

# New Covenant Truths - the Inner Life - Part 3

by Zac Poonen

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*Zac Poonen emphasizes the importance of inner preparation and faithfulness in the life of a believer to fulfill God's calling and ministry.*

**Duration:** 10:00

**Scripture:** Luke 4:1

**Topics:** "Spiritual Preparation", "Holy Ministry"

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## Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of being prepared by God for ministry, highlighting how many fail during the time of preparation due to various reasons like pursuing worldly desires, lack of diligence in studying the Word, or not seeking the anointing of the Holy Spirit. It stresses the need for faithfulness, overcoming temptation, and being led by the Holy Spirit before stepping into ministry, drawing parallels with Jesus' preparation and ministry.

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## Transcript

You know that God has to prepare a man before He gives him a ministry? And the reason why He cannot give a ministry to many people is they fail in the time of preparation. That's really the reason. I believe God has wanted to prepare many, many people for His service, but they fail in the time of preparation.

So they can never get the ministry that God wanted them to have. I asked the Lord once, I said, Lord, there are more than 1,000,000,000 people in India. 1,000,000,000.

It's one of the biggest countries in the world. Why are there so few prophets in this land? There should be hundreds and thousands of prophets in this land or in a country this size. And this is what the Lord told me.

I called many people to be my prophets. But most of them, somewhere along the way as they are being prepared for their ministry, fall by the wayside. Someone goes after money, someone marries the wrong person, somebody goes after something else, somebody joins some organization because they give them a bigger salary and completely give up the ministry God has for them.

Some people are too lazy to study the Word of God. There are many reasons. It's not that God didn't prepare people, but He can't force them.

They fail in the time of preparation. So God's not going to, I mean, there are a few people like Samuel and Jeremiah whom God said, okay, I've called you to be a prophet. But with most of us, He's not going to tell you necessarily, you're going to be my prophet.

I think it will swell our heads. God said that to you when you were a 16-year-old young man. But maybe that is what He has in mind for you.

But He sees whether you are faithful. And as He sees, over a period of 10-15 years, He'll train you through all types of trials and difficulties and problems. And see whether you overcome the world, whether the world has no power to over touch you.

And He sees whether you are a student of the Word. And then, that's how it was with Jesus. It's not going to be any different for us.

And Jesus was so faithful in those 30 years overcoming temptation, so faithful in those 30 years studying the Word, that He could go out and be anointed and have a ministry as a prophet. Is it possible that some of you, God had such a ministry for you, but you went after other things, or you were not faithful in temptation, or you didn't spend time studying His Word? You didn't seek for the anointing of the Holy Spirit? And you know how we have the tendency to blame God? Adam had that tendency. This woman whom you gave me, we blame God and say, God hasn't given me a gift.

You know that that's a way of blaming God? Why don't you do that? God hasn't given me that gift. Of course, I'm perfect. I've done everything perfectly, but God didn't give me the gift.

You'll discover when you stand before the Lord that that is not true. That God probably wanted to give you a gift, but He saw you were unfaithful. He saw that you were not diligent.

He's not going to reward lazy people. He's not going to tell you when you're 15 years old, I'm going to make you a prophet or any such thing. He's just going to see whether you're faithful.

Maybe He'll tell you that after you're 35, but He'll see between the ages of 20 and 35, whether you're going to be faithful or not. And I believe there are many, many people who have missed out, because they're waiting for some day when God will say to them, I'm going to give you this gift. It won't happen.

It didn't happen with Jesus. How is it going to happen with us? From our innermost being, if it has to flow, then God has to work in the innermost being first. Then the rivers will flow out from us.

So I want to say to you, my brothers and sisters, don't be discouraged if you don't have a great ministry. That may come in a few years. But right now, be faithful.

In the inner life, in your thoughts, in the words you speak, in the way you live at home, the way you work in your office, be upright, honest, Christian. Treat others the way you want to be treated. These are the temptations we face.

Don't run after the things that heathen run after. Remember like Noah, you're called to condemn the world, because you know that everything around you is going to pass away. You're only here to earn your living and build a church.

Luke chapter 4. Notice this. I don't know whether you've noticed this expression. Jesus was full of the Holy Spirit and he returned from Jordan and was led by the Holy Spirit into the wilderness for 40 days, tempted

by the devil.

And at the end of the temptation, notice in verse 1, he was full of the Holy Spirit, and at the end of the temptation, it says in verse 14, he returned in the power of the Holy Spirit. Have you noticed that? Full of the Holy Spirit, in the power of the Holy Spirit. What was it that happened between verse 1 and 14? Temptation.

It's not enough to be filled with the Holy Spirit. He was filled with the Holy Spirit in verse 1. But he was not ready for his ministry, till he had fasted and prayed and overcome temptation. A lot of people today think, well, I've been filled with the Holy Spirit.

I believe in the baptism of the Holy Spirit. I've been baptized in the Holy Spirit. Wonderful, brother.

Have you been faithful in temptation? That's the next step. Then you can come in the power of the Holy Spirit and minister the Word of God. It was like that with Jesus and it's like that with everyone who is a disciple, a follower of Jesus.

And this is what the devil has blinded the Christian world to. They say, baptism in the Holy Spirit, baptism in the Holy Spirit. That's the main thing, that's the main thing.

You got it, you got everything. You haven't got everything. Now you have to be faithful in temptation for that power to flow out from you.

So we see that so clearly here. So remember that. This is distinctive in the New Covenant.

In the Old Covenant it was not like that. The day a man was anointed, he went out into his ministry. It wasn't like that in the New Testament.

We have to conquer our bodily passions with the power of the Holy Spirit. For the first temptation that Jesus was tempted by was the desires of the body. And the second temptation was to overcome the honor of man.

Jump off the temple and you will land unhurt and people will receive you as the Messiah. You've got to overcome the dispassions of your body that hinder you from doing God's will. To overcome seeking the honor of man.

And the third as he saw was to overcome the glory of this world. And then we come forth in the power of the Spirit to go out into a ministry. It was not like that under the Old Covenant.

Then I want to move on to Matthew Chapter 5. Matthew Chapter 5, 6 and 7. We could say is the New Covenant standard of life. The Old Covenant standard of life was described in Exodus 20 in the Ten Commandments. You ask any Israelite, what is the standard of life? Ten Commandments.

I must honor my father and mother. I mustn't steal, mustn't kill. You know, then the rich young ruler came to Jesus.

Those are the things that Jesus told him. And he said, I've done all these things. The Old Covenant standard of life was purely external.

This, this, this, this, this, this. It's all external. Don't kill, don't steal, don't commit adultery, don't bear false witness in the court.

But what the Ten Commandments were to the Old Covenant saints, Matthew 5, 6 and 7 is for the New Covenant believer. So if you want to know what standard of life you are supposed to live under, don't go to the Ten Commandments. The Ten Commandments is for the whole world.

Whole world. They have laws in the world. Every country in the world has got laws based on the Ten Commandments against bearing false witness in court, telling lies, murdering, stealing, etc., committing adultery.

But in the New Covenant, that's not our standard. We are not living under the law, but led by the Holy Spirit. And the leading of the Holy Spirit, as I said, is something inside.

So, in Matthew 5, when Jesus saw the crowds, verse 1, He went up to the mountain and began to teach His disciples. Notice that the Sermon on the Mount is not for the multitude. It is for the disciples of Jesus.

It's for those who have decided to follow Him. And He taught them how to follow Him.

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