

(Laying Hold on Eternity) Knowing the Holy Spirit as Our Helper

by Zac Poonen

Zac Poonen emphasizes the importance of knowing the Holy Spirit as our helper in laying hold of eternal life and experiencing God's love.

Duration: 57:33

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, John 3:16, John 7:39, John 14:9, John 20:22-23

Topics: "Holy Spirit", "Christian Calling"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of understanding our calling as believers. He highlights the fact that just as the Father sent Jesus into the world, He has also sent us to our own little world of people whom only we know. The speaker emphasizes that we cannot fulfill this calling on our own strength, but we need the power of the Holy Spirit. He explains that the purpose of Jesus coming to earth was to reveal the Father, and as believers, we should strive to reflect Jesus in our lives so that others can see a glimpse of what God is like.

Transcript

This is the third in a series I started last evening on the subject laying hold of eternal life. This is eternal life, to know the only true God. That's what Jesus said in John 17 verse 3. And in 1 Timothy 6 verse 12, he said, Paul said to Timothy, lay hold of eternal life.

Eternal life is not something we just get once and we have it forever, no. It's something we have to lay hold of and possess more and more and more and more. And when Jesus said in John 17 verse 3 that eternal life is knowing God, it's just like getting to know someone more and more and more and more and more, whether it's knowing your marriage partner or knowing your friend or even getting to know your own father better and better as you grow up from childhood.

God wants us to know him more and more and more. And the more we know him, the more we lay hold of eternal life. And eternal life is not living forever.

It is partaking of God's own life because the definition of eternity is something that has no beginning and no end. Eternal life is a life that had no beginning and has no end, which only God has. And when he gives us that life, we have eternal life, but we need to know it more and more and more and more.

And Jesus himself said this comes through knowing God and God is in three persons. So in our first study, I was looking at knowing God the father as our father. That's where everything begins.

The foundation of our Christian life is to be knowing that perfect love with which God loves us. And then in our second study, we looked at knowing Jesus Christ as our Lord, not just as our savior, but knowing him as our Lord, one who has complete authority over everything in our life. And now we want to look at the third part of it, knowing the Holy Spirit as our helper.

There's a lot of confusion concerning the ministry of the Holy Spirit in the world today. I would say that generally speaking, Christians are more confused concerning the ministry of the Holy Spirit than perhaps any other doctrine in scripture. And that's not surprising, because that's exactly what the devil wants, get you confused about this most important person of the Trinity.

The father never came down to earth at any time. Jesus came to earth and the devil did his best to confuse the Jewish nation about the ministry of Christ. He got most people to turn against Christ.

Most people rejected him, but a few understood. Today Jesus is in heaven. It's the Holy Spirit who is on earth ever since the day of Pentecost, just like Jesus was on earth for 33 and a half years in Palestine.

It's exactly the same. He's the third person of the Trinity on earth. The only difference is that Jesus came with the body and the Holy Spirit has not come with the body.

But if we can see exactly like the second person of the Trinity was on earth for 33 and a half years, the Holy Spirit, the third person of the Trinity, has been here for nearly 2,000 years to carry on the ministry where Jesus began. And that's why the Acts of the Apostles begins with these words. Let me read it to you.

Acts 1, verse 1 reads like this. This is written by Luke and Luke is referring here to the first book that he wrote, which is the Gospel of Luke, which was a description of the life of the second person of the Trinity on earth. And how does he describe that? He says, the first account I composed, O Theopolis, about all that Jesus began to do and teach.

Acts 1, verse 1. This is the first verse in the Acts of the Apostles. And he describes his gospel in these words, all that Jesus began. Read that carefully.

The Gospel of Luke is a description of all that Jesus began to do and teach, meaning that the Acts of the Apostles is a description of all that Jesus continued to do and teach, this time through a spiritual body. In the Gospel of Luke, it was through his physical body. In the Acts of the Apostles, it's through his spiritual body.

And that work has continued till today. And that is through the ministry of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit needs your body and my body, because he's come without a body.

Jesus came with a body. And so the Father could do, manifest his nature through that body to all the people in Israel, wherever he traveled. And now, Jesus said, it's better that I go away, because if I'm here, it's only a few people that will be able to see what God is like.

But if I go and I send the Holy Spirit, and the Holy Spirit comes and fills many bodies across the earth, then people everywhere will begin to see what God is like. That is the purpose with which God sent the

Holy Spirit. And that's what you need to ask yourself if you're born again.

Is that purpose being fulfilled in your life? Do people who look at your life and observe it, get a little idea of what God is like? Of God's love and compassion, purity, humility? Do they see a little bit of what Jesus is like? That's the thing that's challenging my heart. I think of two verses in the Gospels, you put them together, this is what you get. Jesus once said, in John 14, If you've seen me, you've seen the Father.

You don't need to see the Father. If you've seen me, you've seen the Father. And then he said to his disciples in John 20, six chapters later, after the resurrection, Now, I breathe, he breathed on them, and they received the Holy Spirit.

And then he said to them, let me turn you to that verse. It's in John's Gospel, chapter 20. It says here in verse 22 and 23.

John chapter 20, verse 22 and 22 first. Peace, sorry, he breathed on them and said, receive the Holy Spirit. And verse 21, not 23, verse 21 now.

Before he breathed on them, he said, as the Father has sent me, so send I you. Having said that, he breathed on them, said, this is how you're going to do it. Okay, but here's your ministry.

As the Father sent me, I send you. It's a fantastic calling. As the Father sent Jesus into the world, he sent you and me to different parts of this world.

It's like a young brother in one of our village churches once got up and gave the way he got a revelation on John 3, 16, which I had never heard before. And it thrilled my heart so much. I've always shared it wherever I've gone.

John 3, 16 is a very well-known verse. God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son, that whoever believes in him should not perish, but have eternal life. And this young brother got up and said, you know, all of us have a little world of people whom only we know, whom nobody else knows.

And that's true of every single person sitting here. There are certain people in this world who only you know. Your wife doesn't know them, people you meet at work, perhaps.

And your neighbors, your relatives, who nobody else in this auditorium knows. There's a little group of people which is your world, whom only you know. God so loved that little world that he sent you, his son, his daughter, into that world so that in that little world, they might hear the gospel, that they might not perish, but have eternal life.

Boy, that was a revelation to me too. As the Father sent me, so send I you. And then he breathed on them, said, receive the Holy Spirit.

He says, you can't do it. I mean, just because you've got an exhortation saying, as the Father sent me, I send you and say, okay, I'm going to do it. You're not going to be able to do it.

You need the power of the Holy Spirit. And so he breathed on them and they received the Holy Spirit. So I see there that the reason why he breathed on them was so that they could go out and fulfill that calling.

Now, what did the Father send Jesus for? In John 1.18, it says, Jesus came to earth and explained the Father. That's why he could tell people at the end of his life in John 14, if you have seen me, you have

seen the Father. Now, put these two verses together.

If you have seen me, you have seen the Father. As the Father sent me, so send I you. When I put them together, you know what I get? I should be able to tell people, if you have seen me, you've seen a little bit of what Jesus is like.

Think of that. Can your wife say she's seen a little bit of what Jesus is like by looking at your life or your husband or your neighbor or the people you work with or the people who irritate you on the roads by not obeying the traffic rules? This is our calling. And I'll tell you this, it's no use studying or hearing about the Holy Spirit if we don't first understand why do we need the Holy Spirit? Now, there are all types of people saying all types of testimonies about the Holy Spirit today.

Some people said, I got a shock. Well, you don't need the Holy Spirit to get a shock. Put your finger in an electric socket, you'll get it.

He hasn't come to give us electric shocks and tingles down our spine. There are many other ways to get that. But to show people what Jesus is like, well, you can't get it any other way except through the power of the Holy Spirit.

We got to keep that clear in our mind. That's why we need to know the Holy Spirit, just like we know the Father. And we know Jesus as our Lord and our forerunner and our example.

We need to know the Holy Spirit in our life, the working of the Holy Spirit. So that's what I want to share with you a little bit today so that we lay hold of eternal life. Eternal life is to know God.

And the Holy Spirit has come to help us to lay hold of this eternal life by working in us. So to begin with, the first thing that the Holy Spirit does when he comes into our life, as soon as we are born again, is what we read in Romans chapter 8. Let me read this verse to you. Romans chapter 8 and verse 16.

Romans 8, 16 says, The Spirit bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God. I've been preaching the gospel for 50 years. And I've never gone, nearly 50 years, and I've never gone up to somebody and told them, Oh, you're saved.

You're a child of God. How do I know? I don't know his heart. He may have said those words with his mouth, Lord Jesus, come into my heart.

I don't know whether he's sincere or not. I don't know whether he's just repeating some words. I leave that to the Holy Spirit.

That's his ministry. We read in this verse, the Holy Spirit bears witness with our spirit that we are the children of God. I can trust the Holy Spirit to do that.

And he never makes a mistake. How do you know that you're a child of God? Two things. You need God's word that says as many as received him, to them he gave the power and authority to be children of God.

And the Holy Spirit. It's a double witness. It's like all electric appliances and bulbs and everything work with two wires that make contact.

You can never have electricity with just one wire. Anywhere in the world. You need two wires.

When you put on a switch, all that that switch does is make those two wires touch. That's all it does. But when the two wires touch, things happen.

The gadget runs, the lights turn on. It's like that. In the word of God plus the Holy Spirit, there's light.

And that's how we have an assurance in our heart that our sins are forgiven. It's not enough to know the word. You need the Holy Spirit bearing witness with you.

Don't be satisfied with some man, even if it's the greatest man of God coming and telling you, you're saved. He may be wrong. He doesn't know your heart.

Seek for the witness of the Holy Spirit that tells you, you are a child of God. And God, the Holy Spirit will give that to you. If you're really sincere, you've opened your heart and said, Lord, I'm a sinner, I believe that Christ died for my sins.

I come to you as a sinner with blaming nobody else in the world but myself for my sins. I believe that Jesus died for me and rose again. And I want to turn from my sin.

I want to receive Jesus as Lord of my life. I guarantee if you've said that sincerely, anybody. The Holy Spirit will bear witness.

I worked with people in India who are illiterate means they can't even read. They got to get somebody else to read the Bible to them. And I know that they have that witness in their heart of the Holy Spirit bearing witness to them.

They can't even read the scriptures, but the Holy Spirit bears witness to them that they are children of God. This is the most important requirement to start the Christian life. The Holy Spirit bearing witness, you are a child of God.

It says in Romans 5, let me tell you something else the Holy Spirit wants to tell you. Romans 5 and verse 5. Romans 5 verse 5 says, hope does not disappoint because the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit. That's the other thing the Holy Spirit wants to convince you about.

This means two things. First of all, that God loves you. And as a result of that, the Holy Spirit, first of all, he pours that love into our heart.

God's love for us has got to begin there. Then from the abundance of that, it overflows. And then we begin to love others.

The reason why many Christians are not able to love others is because they haven't, their hearts have not been flooded with an assurance that God loves them. I tell you, your whole attitude to other people will change completely. For the better, when you are convinced that God loves you just as you are.

Not after you change. Why do you wait for other people to change before you start loving them? I'll tell you why. Because you think God will love you only after you change.

That's a lie. God loves you as you are. And when I understood that in my heart, I could love people just as they are before they change.

God changes you by first loving you. And you will change other people by first loving them. That is God's way.

It's not the human way. The human saying is, I love you when you change. But not God.

The Holy Spirit pours the love of God in our heart. It's like if I were to take a fire hose and spray this room, every nook and corner would be flooded with water. Every little crevice, the water would go into.

And that's how the Holy Spirit shows me that in every little area of my life, God loves me. God loves me. Every situation I see, God loves me.

God loves me. God loves me. He just assures me of that and it changes my life.

You'll have no more complaints in your life when you realize that God loves you. Many Christians haven't experienced that because they haven't opened up to the Holy Spirit. They're waiting for the electric shock or the tingle down the spine, which won't help you at all.

Not even speaking in tongues. Now, I'm not against speaking in tongues. I speak in tongues and I've spoken in tongues for the last 33 years.

And it's a great gift. God doesn't give it to everybody. It's like gift of teaching.

God's given me a gift of teaching for many years. He doesn't give it to everybody. He gives different gifts to different people.

You accept what he gives. So I'm not against it. But what I say is speaking in tongues is not the mark of the fullness of the Holy Spirit.

The mark of being filled with the Holy Spirit is the love of God flows out of your heart to other people. That's the mark of being filled with the Holy Spirit. So that's the second thing we need to know.

First of all, he assures me I'm a child of God. I need that witness more from him than from anybody else in the world. Second, I need to be flooded every nook and cranny in my heart with the assurance that God loves me just as I am.

And progressively he will change me. But his love for me is unchangeable because God is God and God is love. And the more I'm assured of that, as I said, this love begins to flow out to other people.

I want to turn now to John's Gospel, chapter 14. See, there was a big difference between the Holy Spirit ministry in the Old Testament and now after Jesus died on the day of Pentecost, something significant happened on the day of Pentecost. I want to turn to John's Gospel, chapter seven.

I was talking to you about this love flowing out of our heart to others. And Jesus described it here in John, chapter seven, like this. Verse 38.

John 7, 38, he said, He who believes in me and that there's no other qualification. You know that you can be saved if you believe in Jesus Christ, according to this verse, you can be saved, you can be filled with the Holy Spirit if you believe in Jesus. There's no extra condition.

He who believes in me, that's all. You don't have to fast, you don't have to pray, but you've got to trust completely and trust in the New Testament means opening up completely our heart to trust him. From his

innermost being will flow rivers of living water.

And this is the love of God flooding our heart and flowing out. And then he goes on to say in verse 39, John 7, 39. This he spoke about the Holy Spirit whom those who believed in him would receive.

And then it says the spirit was not yet given. Because Jesus was not yet glorified. You say the spirit was not yet given because Jesus was not yet glorified.

How did David have the Holy Spirit? How did Elijah have the spirit? How did Elisha get a double portion of the spirit? How did Gideon have the Holy Spirit? How did Samson get the part of the Holy Spirit? There's a big difference. The Holy Spirit was not yet given means not given in the way he was going to be given on the day of Pentecost to indwell people. In the Old Testament, he came upon people.

It says about Gideon in Judges 6, 34, the spirit of the Lord the spirit of God clothed him. It's like a robe that you put on and you can take off. You know, Samson would put on that robe when he fought a lion and he'd take it off when when he was with Delilah.

That's how it was. You could do that in the Old Testament. Some people try to do that today as well, but it is not meant to be like that.

And it was like that with Gideon, too. He put on the robe, the Holy Spirit came on him and he fought the Midianites and won a battle for Israel. And then he'd take it off.

And do you know that he made idols? This man who was clothed with the Holy Spirit made idols later on and worshiped them. This is how it was in the Old Testament. David had the anointing upon him.

He could kill Goliath. But when he met Bathsheba, he took off the robe. It's the same old story.

And anyone who lives like that today is living like an Old Testament person. You have to say to such a person, even if he's a pastor or preacher, anybody, oh, the spirit is not yet given for this guy. He doesn't know the new covenant ministry of the Holy Spirit.

A lot of Christians are in that condition. They've got gifts, but they don't have the spirit indwelling them. They're like Samson, who can do a mighty work for God and then go and commit adultery.

But here it says the spirit is given another way in the New Testament where he comes and floods our heart. And what does he come to do? Jesus spoke about in John, Chapter 14, we got to know the Holy Spirit. This is what it means to lay hold of eternal life.

Eternal life is to know God. And I want to know the Holy Spirit. I want to know what he does for me so that I can experience it.

You shall know the truth. The truth shall set you free. It says in John 14.

Jesus said about the Holy Spirit. In verse 16, John 14, 16. I'm going to ask the father.

And he will give you another helper. Now, in the King James Version, it says comforter. And that doesn't really give us.

It's not just, you know, comforting us and say, oh, don't worry, it's OK. That's not all he says. He's a helper.

The 16th century meaning English meaning of comfort, comforter comes from the word fort, which is in the middle of comforter. F-O-R-T. It's a strengthener.

That's the meaning of comforter, if you really want. The words have changed meaning like charity means something different today than it meant in the 16th century. Comforter meant something else.

The comforter means the strengthener, the helper. The Greek word is a word called paraclete, which means someone called alongside to help me, called alongside to help me. It's like if I'm walking with a little child and we come across a big wall and he can't go over the wall, I help him over the wall.

That's what the Holy Spirit does. I come to a wall called lust. Oh, and I can't get over it.

The Holy Spirit takes me over. I come to a wall called fear. Anxiety.

These are all walls I can never climb. The Holy Spirit helps me over the wall. Just like a grown up takes a child and takes him over the wall.

He's a helper. Whenever I come across a situation which looks impossible, but God wants me to go over that. The Holy Spirit is a helper.

It's wonderful to have the Holy Spirit. If Samson knew the Holy Spirit like that, he'd never have sinned with Delilah. If David knew the Holy Spirit like that, he would never have sinned with Bathsheba.

He's a helper, but they didn't have the Holy Spirit inside. They only had him on the outside for ministry. But the Holy Spirit in the day of Pentecost onwards has come inside to help us to fulfill the will of God, to go forth as the Father sent Jesus and Jesus sends us to fulfill that ministry, to reflect Christ to the world around us.

And it says here further in John chapter 16 about the Holy Spirit, it says here in John 16 and verse 14, referring to the Holy Spirit, he says, he will glorify me because he will take of mine and show it to you. You know, the Holy Spirit's come to glorify Christ. He's come to show me the glory and the beauty of Jesus as I read the Bible and Jesus becomes my hero.

I've been to, well I see sometimes the rooms of young people with huge posters of their heroes. It could, sometimes it's unfortunately some rock star or or it could be some sports, someone who plays basketball or football or something like that. And, you know, they these young people are gripped by that.

They want to they want to be like that. They want to be like that person. They want to comb their hair like that person and play ball like that person, et cetera, et cetera.

Imagine if Jesus became your hero. Imagine that's what every Christian should have. We don't have a picture of Jesus, but we do have a picture of Jesus in the Gospels and the Holy Spirit shows me that this is the one who is to be your hero.

You should live like him. I tell you, it would revolutionize your life if Jesus became your hero. If you said, if he really became your hero, you say, Lord, I want to live like you.

I want to speak like you. That if ever a word comes out of my mouth, which is not Christlike, I'm going to be convicted about it immediately. It happens.

We all stumble, especially in our speech. James says we stumble, we stumble. But the godly man is the one who recognizes it immediately and apologizes, apologizes to his wife or husband or brother or whoever it is.

Sorry, I'm sorry. A co-worker in the office. I'm sorry.

I shouldn't have said that. Forgive me. You know, we stumble.

We all stumble. But the godly man immediately takes back what he's recognized is wrong. So the Holy Spirit comes to help us in all these things.

The Holy Spirit shows us Jesus. He becomes our hero. And we see how he lived a life where he was always so gentle and he was only hard on religious hypocrites.

He was never hard on people who hurt him or even spat on his face or called him the devil. And when he becomes my hero, I say, Lord, I want to be like you. I want to be like you.

Just like that young fellow wants to play football like that hero of his. This is what will happen when Jesus becomes your hero. And then the Holy Spirit show you this is how he behaved in this circumstance.

This is how he behaved in this circumstance. This is how he lived. This is how he did.

This was his attitude to money. This was his attitude to women. I tell you, your eyes will become pure if Jesus becomes your hero.

Because he will, he'll show you. He'll immediately, the Holy Spirit will immediately tell you something's wrong. It's wonderful.

I'm so much more blessed. You are so much more blessed than David was and everybody in the Old Testament. That's why Jesus once said in Matthew 11, verse 11, he said, the greatest man that ever was born between Adam and Jesus, the greatest was John the Baptist.

He said that himself. But he said, the person who enters the kingdom of heaven. That's someone who comes into this new covenant life through the Holy Spirit can rise higher than the greatest of all men born from Adam to Jesus.

That's an amazing statement. For so many years of my Christian life, I never understood that. That I can live a life higher than every Old Testament saint.

Well, if you don't believe it, of course, you won't you won't have it. You know, it's one of the things in the Bible is you never get what you don't believe. It can be written there, but you don't get it.

It's like if somebody sends you a check for a million dollars and you just look at it and keep it in your drawer, nothing will happen. You know, that it can be it can be a genuine check sent by some multimillionaire who loves you. But I mean, it's a sort of a fictional scenario.

But anyway, if you get it, I'll tell you, if you get it, don't just keep in your drawer. Go and quickly deposit it in the bank before a man changes his mind. That's what we got to do with the promises of God.

God won't change his mind. His his promises are like checks. But you get nothing from it if you don't believe.

If you don't believe this is for me. It'll never work. And there's a verse like that in James one, which says, if a man doesn't believe that God will give him that, let not that man think he'll receive anything from the Lord.

He will receive nothing because God's promised it, but he won't get it. There are many examples of that in Scripture. One example is in the Old Testament, where God promised the Israelites when they were in Egypt through Moses, he called the elders and said to them, I give you two promises, he said.

This is in Exodus three. I'll take you out of Egypt and I'll bring you into Canaan. And you know, out of all those elders who stood listening to him, they never experienced the second part of that promise.

Not one of them, because they didn't believe. One part was experienced coming out of Egypt. But when it came to the second part, they came to the borders of the promised land two years after they came out of Egypt.

They didn't believe that God could take them in, that the God who delivered them from Pharaoh, the most powerful army in the world. They didn't have faith that he could deliver them from some inferior army of the Canaanites. That's why they never entered.

And if you believe that God can forgive your sin and you come out of Egypt, but you can't believe that he can fill you with the Holy Spirit and help you overcome sin in your all the sins in your life. You won't experience it. It's like that.

It's according to your faith. Be it unto you. Oh, I wish I could spread this everywhere.

But you don't get according to your desire. You get according to your faith. You don't get according to God's desire for you.

You get according to your faith. You can get a check from God. You don't cash it.

You don't get it. And that's why we need when you read a promise like this, like I said just now in Matthew 11, 11, that under the old covenant, you could rise to such great heights. But the least person, the least means anyone who is living subsequent to the day of Pentecost, who's accepted Christ as his Lord, can rise higher than the greatest Old Testament saint.

I say, yes, Lord, it happens. You say, well, I'm not so sure. I guarantee it will never happen in your life.

What's the difference between you and me then? It's not that God favors one and doesn't favor the other. It's just a matter of faith. You and I got the same check.

I cashed it in the bank. You kept it inside your drawer. That's the difference.

That's what's happening to so many Christians. You shall know the truth. The truth shall set you free.

So this is why the Holy Spirit is being given. He's come alongside to help us climb these walls, kill these giants that we're not able to kill otherwise. I want to show you a title of the Holy Spirit in Hebrews chapter 10.

In Hebrews chapter 10, we read of a title given to the Holy Spirit. He's called here in the last part of verse 29, Hebrews 10, 29. He's called the spirit of grace.

It speaks there about insulting the spirit of grace, the Holy Spirit. Now, we've heard a lot about the grace of God. But the one who communicates that grace is the Holy Spirit.

He's called a spirit who gives grace. Now, I want to tell you what grace can do for you. What the Holy Spirit when he comes.

What does this grace of God, which, by the way, is a New Testament word? It's not found in the Old Testament. In its New Testament form. John 1 17 says the law came through Moses.

That was Old Testament. But grace came through Jesus Christ. There was no grace on earth before Christ came.

John 1 17 is clear. And even after Christ came, people could not experience it. Until the Holy Spirit came on the day of Pentecost, then he could communicate that grace.

What I want to ask you to check up now is to see whether you have experienced this grace. In all the four areas that I'm going to mention now. Number one, Ephesians one, verse seven.

The Holy Spirit communicates to us that we have forgiveness of sins according to the riches of his grace, forgiveness of sins according to the riches of his grace, Ephesians one, verse seven. That's the first thing he assures us. I don't want that assurance from anybody else.

I don't want some human being, however great a man of God he may be. To tell me my sins are forgiven. Because that man of God is not going to sit on the throne in the day of judgment, judging me.

I want the Holy Spirit to give me that assurance that according to the riches of God's grace, all my sins have been forgiven. There's no record of it. The blood of Jesus has cleansed it out completely.

The blood of Jesus was shed for the sins of all humanity. But more than 90% of humanity have not got their sins forgiven. Why is that? Because you've got to repent and you've got to believe.

And so I want to be sure that I have really repented and believed. Who can assure me of that? The Holy Spirit. He's the spirit of grace.

He can tell me, son, daughter, don't be afraid. Your sins are forgiven. You know how Jesus used to tell people, be of good cheer.

Your sins are forgiven. Today, the Holy Spirit, the third person of the Trinity, is doing exactly the same thing to those who respond saying, don't be afraid. Cheer up.

Your sins are forgiven. That's the first step. None of you should be satisfied without that assurance from the Holy Spirit and from God's word that your sins are completely forgiven.

Because you confess them. As I keep on saying, the only sin that cannot be forgiven is the sin that you don't confess. That's all.

Every sin that you confess will be forgiven. I remember somebody coming up to me once and said, Brother Zach, I wonder if I've committed that unpardonable sin Jesus spoke about. I said, do you have a desire? He said, I wonder if I've sinned against the Holy Spirit.

I asked him, do you have a desire to go to God and ask him to forgive you? He said, oh, yes. I said, then you can be sure you haven't committed that sin. Because it's the Holy Spirit who gives you the desire to repent.

And if you still have a desire to turn to God, I guarantee you haven't committed the unpardonable sin. Whatever it is, you don't need to know the definition of it. Just know that you haven't committed it.

If you still have a desire to turn to God and you can be sure that if you have a desire to turn to God, as soon as you come to him and say, Lord, I want to turn from my sin. I want to confess it. I don't want to blame anybody else like Adam.

I'm taking the blame myself. Forgive me. You're forgiven.

The blood of Jesus cleanses you from all sin. If you walk in the light, walking in the light means be honest about it. That's all.

Tell God the truth. That's the first thing. Secondly, Romans chapter six.

Romans chapter six and the second verse 14. Here again, grace. What does grace do for us? Sin shall not be master over you, Romans 6, 14, because you are not under law, but under grace.

You know, just like law was the big word in the Old Testament. You went to anybody in Israel and say, what's the great thing for you, fellas? Law, the law. We are the people on earth who've got the law.

Nobody else has got it except us. Today, you go to the New Testament Christian, say, what have you got? Grace. That's the great word in the New Testament.

And what does it say? When you're under grace, sin cannot rule over you. It's one thing to have forgiveness of sins according to the riches of His grace. It's quite another thing for us to be under grace where I let grace fall over me like a waterfall.

You know, when the Bible speaks about the baptism in the Holy Spirit, what is the word baptism? Unfortunately, the people who translated the English Bible way back in the 1600s did not translate the word baptism. I wish they had. It would have saved a lot of confusion.

See, baptism is a Greek word, really. It's not an English word at all. You go to the average, well-known, educated person in English and tell him about baptism.

He doesn't know what it is. It's not it's not an English word. It's a religious word.

It's found only in Christendom. Because it's not an English word, it's a Greek word, baptizo, bapto. And if you went to Greece 20 centuries ago and talked to them about baptizo, you say, oh, we understand that.

It means to dip. That's all it means to be dipped, to be immersed. And way back in the 1600s, when King James, whatever number he was, told somebody to translate, translate the Bible.

And he gave them some rules. And one of the rules he gave them was don't disturb church traditions with your translation. So these godly men translated the King James Version and they came to the word baptizo, bapto, Jesus said, go and immerse people.

He said, boy, if we translate it the way it should be translated, immersed, it's going to really rock. The Anglican Church, because they don't immerse anybody. They just sprinkle water on a child and call it baptism.

And so they were godly men. They couldn't translate it. Jesus said, go and christen everybody.

That would be a lie. They were very clever. They invented a new word, meaning nobody knew.

Go and baptize everybody. So people read the Bible. They'd never read that word in their entire life.

Baptize, what does that mean? Oh, I suppose that's what they do for the children when they, that's how this whole christening drama began. Jesus was immersed. He wasn't christened.

And he told people, John the Baptist immersed people. It says in one place, he baptized in one place because there's plenty of water there, not plenty of water to pour on people's heads, to immerse them. And so what does baptism mean? To be immersed.

Now, there are two ways to be immersed. One is when you're dipped in the water. The other is if you stand under a waterfall.

One is baptism in water. We testify to after we are born again, to be baptized in the Holy Spirit just means the same thing. To be immersed in the Holy Spirit.

To live under this waterfall, not to just occasionally come under it, but to live under this waterfall where I'm drenched with the power of the Holy Spirit that soaks me right through to my inner being. This is what baptism in the Holy Spirit means to be immersed in the Holy Spirit, to live every day of my life, immersed in the Spirit's power, controlled by the Spirit, allowing my tongue, my eyes, my hands, my behavior to be controlled by the Spirit. And we slip up.

Sometimes we slip up with our tongues. Sometimes we slip up with our eyes. But immediately we pull ourselves back.

Oh, Lord, forgive me. Just like you do if you trip over a stone and fall. What do you do? Get up immediately.

That's how we're supposed to do. The Holy Spirit immediately convicts us and we repent. We have it cleansed away.

And as we continue that walk progressively, we discover the falls become less frequent and we begin to experience what it says in Romans 6, 14, sin losing its power over us because the spirit of grace is upon us, immersing us. Do you know this is your birthright? Don't let the devil steal it from you. Look how the devil stole Canaan's land from 600,000 Israelites.

God wanted them to go in. The devil didn't want them to go in. And who won that battle? The devil.

Because God won't force 600,000 people to go into the land of Canaan if they say, no, God, we don't believe you can take us there. And he's not going to take 600,000 Christians into a life of victory over sin. You say, no, no, no, no.

It's not possible. You don't know my temperament. You don't know the life in the world is so difficult today.

Or my grandfather lost his temper. My father lost his temper. I'm not going to be any different.

Well, according to your faith, be it unto you. But that's not God's will for you. God wants you to be an overcomer.

He wants you to be an overcomer over every sin for which Jesus hung on the cross for you. You got to understand that God's will is for you to be a triumphant, victorious warrior. Against the devil.

I look at it like this. That if I allow one sin to rule me, I bring dishonor to the name of Jesus Christ by that. If I slip and fall, I want to get up and say, oh, I slipped up.

I'm sorry I slipped up there. And I find that that happens. You know, we get more and more light on sin in our life and we become more sensitive.

I hope that's happening in your life. But our goal is that no sin will rule over us. And if this is a mountain like Mount Everest that we got to climb by the power of God, we're going to do it.

You know, they didn't kill all the giants of Canaan in one day. It took time. But one by one, every giant they faced, they killed.

And that's the picture of victory over sin in the New Testament. When you're under grace, the Holy Spirit has come to give us victory. And then number three, in Second Corinthians, chapter 12 and verse nine, here it speaks about grace again.

Second Corinthians 12, verse nine. You know, Paul had a thorn in the flesh. I was saying yesterday evening that God is a loving father.

And one of the things that Jesus said about God was this, if you earthly fathers being evil. And you say, Lord, are all earthly fathers evil? Jesus said that, by the way, in Matthew, chapter seven. And I think the answer would be compared to God, the best earthly father is evil.

That's how good God is. It's like saying the stars have got light. That's right.

But compared to the brightness of the sun, the stars just disappear. You can't see the stars right now. They're there, but you can't see them.

That's the goodness of earthly fathers. The best earthly father. His goodness is like the light of the stars.

But the goodness of God is like the light of the sun. And if you earthly fathers think of the best earthly father in the world. He will never give anything bad to his children.

How much more shall your heavenly father give only good things to those who ask him? Now, I was saying yesterday, is sickness a good thing? I've never heard anybody say it's a good thing. Does God give sickness? How could it be? Do any of you good fathers give sickness to your children? God doesn't give sickness. But sometimes he allows it.

And this is one of those cases where he allowed it in one of his greatest servants, the Apostle Paul. He got a thorn in the flesh, which is a sickness because he calls it a messenger of Satan. In 2nd Corinthians 12 7, a messenger of Satan that troubled him, troubled him, troubled him.

I don't know what sickness it was, but it was some type of sickness that bothered him. And he prayed and he prayed three times. He prayed, Lord, heal me, heal me, heal me.

And the Lord said, no. There are some prayers God doesn't answer because he's got something better. And sometimes it's true even today that he doesn't heal a sickness because he's got something better.

And the Lord said to Paul, you need that because you're in danger of becoming proud. And you need that to humble you. And in that situation, I'll give you my grace.

And he says, my grace, 2nd Corinthians 12 9 is sufficient for you. To overcome whatever limitation you have because of that thorn in your flesh. That thorn in the flesh will humble you, but it will not limit your ministry.

It will not take away your joy. It will not take away your peace. You'll still be a triumphant Christian.

You'll overcome sin, even though you have that sickness. And that applies to every other trial we may have in life. Whatever you think is your thorn in the flesh, whatever trial you're having in your life.

I want to say to you in Jesus name, if you have prayed and prayed and prayed and prayed and that problem is not removed. Hear the word of the Lord. God's grace is sufficient for you to overcome it, even though that person or that difficulty remains there.

Here's a neighbor who's troubling you, troubling you, troubling you. And you're just hoping that he will shift and move away from this house next door. And the next thing you hear, he has bought the house and he's living there.

You know what the word that you need? My grace is sufficient for you. You can be an overcomer, even though you have the most difficult neighbor in the world. I'll tell you why.

Because there's another wonderful promise in scripture, which says in 1 Corinthians 10, 13. This is a promise all of you really need to know if you don't know it already. It's a promise that's blessed me through many, many years of my life.

1 Corinthians 10, verse 13. It says in the middle of that verse, God is faithful. In the middle of that verse, God is faithful who will not allow you to be tempted, tested, tried.

It all means the same thing, more than what you're able to bear, but with the temptation will make a way for you to escape it. I tell you with that one verse, you can live your whole life. Lord, in the next 50 years, I'm never going to face a temptation that's too much for me to overcome.

You'll give me grace to overcome it. It may be tough, but I'll be able to overcome it. It's like, you know, if I when I was in the second grade, if somebody gave me a 10th grade examination question paper, I wouldn't have been able to answer it.

But give me eight years and I got into 10th grade, then I could handle it. It's like that's been like that with all of you. At each grade, we get an examination that's tougher than we had in the previous grade.

But that's because we studied a little more. Grace is like that. Grace is not meant to be constant.

It says here in John's Gospel, chapter one, about the grace of God that was in Jesus. John 1, 16, from the fullness of grace that was in Christ, John 1, 16, we receive grace upon grace. Now, what I want to want you to know is what I want to ask you is not whether you've got grace, but whether you've got grace upon grace.

Is it increasing in your life? Are you going from the first grade to the second grade, to the third, to the fourth, to the fifth? Is that the way you want your children to grow? Well, that's the way God wants you to grow to grace upon grace as you face. That's why you find greater trials coming into your life. So whenever you come across a trial, that's oh, this is too much for me to bear.

Don't ever say that. If you've said it in the past, don't say it again, because when you say that, what you're actually saying is God is unfaithful. He has allowed me now to be tested beyond my ability.

That's what you're saying in your spirit. It's a lie. It's a lie the devil's making you say.

I want to tell you this. If you're a child of God, I believe with all my heart, and I've got 50 years, nearly 50 years of experience of knowing the Lord to tell you this. He will never allow you to be tested beyond your ability.

I think of certain trials that the devil brought into my own life a few years ago. You know, things like cult people taking me to court, etc. Now, I don't believe I could have handled it earlier.

But it looks, it appeared to me like this. The devil would go to God and say, God, can I get these people to troubles act like this? God says, no, he's not ready for it. One year later, can I do it now? No.

Five years later, the devil comes and he says, no. One day, God says to the devil, OK, now you can. What does that prove? He's brought me to a higher class.

He's confidence in me. Now I can handle that. The Holy Spirit leads you from one degree of grace to another.

Dear brother, sister, it'll change your whole life if you believe scripture. That God will not allow you to be tested beyond your ability, but his grace will be sufficient in every single situation you can ever face in your whole life. Then number four, grace.

In 1 Corinthians chapter 12, 1 Corinthians chapter 12, we read verse four, there are varieties of gifts for the same spirit. 1 Corinthians 12, verse four, and then it says in verse seven, to each one is given the manifestation of the spirit for the common good. Now, here it's speaking about the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

We've seen forgiveness of sins. We've seen overcoming sin. We've seen grace sufficient to face every trial and temptation I can ever come across in my life.

And number four, gifts of grace to serve other people. You've heard the word charismatic. That's again a Greek word, by the way.

Charisma, charis, charis, C-H-A-R-I-S, charis is the Greek word for grace. That's what it means. Charisma is gifts of grace from which you get the word charismatic.

So the Holy Spirit gives us gifts which are called gifts of grace. Gifts through which I can communicate grace to other people. That's why the Bible says, seek for the gift of prophecy, the gift of preaching God's

word in a way that you can edify, encourage and strengthen other people.

I started seeking for that gift when I was 22 years old. I said, God, your word says I must seek for it. I sought for it and God gave it to me in increasing measure.

I don't have disability naturally. I cannot think that I would be standing here preaching God's word if God had not given me the charisma of prophecy, the ability to speak God's word, to encourage, edify, strengthen, build up, challenge others. And to different people, God gives gifts.

Some are evangelists. Some have got a gift of healing. I mean, real gifts of healing, not these counterfeits that you see a lot today.

God gives it to some different gifts of healing, different gifts of exhortation and helps. And there's another gift called the gift of giving money for God's work, which many people don't see. But that's also one of the gifts of God.

Yeah, you read that in Romans chapter 12. But just by the way, if you want to look it up, it's in Romans 12, the gift of giving. So there are many gifts, but they're all gifts of grace.

And the one thing about gifts of grace different from all these other three aspects of grace I just mentioned so far is this. All the other three I mentioned are all for you. You get the assurance of forgiveness of sins.

You get the victory over sin. You triumph over all your trials. But when it comes to the fourth one, it blesses others.

Every gift of the spirit is meant to bless other people. Every single one of them. If you have the ability to evangelize, it's somebody else who gets saved.

If you've got the gift of healing the sick, it's somebody else who gets healed. If you've got a gift of preaching, it's somebody else who gets blessed. I remember even when I got the gift of tongues.

I read in the word of God that he who speaks in the tongue edifies himself. And I said, Lord, there are many ways of edification, reading the word, praying, listening to tapes, etc. If there's one more gift of edification, give it to me because I always want to be fresh to bless others.

I never want to be dry in my life. So every gift of the spirit is for blessing others. Jesus once told a story about a man who had a visitor come to his house at midnight and he hadn't eaten.

Now, he could have said, hey, listen, it's midnight. Just go to bed. We'll see if there's any food tomorrow.

But he didn't say that. He said, have you eaten? And it's not a good question to ask if you don't have any food in your house. He said, no, I haven't.

He said, OK, we'll get you some. He goes to his neighbor's house and knocks and knocks and knocks and knocks. And the neighbor says, hey, don't disturb me.

I'm in bed. You read the story in Luke 11. He said, no, I'm going to keep disturbing you until you give me some bread.

And he got it. And Jesus said, Luke 11, 13. If you seek for the Holy Spirit like this, your heavenly father will give you.

This is how you are to seek for the Holy Spirit. How? Seek to bless others. Seek to bless others.

Seek for the, this is what he said at the end of this parable. That means you have such a burden for somebody else who's got a need. Somebody you're counseling, you're not able to help that person.

Somebody who is sick, you need to help that person. I used to come across demon possessed people in India. I didn't know how to help them.

I said, Lord, I need the power of the Holy Spirit to cast out demons. You know, if you have a concern for others, if you're only selfishly concerned about yourself. I want to be a holy man.

I want to go to heaven. Forget about it. You don't need the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

But if you're concerned about others, this other fellow who came visiting you and you want to feed him something. Your stomach is full, but his is empty. You want to help him.

I tell you this, if we were seeking more to bless others, we'd have the genuine gifts of the Holy Spirit pretty soon. Dear brothers and sisters, there's much that God wants to give us to the Holy Spirit. Don't be confused by all the wrong teaching that's going on today.

That the Holy Spirit has come to make you rich and healthy. It's come to make you bless others. Jesus came to bless others.

He came to earth not for himself and he'll send you out into the earth to bless others. What a wonderful life this is. Lay hold of this eternal life.

Lay hold of knowing the Holy Spirit's power in your life so that you can live as a triumphant Christian and fulfill God's will to be a blessing to people all around you. Let's bow our heads.

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