

New Covenant - the Gifts of the Spirit -Part 2

by Zac Poonen

Zac Poonen's sermon explores the gifts of the Spirit and the believer's role in the new covenant, emphasizing spiritual authority and appreciation for faith in others.

Duration: 9:54

Scripture: Matthew 8:5-10, Matthew 8:28-32, Matthew 10:1, Mark 1:40-42, Ephesians 6:12

Topics: "Spiritual Gifts", "New Covenant"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of recognizing that every individual in the body of Christ has a unique function and calling from God. It highlights Jesus' ministry of healing, casting out demons, and appreciating faith and goodness wherever He saw it. The sermon also delves into the significance of the new covenant ministry, where believers are called to focus on spiritual battles rather than fighting with human beings, as Jesus confronted demons and empowered His disciples with authority over sickness and evil spirits.

Transcript

For 68 years, I heard that the doctor said that there's one part of the body which has no function, and that's the appendix. And I always said, the humble doctor will say, we don't know the function. The proud doctor will say, there is no function.

But just last week in the papers I read, the doctors have discovered the function of the appendix. I wasn't a doctor, but I always said that. For more than 40 years I said it.

Because I believe the Bible. I believe that God never created anything in this body without a function. And I want to say to you, if you're a part of the body of Christ, every single person in the body of Christ has a function.

I mean, you may be ignorant of the function. That's another thing. Or you may be too lazy to find out what your gift is.

That's another thing. But every person is called by God to fulfill a function. A hand can be paralyzed.

And many Christians are paralyzed. So we see Jesus ministering here. He comes to a leper.

And it says here, Jesus stretched out his hand and touched him. And he healed him. The other thing we see in John chapter 8 is Jesus ministering to Gentiles and praising non-Jewish people.

I mean, this would be as surprising as in the church, getting up and praising a Hindu man here, saying, he's much better than all of you Christians. I'll tell you, I sometimes say that, the way some Christians behave. That's exactly what we see here.

This Roman centurion, you read in Matthew 8 verse 5, Jesus says about him, I tell you, he says, I have never, verse 10, found such great faith in anyone in Israel. I've never found such faith in anyone in Israel. Lord Jesus, not even in your mother Mary.

I mean what I said. Not in anyone in Israel. What a word of praise he gave to that Roman centurion.

I see here that Jesus was a person who always knew how to appreciate. Whenever he saw something good in somebody, he appreciated it. We are such misers, just like we're misers in money, we are misers in expressing appreciation.

That shows we're not like Christ. I know that in my younger days I was like that too. That I was not like Jesus.

But I have learned to follow Jesus here, to express my appreciation. For non-Christians. But this chap is like, he's a non-Christian.

Jesus appreciated, yeah, there's something good I see there. And we need to, in children, people who don't have much Bible knowledge, what Bible knowledge did this chap have? But Jesus appreciated faith, he appreciated goodness, wherever he saw it. I like that.

Because the gospel was not meant just for one little community of people, it was meant for the whole world. That's what we see here. And we see also in Matthew 8 verse 28, Jesus encountering demons for the first time.

I told you earlier in Matthew chapter 4, that is the first time in history, in the Bible, that you read of a man coming face to face with the devil, is Jesus Christ. And that's part of the new covenant. Jesus didn't confront the Philistines and the Amorites and the Hittites like the people in the Old Testament.

He confronted Satan. And as long as anybody is fighting human enemies, he's under the old covenant. Ephesians 6 verse 12 says, we don't wrestle with flesh and blood.

Anyone who wrestles with flesh and blood, go back to the old covenant, there they fought with flesh and blood. Philistines, Canaanites, Egyptians, Syrians, all types of people. And you can be fighting with your wife, or husband, or mother-in-law, or brother-in-law, or neighbor, or somebody in the office, or your boss, or it doesn't matter.

It's all Philistines and Canaanites and everybody else. Flesh and blood. That is the clearest proof, that you also have not understood anything about the new covenant.

A man who enters into the new covenant, stops fighting with human beings. Jesus would never fight with human beings. You could spit on him, call him a devil, do what you like.

You couldn't get him to fight with you, because he's concentrated in fighting the devil. It's one mark of new covenant Christians. Where do you find people like that? And here we find him confronting demons now.

He dealt with the devil first, the strong man. Now he deals with the people who belong to him. And here he deals with this man who has got thousands of demons.

His name was Legion and he had at least 2000 demons, because we read that the demons went into the pigs. And so many demons in one person. This is the first time in the Bible, that you read of a man possessed by demons and somebody casting it out.

I mean we read of evil spirit coming up in Saul, King Saul in the Old Testament. But here were demons in a person and somebody cast it out. That was Jesus.

That's a new part of new covenant ministry. And he gave us the same authority. We read here that the demons said, Have you come here, verse 29, to torment us before the time? They know there's a time coming when they'll be tormented for eternity.

In a lake of fire. That's described in Revelation 20. And they knew that time had not yet come.

I mean they know scripture very well. They know Jesus has come only the first time. He's got to die and the church has got to be built.

And later he'll come and then they'll be cast in the lake of fire. And he says, it isn't yet time. Are you come to torment us before that? They knew he had authority.

And he didn't send them to hell. You know there are some people I have heard who try to cast out demons like this. I command you in Jesus name, go away to hell.

Rubbish. If Jesus couldn't send them to hell, who are you going to send them to hell? There is a time when they will be sent into hell. We can only command that demon to get out of that person.

I never tell a demon to go to hell. I never tell anybody to go to hell. Like a lot of people do.

I tell them to get out of that person. Stop oppressing him. Leave him alone.

And so they said, can you let us go into the pigs now? Have you ever thought why Jesus allowed this? You know there are some people who say animals are as important as human beings. Well here is the clearest proof they are not. At least Jesus didn't think so.

You know the Jews were not supposed to raise pigs. It was forbidden in Leviticus chapter 11. And these guys were all disobeying God's word and raising pigs because people like to eat pork.

I am not talking about the new covenant. You can eat it today. But it is forbidden under the old covenant.

And so, I think that is one reason. The other thing is that Jesus wanted this man to know that the demons had left him. I mean if you just tell a person the demons are gone, how will he know? He said, there they are.

They have gone into those pigs. See the pigs going down? He knew for certain they are gone. And then we see in Matthew chapter 9 about his calling Matthew and other disciples.

And I want you to move to chapter 10. The thing I want you to see here, we are talking about ministry now. The new covenant ministry.

With Jesus initiated. With the supernatural gift of healing, healing lepers. And, you know, casting out demons, opening up to Gentiles, to non-Jews.

And then in chapter 10, we read that this authority that Jesus had, he gives to the 12 disciples whom he has called. That is where we come in. See now we see Jesus and in the new covenant he has given this authority to others.

He called his 12 disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits. Cast them out to every kind of disease and every kind of sickness. He gave them authority to, verse 8, heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, cast out demons, freely receive, freely give.

And he taught them how to serve in this new covenant time.

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