

# How the Spirit Leads Us - Part 1

by Zac Poonen

---

*The sermon emphasizes the importance of internal righteousness and the need to understand the difference between the Old and New Covenants.*

**Duration:** 9:06

**Topics:** "Holy Spirit", "Sanctification"

---

## Description

This sermon emphasizes the concept of sanctification and holiness, focusing on the internal transformation that Jesus came to bring rather than external blessings. It contrasts the Old Testament external works of God with the internal work of the Holy Spirit in the New Testament, highlighting the importance of internal righteousness and sacrifices. The message underscores the significance of the Sermon on the Mount as a guide for Christians to prioritize internal transformation over external appearances.

---

## Transcript

God is a Trinity and he made man in his image and his likeness. And so he made man also as a Trinity. We read in 1 Thessalonians 5 and verse 23, when it speaks about making us holy, we must remember that the whole purpose with which Jesus came to earth was to make us holy, like God is holy.

He didn't come to make us rich. He didn't come to make us healthy. He didn't come to give us a large family.

He didn't come to give us comfort or pleasure. He came to make us holy. 1 Thessalonians 5 verse 23, it says here, May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you entirely.

Whenever you read the word sanctify or holy or saint in the New Testament, it always means being separated from something. Sanctification is being separated. Separated from sin, separated from the spirit of the world, separated from the spirit of the devil, etc.

So who's going to do that? It says your God does that. In the Old Testament, God only did external things for people. You see that throughout the Old Testament, you'll never read of God doing something inside somebody, right from Genesis to Malachi.

It's one of the big differences in the Old Testament and the New Testament. He did a lot of amazing things for them externally, like splitting the Red Sea, pulling down the walls of Jericho, healing the sick, raising

the dead. These are all external things.

And you look at all the miracles that God did for his people in the Old Testament, it was always on the outside. And the promise that he gave to Abraham was also, I'll give you a land on this earth, and your children and your seed will always have that land. And they have that land today.

God's kept his promise. But it's related to the world and to external things. And then Jesus came, and a lot of those miracles were all external.

He healed the sick. He filled their boats with fish. But every miracle was a parable.

And John, the apostle, recognized that. And that's why in John's gospel, he calls those miracles signs. Turning the water into wine was a picture of how God would take away our human nature and replace it with the divine nature, if he allowed him.

Then we could serve other people and bless people around us with that. And every miracle was like that. But in the New Covenant, that begins from the day of Pentecost.

And Jesus prepared the way for that by preaching the Sermon on the Mount, where he said, your righteousness must be more than the righteousness of the Pharisees. That doesn't mean in quantity. That doesn't mean if they fasted twice a week, we've got to fast four times a week.

Or they prayed three times a day, we prayed five times a day. That's quantity. Quantity doesn't make us spiritual.

If you have something carnal, and you make it 10 times, it's still carnal. I mean, a bag of bad apples, you get 10 bags like that, it's still bad apples. It's quality.

Your righteousness must exceed the righteousness of the Pharisees in quality. In other words, theirs was only external, yours must be internal. That's what he said in Matthew 5:20.

And he went on to say, they stayed away from murder, you must stay away from anger. They stayed away from adultery, you must stay away from the lust of the eyes. They stayed away from telling lies when they swore their hand on a Bible or something.

But you must stay away from telling lies anytime. You don't have to swear or sign a statement on a court document to speak the truth, you speak the truth all the time, etc, etc. And they said they would pray but they want people to see it, but you must pray without wanting the people to see it.

You see how everything in the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus put it inside. So for the Old Testament people, if the law, the Ten Commandments was the great thing, I mean, if you go to any Jewish person in the Old Testament and ask you, what is the great thing for you? He said the law, the Ten Commandments. Now if someone were to ask you as a Christian, what is the great thing for you? What's the great passage of scripture for you? The answer should be the Sermon on the Mount.

Is that so? For the Jews, the Ten Commandments. For Christians, the Sermon on the Mount, Matthew 5, 6, and 7. And the great work that the devil has done is there are very, very few Christians who value the Sermon on the Mount. That is among the Jews, everybody valued the Ten Commandments.

They were taught from childhood to value the Ten Commandments. Whereas Christians are taught from childhood perhaps to read the Bible, go to meetings. These are all good.

Pray, witness, they're all external. I'm not saying they're wrong. But you remember what Jesus said to the Pharisees, the trouble with you people is you clean the outside of the cup.

And anyone who spends his life cleaning the outside of the cup will definitely end up as a Pharisee. So if you spend your life trying to look good on the outside and doing all the external things that Christians are supposed to do, the chances are at the end of your life, you'll just be a very good Pharisee. We have to see this difference, which is almost not preached anywhere.

The main difference between the Old Covenant and the New Covenant is that was external, this was internal. There the sacrifices were on the outside, everybody could see it. Today you make sacrifices on the inside, which nobody can see.

And you know how guilty the Jews were if they didn't make those sacrifices? Every Christian who does not make internal sacrifices is guilty. And the reason why we don't become spiritual is because we haven't understood this difference. And in the New Covenant, it's internal.

And you say, well, doesn't the external matter? It certainly does, but it begins from the inside. Jesus said in the Old Covenant, the Spirit is upon people, but in the New Covenant, from the innermost being, the rivers will flow. Whereas in the Old Covenant, the river flowed, but it's something we poured on somebody's head and the river flowed like that.

But now it would be from the innermost being. David, in Psalm 51, when he confessed his sin, he said, Lord, you decide truth in the innermost being. He couldn't have that.

He acknowledged, the best I can do is, okay, don't commit adultery again. I did it. I'm sorry.

Not do it again. But Lord, I know David was a man after God's own heart. He knew that even if he never committed adultery again with another woman for the rest of his life, it still wouldn't satisfy God.

A lot of Christians are very happy when they think God is satisfied because I don't commit adultery. I don't mutter. I don't steal.

I go to the meetings. I read the Bible. They make a list of 10 external things they've done and they think they have pleased God, which means they don't even have the light which David had.

---

Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/Nhn9Y9liSRM.mp4>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/zac-poonen/how-the-spirit-leads-us-part-1/>

# *Grow in Your Walk with Christ*

---

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

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

**[www.sermonindex.net](http://www.sermonindex.net)**