a life free from sin.

And if you're in a situation where you cannot escape, then you pray for grace. Lord, help me now in my time of need and you'll get grace. Lift you up and make you stand on the cliff.

But if you can flee, when it comes to immorality, we don't flee from other things. No. When you're tempted to anger, you don't run away.

You just resist it in Jesus' name and say, Lord, help me now. I've got to overcome this anger. I've got to come to a life where I'll never get angry.

Is that possible? I believe it is. I used to get very angry in the early days of my Christian walk and my marriage and all that. But I saw it was not God's will.

I saw the Bible says, put away all anger, Ephesians 4, 31. I said, OK, Lord. I tried and tried and tried for years.

And the thing that helped me was Jesus was tempted exactly like you. So what did he do when he was tempted? Turn with me to Hebrews 5 and you see what Jesus did when he was tempted. And I say, I want to do the same thing.

It says in Hebrews chapter 5, Jesus Christ, verse 7, Hebrews 5, 7. We saw earlier in chapter 4, 15, he was tempted like us. And now he tells us a few verses later what he did when he was tempted like us. When he was tempted like us, in verse 7, in those 33 years when he was on earth in his flesh, he prayed.

Supplication means specific prayer. Prayer means general prayer. He had general prayers and specific prayers with loud crying and tears to the only one who was able to save him from spiritual death.

Sin is called here spiritual death. He wanted to be saved from spiritual death. When it says here, he prayed to be saved from death, you have an option.

It is not specified there which death it is. Is it spiritual death or physical death? We don't know. But you read the rest of the sentence and you understand.

He was heard. His prayer was heard. Was he saved from physical death? No.

So it's obviously not referring to physical death because that prayer was not heard. He never prayed for that. I mean, you see martyrs going to the flames with boldness.

Can you imagine Jesus being afraid of physical death? Never. He would be ready to die a thousand calvaries for you and me. But there was one death Jesus really hated.

That is spiritual death, which is a result of sin. That means being cut off from God by sin. Jesus knew that if I sinned once, my fellowship with God would be broken.

We don't realize that. Jesus knew that. So he said that I never want that to happen.

It did happen when he took our sin on the cross, but all his life it never happened. And you know why it never happened? Because he prayed with loud crying and tears. Have you read in the gospels how sometimes Jesus would go into the wilderness sometimes? Because there'd be nobody there.

He could cry out to God, the Father. But I learned something. You know, I live in a city, a big city with 10 million people.

There's no wilderness anywhere nearby to run away and cry out with a loud voice. So I said, Lord, how in the world can I follow you here? There's no wilderness anywhere nearby here. And the Lord showed me you can cry out without making a noise with your mouth.

It's the cry of the heart that God hears. And I can lie in my bed and without making any sound, cry out to God with loud crying and tears. Lord, I don't want to commit this sin.

Lord, I'm sorry I've slipped up in this area so many times. I want you to help me. I want to have that cry in my heart.

And I'll tell you, I had that cry for a number of years. And the Lord delivered me from anger. The Lord delivered me from discouragement, which was another thing I was thoroughly enslaved as a believer.

Grace to help you in your time of need. I'll tell you one thing, my brothers and sisters, if you fulfill the conditions, God will definitely do his part. Jesus said, take my yoke upon you and learn from me.

You will find rest for your souls. You can say you'll find victory in your life. But take that yoke.

You have to do your part. It's not going to be automatic because God doesn't want robots in heaven. I've often used this picture.

Imagine if God had made Adam like a robot, programmed inside, never to go near the tree of knowledge of good and evil, but to go to the tree of life. He would never have sinned because when he came near the tree of knowledge of good and evil, the program would have said, turn right now. And like a robot, he would have turned right, walk forward.

He'd walk forward to the tree of life. He'd never have sinned, but he could not be a child of God. Do you know that you can't be a child of God or a sinner if you don't have free will? Proof, the planets.

They cannot be sinners. They cannot be children of God. But because you and I have free will and a conscience, dogs have free will, but they don't have a conscience.

So they can't be sinners. A dog cannot be a sinner and a dog cannot be a child of God because even though it's got free will, it doesn't have a conscience. But we have free will and conscience.

That's what gives us the possibility of becoming sinners or holy men and women of God. Tremendous possibility. So when we attempted to sin, we come to a fork in the road.

You know, like sometimes you come to a fork in the road when you're traveling somewhere and you listen to the GPS, right? If you're in a strange territory and the GPS says, turn right here. Don't you listen to it? Believers listen to the GPS much more than they listen to the Holy Spirit. I'll tell you that.

And the GPS knows how to take you to your destination. If we can trust the Holy Spirit like that, oh, don't you hear the voice of the Holy Spirit? You certainly do. I know you do in that moment of temptation.

The Holy Spirit tells you, shut your mouth now. Don't say anything. But you don't listen.

And you open your mouth and let the other person have it. Does the Holy Spirit get angry with you? That's a wonderful thing. He doesn't.

If you take, if you disobey the GPS and turn the other way, you know what the GPS says? You don't say, why did you go that way? No, no, no, no, no. It says recalculating. I'll bring you back to the right direction.

I love that. It reminds me of the Holy Spirit. When you take the wrong turn, he doesn't yell at you and say, why did you take that turn? He says, I'll bring you back to the right one.

Just listen to me, at least now. You wasted a lot of time taking all those circuitous routes, trying to think that you know better than the GPS and you went astray. And you think you know better than the Holy Spirit and you waste a lot of your life and your time.

And he says, don't worry, I'll bring you back. Now, you would have thought with one lesson like that, you'd learn to obey the GPS thereafter. I think most people will.

But when it comes to the Holy Spirit, one lesson is not enough. We keep on disobeying. When will we stop disobeying the Holy Spirit? I'll give you one last verse before we close.

Isaiah chapter 30. It's very practical, my brothers and sisters. God has a great purpose for every one of your lives.

And I believe that's one reason why he brought you here this weekend. Pray that that purpose will be fulfilled before you go home. Isaiah chapter 30.

It says here, in the middle of verse 20, your teacher, that's Jesus Christ, will not hide himself. Your eyes will see your teacher. Tempted like you, but not sinning.

The Holy Spirit will show you your teacher. And then you'll hear a word in your heart saying, turn right here. Don't turn left.

When you have to turn to the right or to the left, exactly like a GPS. But whether you obey or not, that's up to you. The GPS doesn't take away your free will.

And God doesn't take away your free will. But if you want to end where you should be going to your destination, it's better to listen to the GPS and to the Holy Spirit. May God help us.

Let's pray. So whatever the Lord has spoken to your heart, will you pray that the Lord will imprint it in your mind and your memory so that you don't forget it? Think about it when you go to bed tonight and say, Lord, what is it you've been trying to say to me this evening? Something that can change the direction of my life for good. Please help me to meditate on it.

It's like pouring water on the seed that was sown. We've been sowing a seed here. I want to ask you to pour some water on it.

Otherwise it won't grow. Pour some water on it, meditate on it, think about it and say, Lord, please, I want my life to change. I want to go away at the end of this weekend a different person from the way I came.

Please work in me, Lord. I believe God is more than eager to help you. If you're honest about your need and say, Lord, I cannot overcome, but I know you'll help me.

I'm crying out to you. The best I know how I'm crying out to you. That's enough.

Heavenly Father, I believe there are a lot of sincere people right now bowing before you and praying. I pray that you will hear their prayers and slowly change the direction of their lives.

Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/o5tM2nq8d1c.mp4>

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