

Religiosity or Spirituality - Listening to the Spirit

by Zac Poonen

The sermon emphasizes the importance of listening to God and having a personal relationship with Him, rather than just following rules and regulations.

Duration: 56:21

Scripture: Isaiah 30:21, Matthew 6:33, Luke 5:16, Luke 10:38-42, John 17:4

Topics: "Religiosity"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of understanding and fulfilling the specific work that God has given us. He uses Jesus as an example, highlighting how Jesus obediently completed the tasks assigned to him, including spending thirty years making stools and benches and preaching for three and a half years. The speaker also emphasizes the significance of spending time alone with God, drawing attention to Jesus' habit of going into the wilderness to pray early in the morning. The sermon concludes with the speaker encouraging listeners to prioritize hearing from God and being obedient to His word, even if it means sacrificing certain things or potentially offending others.

Transcript

So during the week we have been looking at primarily at the difference between being religious and being spiritual. It is God's will that all of us become spiritual people led by the Holy Spirit rather than led by rules and regulations and self-imposed disciplines and traditions. As I mentioned in one of the sessions, Adam had a choice to go either to the tree of knowledge of good and evil or to the tree of life.

He had a choice we can say to live life by a set of rules and regulations of what was right and what was wrong or to live his life by partaking of God's nature and he chose to live by knowledge. He chose knowledge above life and God had warned him that the day you do that you're going to die. Now we need to listen to that warning after all these 6,000 years of man's history that where we choose knowledge above life we're going to die spiritually and yet our tendency is to be satisfied with knowledge.

We think we've become spiritual because we know more. We may even think that because we've understood so much over this weekend that we've all of a sudden become spiritual. I'm sorry to disappoint you but you haven't.

It's not going to be by just a lot of information that we accumulate that we become spiritual and the clearest proof of that is the devil. He has so much knowledge, so much information, so much supernatural ability and he's not spiritual. In the New Testament we know that the word that Jesus frequently used as I mentioned in one session is the words follow me.

The Christian life is not following a certain code of conduct. It's following a person and it's not a question of understanding rules and a code of conduct clearly as much as knowing a person. God wanted Adam to know what was good and evil by dependence on God and not by having a lot of information stored within him.

Our tendency is to understand certain even certain principles and say I want to live by those principles. We're not going to be spiritual even then. Spirituality comes when we see Jesus clearly come into a personal relationship with him, see him in our spirit clearly, listen to his voice and follow him.

A clear contrast that we can see between a religious person and a spiritual person would be Mary and Martha. I want to turn, if you will turn with me to Luke's gospel chapter 10. In Luke's gospel chapter 10, we read of these two sisters and they were very good sisters.

They were folks who welcomed Jesus into their home. It says in Luke chapter 10 verse 38 that Jesus entered a certain village and a woman named Martha welcomed them into her home. And she had a sister called Mary who moreover was listening to the Lord's word seated at his feet.

But Martha was distracted with all her preparations and she came up to him and said, Lord don't you care that my sister has left me to do all the serving alone? Tell her to help me. But the Lord answered and said to her, Martha, Martha, you're worried and bothered about so many things, but only a few things are necessary, really only one thing. And Mary has chosen that good part which shall not be taken away from her.

Now, when you look at what Martha did, it looks very commendable. I mean, if you went into that home that day and you saw Jesus, the 12 disciples sitting at his feet and Mary also sitting at Jesus' feet and listening to all that Jesus was saying, and you went into the kitchen and you saw Martha struggling there to cook a meal for all these 15 people, I think you would have appreciated Martha too, that she's working so hard all alone. After all, don't these people need to be fed? And when someone like Jesus is coming to your home, don't you think you should set a good meal before him? And you also may have felt that Mary was a bit irresponsible to leave Martha all alone in that kitchen to cook that meal.

And who was Martha doing it for? She was doing it for the Lord, for the Lord's disciples. What better ministry can we have than to serve the Lord and his people? And yet, when she came to the Lord, the Lord said, Martha, you're worried about many things. Do you know that only one thing is needful? And I'm sorry to say, Martha, you have not chosen that one necessary thing.

You've been taken up with so many things which are good. There's a saying that the good is the enemy of the best. You can do what is good and miss the best.

None of us would question the fact that what Martha did was very, very good, totally unselfish. And yet the Lord did not appreciate it. What is the lesson we can learn from that? You can do a lot of unselfish things, and you may not find the Lord appreciate it.

You can do a lot of service for the Lord, sacrificially. And you may discover that the Lord doesn't appreciate it. Because Martha, certainly it was sacrificial service to try and cook a meal for 15 people, all by herself.

And you don't see one word of appreciation. There are many people who feel that God will be happy if I serve him, if I do something for him. And they are stirred by preachers who challenge them to go and do something for the Lord.

You know that that's not what God wants from you. What is the one thing which Jesus said was necessary? To listen to what God wants me to do, and then to do that. If I have a servant working for me, what do I expect him to do? I don't expect him to run around the whole day doing something or the other which he thinks is necessary for me.

I expect him to listen to me first. And that is what it means to be the Lord's servant. Religious people are busy trying to do something for the Lord to ease their conscience.

Some type of service with which they ease their conscience that are doing something for the Lord. Maybe they're helping the poor. Maybe they're visiting the sick or doing something.

But maybe that's not what the Lord expects. Certainly that's not what the Lord expected from Martha. What does it mean to sit at the Lord's feet and listen? Jesus taught us in his prayer which we considered earlier, our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come.

And then the third prayer, thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven. Now how is God's will done in heaven? How do the angels do God's will? What does Gabriel do for example? He doesn't just try to run around heaven trying to do something for God. You know people challenge people, do something for God, don't just sit there doing nothing.

Well Gabriel doesn't do that, trying to run around doing something for God or something or the other for God. They wait on the Lord. You know it's much more difficult to wait on the Lord than to do something for him.

It's far easier to go visiting and to do some type of work than to wait on the Lord. Just wait before the Lord and say Lord what do you want me to do? Man doesn't like to wait. A spiritual man waits on the Lord and he doesn't think that's a waste of time.

If there was one man who walked on this earth, who we would say never needed to pray, never needed to pray, that was Jesus. Why did he need to pray? He had never sinned, he never had to confess any sin, he was always in perfect fellowship with the Father. Why did he need to pray? Why did he need? If there was one man who walked on the earth who did not need the Holy Spirit's power, it was Jesus.

His life was so holy. And yet we see no one prayed like he did. Do you know that? Do you know that once he spent a whole night in prayer, seeking the Father's will, concerning whom he should select to be his disciples.

We read in Luke chapter 6 he spent a whole night in prayer from all the many disciples he had to select 12. He prayed. He waited on his Father.

When he was 30 years old it says he prayed and the Holy Spirit came upon him. He prayed for the Holy Spirit to come upon him. He is our example.

He waited. We don't like to wait. We see a need and we say I must rush and do it.

How did Jesus serve? There was a need on earth for thousands of years and yet Jesus waited in heaven. He waited at least 4,000 years after Adam sinned before he came to this earth. Why was that? There is a verse in Galatians in chapter 4 which says, verse 4, when the fullness of the time came God sent his son.

God sent his son 4,000 years after Adam sinned. You know God says, there is a verse in the Old Testament which says my ways are not your ways says the Lord. The way I do my work is not the way you think I should do it.

If we were in God's place we would have sent Jesus to earth long before that. We would have probably sent him the next week after Adam sinned. Why allow the world to live for 4,000 years in chaos without a savior? Don't you think that was terrible? Can any of you explain to me why God waited 4,000 years? Okay, after he came to earth why did he waste 30 years making stools and benches and all types of stuff like that when there's a world dying in need of a savior? Don't you think that's crazy? You know we hear those type of missionary challenges.

What are you wasting your time doing that when the world's dying in need of hearing the message of salvation? What are you doing sitting around there? And some people get all condemned and quit their jobs and go out and make a mess of the Lord's work wherever they go because God never called them. They acted on the basis of need without a call from God. I know I come from a country where I have traveled up and down India for 40 years.

Now I'm not God but I'll give my opinion. I believe that 90 percent of Christian workers in India were never called by God to serve him. They have been a hindrance to the work of the Lord in my country.

I believe a lot of preachers who come to India from other countries, God never sent them. There's an itch to go and do something for the Lord. They haven't seen the example of Jesus.

You know when you listen to God and do what he says, you can do more in six months than in 60 years of trying to do something on your own. Jesus served only three and a half years. Look at the impact of that life over the last 2,000 years and he served only three and a half years.

Did he travel the world? No. In fact he traveled only a small nation of Israel which is totally about 300 miles long I think. That's about all.

His entire life, he came to save the world and he spent his entire life in a small little nation and he lived only three and a half years and he said, father I finished the work you gave me to do. He didn't say, father I've met the need all over the world. No, I finished the work you gave me to do.

You told me to come down to earth and spend 30 years making stools and benches. I made stools and benches for 30 years and then you told me to go and preach for three and a half years. I preached for three and a half years.

Now I finished my work. Now I go and die on the cross and I finished. I'm coming up to you.

Do you understand that this is how it is? This is what it means to serve the Lord to first hear. It says about Jesus that many times early in the morning when other people were still asleep, he would go out into the wilderness to pray. That was a habit with him.

See today we have our own rooms and we have privacy and it's easy to find time to be alone with God in our own rooms. But Jesus lived in a home where there were four other younger brothers, at least two sisters, his mother and a very poor house. He never had any private room to retreat to.

He could not find a place in his house to be alone with the Father. He looked for a wilderness. And like someone has said, just like tourists when they come to a new city, look for the interesting sights to be seen.

When Jesus came to a new place, he'd look for the nearest wilderness where he could go and be alone with his Father. That was the most important thing for him. He wanted to know what his Father wanted him to do each day of his life.

I want to say to you, my brothers and sisters, that this is the way God wants man to live. To listen, not to do the next bright idea that comes into my mind. Not to be challenged by some person who whips up your human emotions, showing you pictures of human need across the world and stirring you to run when God never called you to go.

You'll be like a Martha. You'll be busy doing so many things, perhaps sacrificially, perhaps unselfishly, but you won't be at rest in your heart. Martha wasn't at rest.

She was so much at unrest and she had so much complaints against other people who were not doing what she was doing. And I've seen a lot of missionaries and Christian workers like that. They're doing something for the Lord, but they're complaining saying, why aren't other people doing what I'm doing? Exactly like Martha.

But Mary had no complaints. She sat at the Lord's feet. When I was a young Christian, I observed carefully various types of Christian work and various Christian leaders and movements they raised up.

And there were one or two I observed which were different. And they challenged me because I noticed that in their ministry, there was a difference. They didn't seem to go here and there and challenge people and all that.

Wherever they went, there was a lasting result. As a young Christian, I said, Lord, this is the most efficient way to serve you. I don't want to go here and there, seeing where there's a need.

I want you to send me where you want me to go. And I know that if I listen to you and go where you tell me to go, there will be lasting results. And that's what I've discovered in the last 25 years.

Today, it's no longer theory, what I'm saying. 25 years ago, it was still truth, but it was a theory for me. Today, it's not theory.

I've experienced the reality of it. That if you listen to God and make that a priority in your life, religious people don't have time to listen. They're too busy serving, like Martha.

You get a bunch of 25 religious people together, and they'll always be talking about what they're doing for the Lord. I'm visiting prisons and I'm going here and I'm doing this and I'm supporting this work and I'm

supporting the other work. And all they can talk about is what they're doing for the Lord.

You get 25 Marthas together, that's what they talk about. You get 25 Marys together, and they'll be telling you what the Lord spoke to them, that changed their life. What do we share with others? What do we find delight in sharing with others? What we're doing for the Lord or what the Lord is saying to us.

One thing is needful. For 40 years in my life, God has spoken one word of scripture more than any other word from the New Testament to me. And you know what that is? One thing is needful.

Listen to me. If you listen to me and do what I tell you, you will accomplish a lot more in your life than if you do whatever you think is right. Give up your own will and do what I tell you to do.

Let me show you what the Bible says in Proverbs chapter 3. In Proverbs chapter 3 it says verse 5. Trust in the Lord with all your heart and don't lean on your own understanding. The Christian life is a life of faith. And faith means dependence upon God.

That means a leaning upon God. It's the leaning of the whole human personality upon God. That's faith.

It's not an intellectual thing that I like. I believe the multiplication table two, twos are four and two threes are six that I lean upon. It's not an intellectual conviction about God.

Even the devil's got that. It's a leaning. It's very important to know what faith is because the New Testament speaks a lot about faith and says without faith it is impossible to please God.

You can do a hundred and one good things and God will not be pleased if you don't have faith. That's what Hebrews 11:6 says. Without faith, whatever else you may have, it is impossible to please God.

And faith means the total leaning of the human personality upon God in absolute confidence in his perfect love, his perfect wisdom and his absolute power. That is faith. Lord, your wisdom is perfect.

You know the best way to make use of my one earthly life. I don't know it. And therefore, I lean upon you.

I say, Lord, what do you want me to do? That's the attitude of faith. I have confidence in your love. You know, the devil's always telling us that God is a spoil sport.

If you give your whole life to him, he'll make a mess of your life and your life will be unhappy. And that's a lie. It's an absolute lie.

You can get the maximum potential out of your life if you give it totally to God. Because he loves you perfectly. He knows everything about the future and he's already made a blueprint for your life.

You know, the Bible says that in Ephesians 2:10, that God has already planned good works beforehand that we should walk in them. Or in simple words, that God made a plan for your life long before you were born. And I'm sure that plan and that blueprint is better than anything I can make because I don't know the future.

I don't know all the pitfalls that Satan's lined up for me in the next few months or years. God's taken all that into account and made a blueprint for my life. I'd be an absolute fool not to find out that we'll walk in it.

So that's the meaning of this verse. Trust in the Lord with all your heart and don't lean upon your own reason. Did you see that? Trust in the Lord with all your heart and don't lean on your understanding.

Do you know what is the biggest enemy of faith? Your own understanding. Your own reason. That's the biggest enemy of faith.

That's what this verse says. Trust in the Lord with all your heart and don't lean on your own understanding. In all your ways, acknowledge Him.

In all your ways, acknowledge Him. Lord, how do you want me to spend my life? Do you want to know God's will in everything? Do you want to seek God's will when it comes to marriage or do you want to marry whom you like? Well, that depends whether you want to make a success of your marriage or not. You know, there are lots and lots of people who want to do God's work in their own way.

They want to make their own plan for their life and they want to serve the Lord. And God says, sorry, you can't serve me like that. You've got to do my work in my way.

In all your ways, acknowledge Him and He will make your path straight. He will direct your paths. He will never let you miss His will.

If you trust in Him, don't lean on your own understanding and acknowledge Him in all your ways. Which means, you take the word of God seriously. Let me show you another verse in Proverbs chapter 8, verse 34.

Proverbs 8, 34 says, blessed is the man who listens to me. And the word blessed throughout the Bible means happy. You want to find the secret of happiness to be blessed of God? It says here, listen.

Proverbs 8, 34. Blessed is the man who listens to me. That's what Mary did.

Watching daily at my gates. Waiting. Lord, what do you want me to do? Waiting at my doorposts.

You know, when we say, thy will be done on earth as it's done in heaven, do you know what that means, actually, when you pray that prayer and that's a prayer the Lord taught us to pray? That should be our prayer every day. Why do I say it should be every day? Because there's one prayer in that, which teaches us that it should be a daily prayer. Give us this day our daily bread.

So obviously that's a prayer, an attitude that we should have every day. This day, thy will be done in my life as it's done in heaven. I'm not talking about tomorrow.

I'm not talking about yesterday. I made a mess of my life yesterday. But today, today, I want to do your will as it's done in heaven.

And Lord, how is it done in heaven? The angels wait on God. And God says, Gabriel, come here, go down to Nazareth and give a message to that young girl, Mary, who lives over there. And what does Gabriel do? He drops whatever he's doing.

And he goes. He waits. And when he hears his obedience is instant.

He doesn't say, just wait, Lord, I've got something to finish urgently before I do that. That's how man is. We've got something else to do before we do what God wants us to do.

We've got to finish that before we go. The angels are not like that. They do obey instantly.

They obey completely. They don't go into a half job and come back. They finish what God's told them to do and come back and they do it joyfully.

And that's how, that's what it means when I say, thy will be done on earth today in my life as it's done in heaven. Lord, I'm waiting on you. Whatever you tell me to do, whatever you prompt me.

God, how does God speak to us? It's not through some voice from heaven. He's given us the Holy Spirit. You know, in the old days, He spoke with a voice from heaven, with thunder and all types of supernatural manifestations.

That's how He spoke in the Old Testament. But now He's given us the Holy Spirit. And that's why I come back to what I've been saying repeatedly over this weekend.

We have to be filled with the Holy Spirit. There is no other way. The Holy Spirit within us is meant to be our guide.

Jesus said He will guide you into all the truth. And the Spirit of God, the reason why He comes to live within us is so that He can speak to us and tell us what God wants us to do. That's the voice.

And when I listen to it, if I listen to it and obey, I'll find God directing me in all my paths. I want to show you another verse in this connection in Isaiah chapter 30. Isaiah chapter 30 and verse 21.

He's talking about this leading of the Holy Spirit and is described like this. Your ears will hear a word behind you saying, this is the way. Walk in it when you turn to the right or to the left.

Do you know that God wants you to be sensitive to the voice of the Holy Spirit? Because that is how He leads His children. Religious people would rather have a list of rules and regulations that they're supposed to do every day. That's not the way God wants man to live.

That was life under the law. Thou shalt do all these things. One, two, three, four, all the way down to a thousand.

And thou shalt not do all these other things. And if you, you know, they had even rules like what to do if a lizard fell into your pot. I'm not joking.

You read that in the Old Testament, there were laws that if a lizard fell into your pot, you know what to do. So you, a lizard falls into your pot, you go to the priest and says, what should I do now? The priest says, just hang on, let me. Oh, here it is.

This is what you're supposed to do. If you've got leprosy, what you're supposed to do. When you find a bird with its little ones, can you take all of them or just take the mother bird and let the little ones go? All types of rules and regulations.

You go down there and you check up and that was the priest's job. That's how they earned a living, by telling people according to the law. But all of that has been replaced with the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit now tells you, this is the way, walk in it. And when you tend to go straight to the right or to the left, the Holy Spirit says, no, not that way, this way. I'm sure you've heard that voice.

When you turn over the pages of a magazine and you come across an article or a picture, which is not very pure. I'm sure you've heard the voice of the Holy Spirit saying, turn the page. Have you done it? In all your ways, acknowledging.

He will direct your paths. You know, it's obedience in these little things that make a man or a woman spiritual. It's not going to long prayer meetings and going for a lot of special meetings and engaging in a lot of activity like Martha.

It's in the little things in life. When somebody speaks to you rudely and you hear the voice of the Spirit say, ignore it. Forget it.

Don't respond in the same way. Don't write that letter. I know that word's on the tip of your tongue.

Don't let it come out. Put it back in. You listen.

So often, we lean on our own reason. We say, well, if I don't give him a piece of my mind, he'll keep on taking advantage of me. Okay, go ahead.

The result is more confusion. And that's the reason why we are not able to find the will of God in the crossroads of life. We come to some very vital place of decision and we say, oh God, show me your will.

And there's no voice, no answer from heaven. You know why there's no answer from heaven? Because in 101 different occasions when he spoke to you, you would not listen. When he told you to turn the page, you wouldn't turn the page.

When he told you to keep quiet, you wouldn't keep quiet. When he told you so many things, you had no time for him. And now in a very important decision you have to take, you pray and the heavens are like brass.

There's no voice, no sound. We need to repent. There was a great man of God, I forget his name, but at the end of his life who lived a very, very useful life for God, a life of great effectiveness for God's kingdom.

At the end of his life, somebody asked him, can you tell me one secret of how your life was so effective? And he said, if there's one thing I would say above everything else, it was that I listened to those little promptings of the Holy Spirit. When he told me not to do something or he told me to do something. I find very few Christians who seek to live like that.

One thing is needful. That's what Mary chose. More important than doing so many things for the Lord, like Martha.

Much more important than that. Religious people do all that. A spiritual person listens to the little promptings of the Holy Spirit.

There are so many things that may appear right to you, but you don't know where it finally ends. Have you read this in Proverbs chapter 14 and verse 12? Proverbs 14 and verse 12, it says, there is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is death. It seems right to the reason, but it ends up in death.

And that's why it says, don't lean upon your reason. Now, if you turn the page, you come to chapter 16 and verse 25. What does it say there? The same thing.

There is a way which seems right to a man, but his end is the way of death. Why does the Lord repeat it? Just in case you missed it in chapter 14, or you read too fast. He doesn't want you to miss it.

He doesn't want you to miss that word. There is a way that seems right to a man. When we see the amount of chaos, and there's no better word to use to describe it.

Chaos. There is in Christendom today, just in the area of marriage, divorce, remarriage. You know where it's come from? It's come from man leaning on his own reason, doing what he thinks is right.

There is a way that seems right to a man, and it ends in death. There is no willingness to listen to the simple word of Jesus Christ. In Matthew chapter 5, Matthew chapter 19, it's so clear.

In Malachi, God says, I hate divorce, and you indulge in what God hates, and you can have a hundred and one reasons why you think it's right. I can prophesy it will lead you to spiritual death, because you choose to reject the word of God to follow after your own lusts. What pleases you? Okay, then you got to reap the consequences.

The Bible says, don't be deceived. God cannot be fooled. What a man sows, he will reap.

You can sow what you like. God won't stop you. But be sure, a day of reaping will come.

And the day of reaping doesn't come the very next day. When a farmer sows his seed, he doesn't reap the next day. He reaps weeks and months later.

And another thing, he doesn't reap just as little as he sowed. He reaps sometimes a hundredfold of what he sowed, whether good or evil. You sow to evil, to disobedience to God's word, you're going to reap a hundredfold chaos and confusion in your life.

In the same way, you sow a little bit of good, and you're going to reap a hundredfold of blessing and goodness in your life. God can't be fooled. Let me say this, my brothers and sisters, today, you are what you are, because of the many, many decisions you took in your past life.

Another person is probably way ahead of you spiritually because of the decisions he took. Think of two people who are converted on the same day. Ten years later, you haven't seen them for ten years.

Ten years later, you meet both of them. And you see a wonderful Christ-like spirit in one, and a total absence of that in the other. Why was that? They were both born again the same day.

They had similar backgrounds. The reason was that this first brother took many little decisions in life. He decided not to please himself, but to please God, to listen to the promptings of the Holy Spirit, to turn the page when the Spirit of God told him to turn the page, to hold back that word which he had a great itch to say.

And the Holy Spirit told him to keep quiet. Not to do something, not to buy something, not to waste his money on that, not to waste his time on this, but to do something else for someone. And when he did something good, to keep quiet about it.

And he listened to that. And he kept on listening, listening, listening. The end result is after ten years, he's reaping the result of years of listening to the Holy Spirit.

And on the other hand, here's another person. He probably didn't do great evil or anything. He did whatever his reason told him.

He's a religious person. He's not spiritual. A man reaps what he sows.

And in the Holy Spirit leading us and guiding us, I found a verse in the New Testament, which I believe is the clearest presentation of the ministry of the Holy Spirit in the entire New Testament, at least for me. And this has protected me from so many things that go on today under the name of the Holy Spirit. And there's a lot of deception that's going on.

And that verse, it can help you too, is in 2 Corinthians chapter 3 and verse 18. Here it says as to what the Holy Spirit does in our life. We all with an unveiled face beholding in a mirror the glory of the Lord.

The mirror is the word of God. You read James chapter 1 verse 23 to 25. It says when you look at the law of God and his word, it's like a mirror.

You know, this is like a mirror. What do you see when you look in a mirror in the bathroom? You see your face, whether it's dirty. You see whether your hair is combed or not.

When I look into God's word, that's exactly what I see. If it were written today, it would have probably used the word an x-ray or a scan. The word of God is like a scanning machine, shows me things inside my body, which I don't see otherwise.

And in this mirror, it's not just that I see myself. The Holy Spirit shows me the glory of Jesus Christ. Now we got to see this.

Number one ministry of the Holy Spirit is to show you in the word of God, the glory of Jesus. To show you the wonderful life that he lived on earth as a man. He wants to show you that glory, first of all.

You know, the way he washed people's feet, the way he forgave those who harmed him, crucified him, the way he put his arms around a leper, comforted him, the way he forgave women caught in adultery, thieves who were condemned to be crucified. This is the glory of Jesus. The way he obeyed his mother for 30 years.

The Holy Spirit shows us the glory of Jesus Christ in his earthly life, in the scriptures. That's the number one ministry of the Holy Spirit. And then secondly, he transforms us, verse 18, into that same image from one degree of glory to another.

The Bible says that Jesus, Hebrews 4.15 says, Jesus was tempted in all points as we are. And the Holy Spirit shows us that that temptation you're facing today, which you think is insurmountable, that temptation which you think you can never overcome. He shows you, Jesus was tempted in the same way as you are, but he did not sin.

You say, well, he didn't sin because he was a son of God. No, that's not how he avoided sin. He had emptied himself, not of his deity, he was still God when he was on earth, but he emptied himself of those privileges and resources that he had as God when he lived on earth as a man.

That's why he needed to be filled with the Holy Spirit, so that he overcame not in his inherent power as God, because then he would be no example for us, but as a man. To me, that's one of those wonderful truths I saw in scripture. Do you think an angel from heaven could teach me how to swim? Supposing an

angel flies across that swimming pool and says, follow me.

And I get in, and I go down, and I say, hey, I can't follow you. I can admire you as you go up and down, but I can't follow you. If you want me to follow you, you first subject yourself to the law of gravity like I am.

And if you feel this downward pull, then I can follow you. Take a body like mine. So, if Jesus came to earth as God and, you know, floated through this earth without sinning and said, follow me, I'd say, Lord, I can admire you, but I can't follow you.

And yet, isn't it interesting that he never told people to admire him? Never once did he say, admire me? How frequently did he say, follow me? Was he teasing us, or was it because he knew we could follow him? I want to ask you, do you believe that you can follow Jesus? All I'm asking you is, do you believe Jesus spoke the truth? Shall I put it that way? It's easier to answer. Do you believe that Jesus spoke the truth? He said, follow me. The Holy Spirit says, you can.

I give you the power. He was tempted like you are, but he didn't sin. He sought for the power of the Spirit, used it to overcome as a man, and that's how we're supposed to live.

In everything, allow the Holy Spirit to show you Jesus as your example. How he lived on this earth, how he served others, how he blessed others wherever he went. I believe this is how God wants us to live when we think of Mary listening.

What I need to do is listen to the Holy Spirit as he shows me the glory of Jesus day by day, and trust him to transform me into that same likeness. I remember when I was a very young Christian, and I began to preach, and I needed a role model. Whom shall I follow? No one better than Jesus.

And I sought to study in the Gospels. How did Jesus preach? I saw that he preached from his life. He didn't preach from his head.

He preached from his life. What he spoke came from his heart. He spoke so simply.

He spoke in such an interesting way, and he spoke with conviction. He spoke with the anointing of the Holy Spirit. And I said, Lord, if I ever preach in my life, that's the only way I want to preach.

Well, that's preaching. How about life at home? Jesus lived at home for 30 years. It says he never sinned, which means he never got irritated with his brothers and sisters.

He was tempted many times, but he didn't yield to it. He was obedient to his mother. He always did a finished job.

If his mother said, Jesus, go and bring a bucket of water from the well, he'd go there, and he would not bring a half a bucket of water. He'd bring a full bucket. That's the glory of Jesus.

If he made a table in his carpenter shop, it wouldn't be a wobbly one. It would sit straight. That's the glory of Jesus.

If he made a little stool for a widow, and the widow asked him, well, how much shall I pay you? I think he'd have said, oh, forget it. Just take it as a gift from me. That's the glory of Jesus.

Do you want to be like him? I want to be like him. The world needs to see more and more people who manifest the glory of Jesus. But we got to listen.

We got to allow the Holy Spirit. Never mind all the hypocrites around you. You decide that you're going to make a difference in your life.

You're going to allow the Holy Spirit to show you the glory of Jesus. You're fed up of being just a religious person. You want to tread the pathway of spirituality from today.

And the only way to do it is to allow the Holy Spirit to show you the glory of Jesus. And you see that glory, and you have a passionate longing to be like him, to live according to his standards and not according to the standards of a wayward, backslidden, compromising Christendom. You're going to have his standards in bringing up children.

You're going to have his standards in avoiding worldliness. You're going to have his standards in marriage. You're going to have his standards in God's word, revealed in God's word, in the matter of purity in every area.

Then you and I can be a light to the world around us. We have so many Christians today who are criticizing so many things that are wrong. Instead of doing that, let's let the light shine in our lives.

Let's pray. There are many things that the Lord has spoken to our hearts in this weekend. I want to encourage you and invite you to set aside your own reasoning, to set aside all the excuses the devil will give you, why you cannot live this life.

Be willing to give up some things that are very precious to you, because you want to please the Lord. You may have to hurt certain people. You may have to offend certain people, because you're going to follow Jesus.

He's going to be more important to you than father, mother, brother, sister, wife, children, life itself. And if you make that decision to be his disciple, you'll have the most fulfilling, satisfying life that any human being can live on this earth. That I can guarantee.

The choice is yours. Never mind your past failures. The blood of Christ will take care of all that.

You can't do anything about yesterday. You can do something about tomorrow. We can do something about the rest of our lives.

Heavenly Father, help us to honor you in the short earthly life that we have, the few years that are left for us, before you come back in glory. We want to use them to the maximum, for the glory of God. I pray that for everyone here.

In Jesus' name, Amen.

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