

The Anointing of the Holy Spirit

by Zac Poonen

This sermon emphasizes the importance of having Jesus Christ truly living in us, not just as a concept but as a reality in our daily lives. It highlights the need for honesty, humility, and a genuine hunger for righteousness in order to experience the anointing of the Holy Spirit. The speaker encourages a deep personal commitment to following Jesus and resisting the temptations and distractions of the world.

Scripture: Luke 1:45, Colossians 1:27, 1 Corinthians 9:24, Matthew 5:3, James 4:7, Romans 12:1

Topics: "Living in Christ", "Commitment to Righteousness"

Description

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Transcript

There's a very lovely verse in Hebrews chapter 1 that tells us why Jesus Christ had such a rich anointing of the Holy Spirit more than anybody else, as a man. Not talking about Jesus Christ as God, but when he came to earth as a man just like us, he needed the Holy Spirit to live this life. He needed the Holy Spirit to prompt him with the right word of scripture when he was tempted by Satan, and the Holy Spirit will do that for us too.

He needed the Holy Spirit to tell him what to speak at different times when he spoke and preached to people. He needed the Holy Spirit to tell him whom to heal and whom not to heal. Sometimes we think that Jesus healed everybody who was sick, it's not true.

Do you know that when Jesus went into the pool of Bethesda, you read in John chapter 5, it says there was a great multitude of people there who were sick. Multitude means what, 100, 200, 300 people waiting there at the pool of Bethesda and he healed one person, one man who had been sick there for 39 years or 38 years, he said take off your bed and walk. Do you think that's the only person there who needed healing? No.

Why did he not heal the others? Because Jesus did not live by a rule saying thou shalt heal all sick people whom thou shalt see. There are today's fake healers who pretend that they are doing that. It's a lot of rubbish.

Jesus did not heal everybody he saw was sick. In the last verse of Matthew 13, it says, Matthew 13, 58, he could not heal certain people because of their unbelief. In the pool of Bethesda, he just did not heal people because he was not led to heal.

And let me give you another wonderful example of the tremendous blessing that came when Jesus did not heal somebody. There are many examples of blessing that came when Jesus healed people. Here is an example of Jesus not healing somebody.

Turn with me to Acts of the Apostles in Chapter 3. In the Acts of the Apostles in Chapter 3, we read about Peter and John walking into the temple, and we read here of their walking past a man who was lame, and the man asked Peter and John for money, and he said, silver and gold I have none, but in what I do have verse 6, Acts 3, verse 6, that I give you in the name of Jesus Christ, rise up and walk. And we read that as a result of that, about 5,000 people, we read later on, came to the Lord. Now, this man, it says here, if you read carefully, he was laid at the gate of the temple by his relatives every day, verse 2, and this happened just a few days after the day of Pentecost, so he must have been, and it says he was more than 40 years old, later on it says he was more than 40 years old, so he'd been lying at the gate of the temple for many years.

Can you imagine the number of times Jesus saw him as he went in and out of the temple? Just like Peter saw him, Jesus walked into that temple numerous times in the three and a half years before this incident, and he saw this lame man, and the lame man stretched out his hand to Jesus and said, give me some money, and Jesus would have said, Judas, give him some money, and the next time when they came by and he asked for money, Jesus would have told Judas, give him some money, and that happened for three and a half years, every time Jesus went in and out of that temple, and he went many times, he would tell Judas to give him some money. Why didn't he heal him? Because the father said, no. I feel that Jesus walked like that in such intimate touch with the father, you know, like these police officers who've got a walkie-talkie inside their car, in which they're constantly connected to headquarters, always switched on, suddenly they may hear a message, go here, go to that street, or come back to headquarters, or something like that, they're always listening, always listening, sometimes it may be silent for one hour, all of a sudden a message comes, and that's how I see that Jesus lived, his walkie-talkie with heaven was always on, all the time listening, listening, going by this sick man, no, don't heal him, just leave him alone, give him some money.

One year later, coming by that same man, don't heal him, give him some money. What is the result? Later on, when Peter and James went by, and they healed that man, five thousand people were converted, who would not have been converted if Jesus had healed that man earlier. Got it? See the blessing that came by Jesus not healing a person.

So, what we need to learn is, the most important thing is not to heal the sick, but to do what the Lord tells us to do. So, in this connection, we read Hebrews, this is the verse I wanted to point out to you, Hebrews chapter 1, how was Jesus anointed in such a wonderful way, that he could hear the Holy Spirit speak to him, all the time? It's one of the things, when I was a young Christian, I thought of a man whom I knew, a godly man, who was very careful to listen to God speaking to him, and he wouldn't accept every invitation he got, he would pray, and seek the Lord, and would go only where he was invited, and I found the result was that, wherever he went, there were churches, and I said, Lord, this is a wonderful way to work, where you don't just go roaming around here and there, hoping something will happen, but you listen to God, and God says, go here, go there, and don't go here, don't go there, it's a wonderful way to live. The picture I

had in my mind is of an owner of a large fruit garden, and he wants laborers to come and help pick the fruit, and supposing I'm one of the laborers, wanting to help the Lord, who's the owner of a great fruit garden, and I say, okay, I want to help the Lord, and I don't consult him, I just go to this tree, I think I'll get some fruit from this tree for my Lord, and I sit there for five years, manage to get some fruit, and bring it to the Lord.

Then I go somewhere else, of my own choice, and sit there for another five years, and bring a fruit basket to the Lord. And I thought a better way would be to go to the master of the vineyard first, and say, Lord, where do you want me to go? And the Lord says he gives me the latitude, longitude of the exact tree in this huge square miles of garden, go there. Like a GPS pointing me straight to that point, go there.

And I go to that tree, and the fruit is ready to fall. And what took me four or five years in another place, I filled up my fruit in one hour, my basket. And I take it to the Lord, now Lord next where, and the Lord says now go to this latitude, longitude, and the GPS takes me there, and that's another tree, ready to pluck.

In one hour I got another basket full, and go back to the Lord, and I say, what a wonderful way to serve the Lord. More efficient than my choosing where to go, not knowing head or tail which is the best place to go to, to wait on the Lord. There's a, this is the way the Holy Spirit led Jesus, and which says in Hebrews in chapter 1, why he was anointed.

Hebrews 1 verse 9, you have loved righteousness and hated sin. Therefore, therefore, that's why God anointed you more than you could ever know, more than all your friends, that means all of us, we are his friends and companions. Why was Jesus anointed more than us? We say because he was the Son of God, no.

Because he loved righteousness and hated sin more than us, so he was anointed more than us. Very important to understand that, the anointing was given to Jesus because he loved righteousness and hated sin. And so I say, Lord, I want an anointing if I am to serve you effectively.

All of us are called to serve the Lord, and I want to say to you, you may not be called to preach like me, you may not be called to plant churches, but you're called to do something for the Lord in the body of Christ. Every member of the body of Christ has a ministry. That's something I love to tell people.

You may not be the tongue like me. There are many people in the body of Christ who are like the heart. Do you see your heart? No.

The heart is the praying, the praying machine of the body. Men and women who have a burden to pray for God's people, for God's servants, like the heart pumping blood constantly, they pray and pray and pray and pray. And I know when people pray for me, the tongue is able to speak.

The moment the heart stops, the tongue stops speaking. And I'm absolutely convinced in my life, that is because many people pray for me around the world, that I can speak freely. And so remember that you also, my dear brother, sister, I don't care if you were born again yesterday, if you're a member of Christ's body, you have a very important ministry in the body of Christ, even if it's invisible.

Think of the invisible parts of our body, the kidneys. Do you ever see your kidneys? But the moment the kidneys pack up, you pack up too. It's these invisible members inside the liver, the kidneys, the heart, the lungs, they're not seen, but they do a fantastic ministry.

There are many people who will never stand in a pulpit in their entire life, who did fulfill a fantastic hidden ministry and you could be one of them. Just fulfill it by prayer, by doing little things here and there. You may be like a little finger.

You say, what value is a little finger? Very important. You may say, I'm not even a little finger, I'm only a nail. When you feel scratchy in your body, which part of the body can help you? Not your heart, not your tongue.

I mean, cows use their tongue, scratch themselves with their tongue. You can't do that, our tongue is not long enough. We need nails.

How can you scratch somebody's back? If your wife says, hey, scratch my back, you can't use your tongue. You've got to use these nails, these small little nails. Do you know what the ministry of scratching somebody's back is in the body of Christ? Encouraging them.

One word of encouragement. And like your wife says, ah, thank you, it's such a relief for you to scratch my back. That man is so blessed when you speak one word of encouragement.

The world is full of so many people criticizing, gossiping, backbiting in the midst of it, all that darkness. Can't you shine a little gleam of light, a word of encouragement? When you speak to somebody on a phone, when you write an email to someone, when you send a text message, one line, I'm praying for you and God will encourage you. Do you know what a difference it can make to that person? Tremendous difference.

Just a one sentence. Very, very important. That's the scratching ministry.

You may be only a nail and you can do that. Is there anybody who cannot give a word of encouragement to somebody? Do you know what a word of encouragement can do? Let me show you. Hebrews chapter 3. This is what I call the nail scratching ministry, scratch my back ministry.

Hebrews 3.13. Encourage one another every day. Encourage one another every day. So that they don't get hardened by the deceitfulness of sin.

Our fellow believers are all in danger of getting hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. How can you deliver them from the deceitfulness of sin? By encouraging them, by scratching their back with your nails. You're a very lowly member of the body of Christ.

You're only a small nail. But you can encourage somebody by speaking a word of encouragement. Don't give up.

Hang on. God will see you through. I'm sure God will solve your problem for you.

Just trust Him. I'm praying for you. How long does it take to say that? How long does it take to write that in a text message? But the result can be amazing.

That person's encouraged, doesn't give up hope. I'll never forget a true story that I heard in San Francisco. It's a true story.

There was a man who was so fed up with life. He was living in an apartment all by himself, lonely and very discouraged with various things. He felt nobody cared for him.

It's a long walk from his house. He said, today I'm going to jump off the Golden Gate Bridge into the stream of water down below into the Pacific Ocean and commit suicide. But in this long walk of many miles to the Golden Gate Bridge from my house, if one man smiles at me, I'll come back home.

And he walked all that way, many miles, I don't know how many hours, and he jumped off the bridge and committed suicide. When the police came and picked up the body and discovered where he stayed, his address was on his clothes somewhere, they went back to his room and they found this note written there. I'm going to commit suicide today at the Golden Gate Bridge.

But on my way there, if I find one man to smile at me, just smile at me. I'll come back home feeling that there's at least one man in the world who cares for me. One man's life would have been saved if somebody had smiled at him.

Not talked to him, told a stranger. Just a smile, which costs nothing. Now I'm not asking you to go smiling at everybody you see on the road.

That's not my purpose of this message. I'm just saying be sensitive. I believe this, that if there was a man of God or a woman of God walking down that street where this man crossed, I think the Holy Spirit would have prompted that one man or woman, smile at this man.

Not at everybody on the street, just smile at this man. That's how good the Holy Spirit is. It's a wonderful life, my brothers and sisters, to listen to the Holy Spirit all the time.

All the time. He'll prompt you to pray for someone. That person may never know that you prayed for him.

But you'll see the result in eternity. Be in touch with the Holy Spirit all the time. But how can you have this anointing? Love righteousness and hate sin.

Jesus loved righteousness more than, and hated sin more than anybody else, so he was anointed more than anybody else. So what we learned from that is the more you love righteousness and the more you hate sin, you'll be anointed too, in the measure in which you approach the level of Jesus. We are a long way from that, but we can still have some measure of anointing.

I'm so challenged by the life of Jesus, you know, how he would be prompted, for example, he'd be walking down a road and the Holy Spirit would say, stop. Imagine living like this. It's a challenge to me.

Stop. Jesus, stop. Look up at the tree there.

He looked up and the Holy Spirit tells him, see that man sitting there? His name is Zacchaeus. He even tells him his name. Tell him to come down.

Go to his house today. Salvation came to that house because Jesus listened. These are stories from the Gospels.

Now I'll tell you another place. He was once by the Sea of Galilee and the Holy Spirit said to him, take a 50 mile walk across the border of Israel and go to Syrophenicia. He did that.

It's in Matthew 15. He went all the way there, not knowing what was happening, and he walked with his disciples and that would have taken him two days. How long can you walk in a day? I mean, if it was 60, 70 miles, it would have taken him two days to reach there.

48 hours. And he reaches there and there's a woman with a demon-possessed daughter and he casts the demon out of that daughter and the Holy Spirit says, okay, go back to Galilee now. 60 miles back, another two days.

He walked 96 hours, 48 hours, 48 hours to help one person. I believe that person will be in heaven, that Syrophenician lady, not even a Jew, with her daughter because Jesus listened to the prompting of the Spirit. And I say, Lord, I want to be like that.

I want to listen to you all the time. I want to go where you tell me to go. I don't want to go where you don't want me to go.

I'll tell you something that happened in my own ministry some years ago. It's amazing how God led me through many, many contacts in different parts of the world to get an invitation. I think it was about 12, 13 years ago to go to Romania.

Now, I had never been there. But when I got an invitation, I felt, okay, let me go. And there was a church there of a number of sincere people who believed in the fullness of the Holy Spirit.

They're newly formed, and they needed some leading to go in the right direction. And in a prayer meeting that they had there, which is long before I came. They didn't know me.

I didn't know them. In a prayer meeting that they were having together, one old godly lady sat in the midst. While everybody was in prayer, gave a word of prophecy.

She said, a man with another color skin will come here and lead this church into another direction, a good direction. Listen to him. They didn't know who it was.

That's all there was in that statement. Then they looked around when some African brother came, they would invite him. No, they didn't feel that was it.

And then without any other, I didn't even know anybody there. Through somebody else's contact, I went there. And they arranged some meetings for me.

And they observed and listened to me for two or three days. And after they heard the message, I didn't know anything about this prophecy. I didn't even know who these people were.

The leader got up and said to them, do you remember this prophecy we heard last year from God? Here you see the fulfillment of it. And from that time, I went there a number of times. And even now they have all my messages there in Romanian on their website.

And from there, the word went out to many Romanian churches around the world that I got openings to Romanian churches in America, France, Australia, all over the place. But it all started with one little step. What I'm saying is that it's amazing how God leads.

And here was this godly woman who I met her when I went there. And she was such a self-effacing humble lady who never wanted to know anything and did not think that because I said one right word once, I'll always have a right word. And she was very cautious.

And I remember when I was there, somebody asked her, what do you think about this situation here? And they wanted a prophetic word from her. She said, I don't know. I have nothing to say.

And I heard that. I knew this lady is genuine. Because these fake prophets, they always have a word about everything under the sun.

A true prophet may give one word and then say nothing for the next two years. Something like that. That means they are really listening to God.

So what I mean is that there are these amazing things that happen. A God who works in the supernatural. And if you have not experienced that, sometimes even unconsciously.

I remember once in a meeting, some meeting I was speaking at. And in some context, I was explaining something from scripture concerning something I said about somebody occupying a house. I don't know whether it was Peter's house or some house.

And some connection with some house. I said, you should not take a house like that. And there was a man sitting there.

I didn't know that. I didn't know that till one month later or something. There was a man sitting there who had come to the meeting with a specific question.

He said, Lord, I'm just about to rent a house here. I want you to speak to me definitely today whether I should take that house or not. I never knew anything about this.

And he's sitting there waiting to hear this. And in some other context, I said about not taking a house. He said, ah, I got my word.

I should not take that house. So he went and told those people, I'm not renting this house. And the next week, that house caught fire and burnt up.

So he comes to me a few weeks later and said, Brother Zak, I'm so thankful for what you said. I said, what did I say? I said, you said in that message that I shouldn't take that house. I said, I don't even remember what I said.

Sometimes it can be unconscious like that. But I was so moved when that man, that his life was saved because of that. I said, Lord, that scares me.

It really scares me when I hear that, that I want to be very careful about what I say from the pulpit. I want to be very careful that I'm in touch with you. And if I'm sincere, even unconsciously, I can say something which will bless somebody.

If I'm not in touch with you, I will not be able to do that. And so how can I ensure that every time I speak, even in ordinary conversation with people, to be able to say something that will really, because some of them may be looking for direction. I don't even know that this guy is looking for some direction.

And I say something and he takes it seriously. I want you to see this, my brothers and sisters. I wish all of us could live like this, to be in constant touch with God.

You know how every part of our body is constant touch with the head, that immediately we react. For example, if you see a, suddenly a car rushing by, you spring back immediately because the head says, swing back, step back. Or a snake suddenly comes in your path.

The head is so quick, the reaction that you don't even think about it. And it's the head immediately pulling us back from danger. And so if we are in touch with Jesus Christ like this, we'll immediately be called back.

You know, for example, we read that Jesus, when he was a little baby, not knowing anything, he was born in Bethlehem and Herod, that evil king Herod, was scheming to kill Jesus and wanted to send his soldiers there to kill him after the wise men didn't come back. And we read before the soldiers came, the Lord told Joseph, take the baby and go to Egypt. And he went to Egypt.

And by the time the soldiers came, the baby was not there. That happened in my life once, when some people who wanted to create some problems for me, planned to come and raid my house with the police one morning. You know, in a corrupt way, in India you can bribe magistrates and judges and get them to pass corrupt orders.

And one of them, they got something to do that and they came. And they phoned up my house the previous night just to make sure I'm at home. They were planning to come the next morning.

At 8.30 they called my phone and I said, hello. No response. They were just checking up that I was at home.

Next morning when they came, I wasn't there. Because I'd left the previous night after the phone call to some other place. And when they came, just like they found Bethlehem empty, they found the house empty.

You know that song we sing? As he cared for Jesus, he will care for you. I wrote that song in 1977. It was what I experienced in my life what he did for Jesus, he will do for you.

As he cared for Jesus, he will care for you. If you know Jesus as your Lord and your elder brother, God is on your side. Who can be against you? My dear brothers and sisters, seek for the anointing of the Holy Spirit at any cost.

More than money or position or honor. Don't even seek to be a preacher. You can be an ordinary brother anointed with the Holy Spirit going around blessing people wherever you go with one sentence here, one sentence there.

Maybe a text message, maybe a phone call. It's amazing what will come out of your life if it says he was anointed with the Holy Spirit above all his fellows because he loved righteousness and hated sin. So when I read a word like that, that he hated sin, I ask myself, what are the sins that Jesus hated the most? And I think number one among them, number one was hypocrisy, pretending.

See in Matthew 23, how he lambasted the Pharisees. First of all, notice that the Pharisees had all their doctrines right. Matthew 23, it says here Jesus told his disciples, all that the Pharisees do, but don't do according to what they do because they say things but they don't do them.

What he was telling them was the Pharisees, their doctrines are 100% right. There was another group called the Sadducees, their doctrines are wrong. They did not believe in the resurrection or in angels or any such thing.

But the Pharisees, their doctrines were 100% right because Jesus said whatever they tell you to do, verse 3, do. Do you think Jesus will tell you people whatever the Roman Catholics tell you to do, do, pray to

Mary, worship the Pope? No. He won't say that.

Whatever the Jehovah's Witnesses tell you to do, do. They don't believe that Jesus Christ is God. No, he will not say whatever they tell you to do, do.

In fact many Protestant groups also who practice infant baptism, he will not tell you whatever they tell you to do, do. Many things may be right but not everything. But in the Pharisees he said whatever they tell you to do, do.

That means their doctrines were not 99% right but 100% right but they were the ones who killed Jesus. Teaching us that you can have all your doctrines right and be totally wrong spiritually. And to people who had all their doctrines right, Jesus said these words.

Matthew 23, further down in that chapter. Verse 33, you serpents, you brood of vipers, how will you escape the sentence of hell? You who have all your doctrines right, how will you escape the sentence of hell? That is a word we need to hear. You know we glory in CFC that we've got such pure doctrines better than probably most other people.

Okay. So what? The Pharisees had all their doctrines right. It's the life that matters, not that we have got our intellect right.

So these Pharisees, what did Jesus criticize them for? Verse 13, you hypocrites. Verse 14, you hypocrites. Verse 15, you hypocrites.

Verse 16, you blind guides. Verse 23, you hypocrites. Verse 25, you hypocrites.

Verse 27, you hypocrites. Verse 28, full of hypocrisy. Verse 29, you hypocrites.

Their doctrines were right but they pretended to be spiritual. Hypocrisy is pretending to have a life that you don't have. Pretending before everybody else that you're spiritual when you're not.

Pretending that you have overcome sin when you have not. You give people an impression by the words you speak that you're an overcomer. But it's not true.

And your wife will say it's not true. You know it's very easy to preach a lot of hypocritical things. I heard of one preacher in some pulpit standing up there and preaching a fantastic sermon and his wife was sitting down there and said, John don't forget I'm sitting here and I'm listening to all that you're saying.

Don't tell people lies. Now some wives may not be bold enough to say that in public but what does your wife think of your sermon? What do your friends who know you intimately, what about your children who watch you at home? What do they think of what you're preaching, what you're saying to people? It's very easy to be a hypocrite. The word hypocrite is not an English word.

It's a Greek word which means in Greek the word means actor. Just like these film actors in those days it was not movies, it was dramas. 2,000 years ago the dramas in Greece, the actors were all hypocrites.

So if you ask people where are the hypocrites, they'd say go to the theater. Today you ask where are the hypocrites, you say go to church, you'll see them there. In those days it was in the theater.

Actors who act and so when Jesus said don't be a hypocrite to translate it, it means don't be an actor. Don't act holy. Like these Hollywood movies where somebody is Moses while the filming is going on, then later on in the day he's a drunkard or is going living with his third divorced wife or something like that.

But in the movie he's the holy man of God. But there are a lot of people who come to church like that, acting, wanting to give an impression to people. I'll tell you this, if you have the slightest desire in your heart, listen carefully, you have the slightest desire in your heart to give anybody an impression that you're more spiritual than you really are, you are a hypocrite.

You're the people whom Jesus is referring to and he hates it. He hates hypocrisy. You want to love righteousness and hate sin so that you can be anointed more than others? Hate hypocrisy, number one.

Hate that people get an impression of you which is not true. And that's why Jesus hardly ever spoke about some of the amazing things he did. He would tell people who may heal, don't tell anyone that you were healed.

Today's healers are so different. They say go and publish it. Go and tell everybody I healed you.

Don't forget my name. Tell everybody I was the one who prayed for you. Jesus was exactly the opposite.

He never wanted people to know. He said don't tell anyone that you were healed. Keep quiet.

So there's a difference there I find. If you have the slightest desire to give people a certain impression about your spirituality by the language you speak or by your bearing or certain things you do, you know you can try and be hospitable in your home just to show people that you know I'm a spiritual guy. I'm so hospitable and nice to people.

If you have the slightest desire for the praise of men, don't waste your time asking God to fill you with the Holy Spirit. Just forget it. Just keep pursuing in that direction and you'll be a first-class hypocrite and you'll probably end up where the Pharisees ended up.

I want to tell you the truth that Jesus hates hypocrisy. Some years ago, I preached a series of sermons. It's on the internet in YouTube called 16 Lessons that God Has Taught Me in My Life.

And among those 16 lessons, the number one was God loves honest people. I believe that. Not holy people, but honest people.

And I'll tell you honestly that I have striven more to be honest than to be holy. The first step to holiness is to be honest. First of all, be honest about my sins.

I don't want to cover up some wrong attitude I have in my heart by saying, no, no, no, but Lord, it was like this. Never justify yourself. Never, never justify yourself.

When your conscience convicts you, when the Holy Spirit convicts you, say, Lord, you're right. See, it says here in Luke chapter 16, another characteristic of the Pharisees was Luke 16 and verse 15. Jesus said to the Pharisees, you are those who justify yourselves in the sight of men.

But God knows your hearts. And what men appreciate so highly is detestable in the sight of God. That's when men appreciate you so much, you're stinking in the sight of God because you're seeking to justify yourself before men.

My dear brothers and sisters, you ask yourself this question. Is there a desire in you to always show yourself in a better way before men, before human beings than you really are? Do you want people to think of yourself more spiritual than you really are? You're on the road to becoming a first-class Pharisee and to end up where the Pharisees ended up. God loves honest people.

Strive for honesty because it doesn't come easily. You try and teach your two-year-old to be honest. It's not easy.

It's not easy for children to be 100% honest. From childhood, they learn pretense, and we develop it more and more as we go. And in our place of work, you know, there's a lot of need for pretense, to pretend that we know a subject when we don't know it.

Even in school, when the teacher asks us something, we want to pretend that we know it. Or pretense is so much among children as in school, in places of work all the time. But I say, don't try it before God and don't try it in the church.

Beware of pretending to be more spiritual than you really are. God detests hypocrisy. He loves honest people.

So, you know, David, when he sinned, one of the wonderful things about David was that when he sinned with Bathsheba, he wrote a psalm about it. And you know that psalm, Psalm 51, let me read it to you. Not the whole thing, just one sentence there.

In Psalm 51, when he was convicted of his sin, it's very interesting to see, it says at the head of the psalm, David wrote the psalm, and Nathan the prophet came to him after he had committed sin with Bathsheba. But it did not happen immediately. It was nine months after his sin, at a time when Bathsheba was about to deliver the baby, which was a result of David's sin.

That's when Nathan the prophet, God waited nine months for David to himself acknowledge his sin. But he covered it up, covered it up, covered it up, till Nathan the prophet came to him and said, you're the man. I love those prophets of Old Testament times.

They were not scared of kings. They'd walk up to a king and tell him you're a sinner. We need more prophets like that today.

And when Nathan came, David said these words, Lord, verse six, Psalm 51, six, you desire truth in man's innermost being. God wants reality, truth. The word truth means reality.

Very often in New Testament, particularly when you read the word truth, it means reality. The opposite of hypocrisy. The opposite of truth is lie.

To live a truth is different from living a lie. Living a lie is living a life of a hypocrite. Living the truth is where you're real, genuine, through and through, without any pretense.

I've heard, I don't know if this is a correct translation, but I've heard that the word sincere comes from, is it two Latin words, sine sere, which means without wax. Anyway, I heard this somewhere. Don't quote me.

But I heard that in the olden days when these sculptors, these Greek sculptors would make a sculpture of some person out of marble. And it's not like cement. Cement means you can patch up a mistake in it.

But in a marble sculpture, if you make one wrong hit, the marble is chipped off at that point. What do you do? You have to start all over again. And maybe you're just about to finish the sculpture of this person standing up and you've made one wrong hit and the thing is gone.

So what these sculptors used to do, they'd take some wax of the same color as the marble statue and patch up that. And it looked just like, and you couldn't see it. And then I've heard that when people went to buy these sculptures, they would put them out in the hot sun to see if the wax would melt.

And then you could find out if there was any defect in the sculpture. And they call that sine without wax, sine, sere. So sincere means there's no wax in me.

I don't know how to patch up something. If there's a defect, you can see the defect. I chipped off this part of the sculpture.

So being, you're seeing, let people see you, not that you're proud of your failures, but you're not pretending. You're exactly what you are inside. You're on the outside.

Now I'll tell you how God met me and filled me with the Holy Spirit 45 years ago, when I was in a desperate state, right at the rock bottom. I was so discouraged with my life because I was preaching, but I was defeated in my inner life. Externally, my testimony was excellent.

I never cheated on my taxes, never stole anybody's money. I didn't fool around with women or any such thing. But inwardly, my mind was corrupt.

I was discouraged, angry, so many things. And I said, Lord, I'm not victorious. What can I preach? I seriously thought 45 years ago of quitting preaching, not quitting Christianity, quitting preaching because I said, Lord, I'm not genuine.

I'm a failure and I want to preach the highest standard, but I don't have it. So I'll just find a job and sit at the back of some church and be a Christian, but never preach again. I was at rock bottom in my life at that point when God in his mercy met with me and just when I was least expecting it, filled me with the Holy Spirit, which I was desperately longing for and praying for for many years and turned my life around like that.

It was at the lowest point of my life. And that taught me one thing, that God does not give the Holy Spirit to those who deserve him. I certainly did not deserve him that day, but those who need him desperately, that I qualified for.

I needed the Holy Spirit's power desperately, but deserve far from it. Not for those who fasted and prayed, but for those who are needy and desperate. I was needy and I was desperate and I was at rock bottom and I acknowledged it.

I didn't want to pretend anymore. I had prayed for only one thing. I did not pray for the gift of tongues.

I prayed, Lord, make my inner life correspond to what I'm preaching. That means everything I preach must be true in my private life, my inner life, my thought life, otherwise I shouldn't preach it. I shouldn't preach ever about the love of money if I love money inside.

I must not preach on any subject which is not true in my life. If I'm failing, I can speak on something, but if I'm failing I have to admit, but I'm brothers, but I want to tell you I'm failing in this area. I want to struggle

towards it.

But I must not speak about anything which is not true in my inner life. And I made that decision. God met with me.

He desires truth in the innermost being. And I'll tell you where God encouraged me from a verse which will encourage you. Turn with me to John's Gospel, Chapter 3. It's a lovely verse.

Hate hypocrisy. Love honesty. Read carefully.

John Chapter 3, Verse 19 to 21. John Chapter 3, Verses 19 to 21. This is the judgment that light has come into the world and men love darkness more than light and their deeds are evil.

Darkness does not only mean sin. Darkness means insincerity. Darkness means pretense.

Darkness means hypocrisy, not just sin. And listen to this. Now read carefully and you'll find this, a difference here.

If you read very carefully, you'll miss it if you read quickly. I'm going to read slowly. Verse 20.

Everyone who does evil hates the light because he's afraid if he comes to the light, his deeds will be exposed. But he who practices the truth comes to the light so that his deeds may be manifested as having been wrought in God. Did you notice a difference? Okay, I'll point it out to you now.

The contrast is between everyone who does evil and the opposite of that should be what? Everyone who does? What is the opposite of evil? Good. So it should be, everyone who does evil is like this. But everyone who does good is like this.

That's the contrast. Everyone who does evil hates the light. Verse 20.

Verse 21 should read, but everyone who does good comes to the light. No, because no one does good. Everyone who speaks the truth, who practices the truth.

The contrast is not between evil and good. The contrast is between an evil person and an honest person. That encouraged me tremendously.

Wow. So Lord, what are you expecting from me? Not good, but honesty. Hallelujah.

Praise the Lord. That I can be. Good may take years.

But I thank God I saw that difference between those who do evil and those who practice the truth. This is the advantage of reading the Bible slowly, meditating, not rushing. You rush through those passages and you think it says something which is not saying that.

So what I learned was God just wants me to be honest. Do you know that a prostitute can be honest? I am a prostitute. Lord have mercy on me.

She's practicing truth. She's not good, but she's practicing the truth. There's hope for such people.

But the Pharisee who pretends to be good cannot come into the light because he's not practicing truth. And therefore it's possible some of you sitting here, I want to make it personal. Some of you sitting here,

you're not able to come to the light.

That's why you don't get light on the scriptures. That's why you don't get light in your life and direction and power. That's why you don't get the anointing above others because you don't hate iniquity.

You don't hate hypocrisy, which Jesus hated thoroughly. Isn't it easy if somebody said you must be a good person? Boy, I give up. It's too much for me.

But if somebody says, can you be honest? Can you be absolute? I'm not saying go and confess your sins to people. No. Don't pretend.

That's what I'm saying. Don't pretend when you share God's word with people that you have reached somewhere we have not reached. Just say, listen, I haven't got here yet, but I'm struggling with you.

I want you to join with me in this race to come to this level. Don't pretend. It's the easiest command in the world to obey.

Don't pretend. You know, children are very honest. I've asked many children around the world, son, what class are you studying in? And they never say seventh grade if they are in fourth grade.

Have you ever heard a child say that? I haven't heard one like that today. They say I'm in fourth grade. But I've heard a lot of believers who say I'm in the seventh grade.

I mean, spiritually, when they are probably in the kindergarten. Honesty. Don't pretend that you're in the seventh grade when you're in the kindergarten.

That's all I'm saying. There's nothing wrong in being in the kindergarten. You can work your way up.

But if you pretend you're somewhere when you're not there, you will never make progress. You will go backwards. And I've seen that.

And I'll tell you from my own experience. I've learned to detest hypocrisy more than anything else. I don't care what failure there is in my life.

But I want hypocrisy to be the number one thing I hate like anything. And it's the easiest thing to get rid of. If you want to.

If you want the reputation of men, you will never get rid of it. If you want to impress people in your church that you're a holy man, spiritual man, just because you're an elder or something like that, you'll be the number one hypocrite and you'll be the biggest hindrance to the spiritual growth of your church. But if you say, Lord, so what? If I'm an elder, I don't have to pretend I'm perfect.

OK, I'm an elder. But I want to be honest. If I failed, I failed.

And I'm not I don't mean let me repeat, I'm not saying you should confess your sins in public. All I'm saying is don't pretend. Can we learn this one lesson? The sin that Jesus hated.

Don't let Jesus ever turn around to you and say, you hypocrite. Oh, if the Lord said that to me, boy, I'd say, Lord, have mercy on me. Please save me from that sin.

It doesn't matter if I'm in the kindergarten, but don't let me ever pretend that I'm in first grade or second grade. No, I want to be honest. I'm not talking about a false humility where a child in the seventh grade says, no, Uncle Zach, I'm in the kindergarten.

That's also a lie. I'm not saying you should boast about where you are. So don't have a false humility.

All I say is don't pretend. Don't pretend. It's very easy if you want to.

And I believe that can be the first step towards the anointing of the Holy Spirit that can change your life. It changed my life completely. Forty five years ago, the direction of my life changed and it's been going upwards ever since.

Six months after that, the first CFC church was born. And since then, many others. But everything I date back to the day when God filled me with the Holy Spirit, like the day of Pentecost, I had a personal Pentecost in my life.

It changed my direction completely. Earnestly seek to be filled with the Holy Spirit. It's not just one event.

I believe I seek to be filled with the Holy Spirit every day. I keep my conscience clear. Only two things I need to do that.

One, keep your conscience clear. Always ask forgiveness from all those who whom you have hurt. Forgive all those who hurt you.

And secondly, humble yourself at every opportunity you get to humble yourself. That's all. Not ten conditions, two.

Keep your conscience clear always and humble yourself whenever you are get an opportunity to go down and you can preserve yourself in the fullness of the spirit continuously. Let's pray. Heavenly Father, I pray that you will bless each one of us as we meditate on your word in the days to come.

We want to be anointed people, Lord. We don't want to be just people who got the right doctrine and glory like the Pharisees. We want to humble ourselves and seek for the anointing and leading of the Holy Spirit that there can be a supernatural element in our life.

We pray in Jesus' name. Amen. I was reading this morning in the book of Luke.

I wanted to share that with you. What really challenged me through that, I shared it with our church family, the local church here, and I think it would be a blessing for us as well. In Luke chapter 1, our desire, our hunger and thirst in this local church, as I believe is yours as well, is that the life of Christ will be manifest in us.

Individually, that Jesus is actually living in me. This is what Colossians says, is our hope, Christ in us, the hope of the Lord. In my marriage, I want Jesus to actually be there.

Not just me talking about Him, coming to a church meeting, but Jesus is actually there. In my home, Jesus is actually there. And I've been reminding our church, us elders have been reminding our church of this often.

It doesn't matter how many of these chairs are occupied on a Sunday morning. I imagine Jesus sitting in this chair. I don't know why I picked that chair.

I say, Lord, that chair is reserved for you. Now, if you happen to sit on there, He'll pick a different one. I want to make sure that that chair is occupied.

If every other chair is empty, but the seat that Jesus is supposed to sit in is occupied, then we are really the living, breathing church of Jesus Christ. And the Lord's refined our perspective as a church over the last year through miraculous circumstances on this, where our hunger and thirst for Jesus to be birthed in us has grown like never before. I am so thankful to the Lord for His mercy.

And as I was reading in Luke 1, where Mary had that miracle of miracles happen, where the living being of Jesus Christ was starting to be birthed in her body. And she goes to visit her relative, Elizabeth. And Elizabeth says this wonderful word.

And in the light of what we've been hearing today and last night as well, I want to read this. This is Luke 1, verse 45. Blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what had been spoken to her by the Lord.

Blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what had been spoken to her by the Lord. Now, it applies to us men as well. We usually use the pronoun he to include our wives.

It's interesting that this was a prophecy to a woman. And there may be some of you women who will need to be the leaders in your home to help your husbands lay a hold of this as well. But regardless, and I don't mean by leaders that you take authority, but if your husband is backslidden or lackadaisical in his spiritual life, you lay a hold of this verse.

And I want to lay a hold of this verse for myself as well. Blessed is the one who believes that there will be a fulfillment of what has been spoken to us by the Lord. If you can leave this weekend with that promise gripping your heart, oh, what a wonderful future you have ahead of you.

You must leave this place believing that what God has spoken will be fulfilled. Otherwise, you wasted your money, you wasted your time. Better you leave today and not even come tomorrow.

But I hope that won't be the case for even one of us sitting here. Blessed is the one who believes, God, you spoke to me. It's not by accident that you brought me here this weekend.

It's not by accident that you've allowed me to hear these words. I'm going to believe you're going to fulfill it. My soul exalts in the Lord.

Mary responds. And my spirit has rejoiced in God, my Savior, for he has had regard for the humble state of his bond slave. For behold, from this time on, all generations will count me blessed.

For the mighty one has done great things for me and holy is his name. And his mercy is upon generation after generation toward those who fear him. He has done mighty deeds with his arm.

What mighty deeds? He has scattered those who were proud in the thoughts of their hearts. Oh, I pray that he will do that more. He has brought down rulers from their thrones and has exalted those who were humble.

He has filled the hungry with good things and sent away the rich empty-handed. I ask you, my dear friend, dear brother and sister, if you're here, rich, things are going well in your life. Yeah, I just want another pep talk.

You'll go away empty-handed this weekend. But if you're poor, it doesn't mean that you're defeated in sin or living a miserable Christian life. It doesn't matter where you are spiritually.

All of us are equal in this, that we want to be like Jesus and we're not yet like him. And we want to run until the end of our lives. And like I say often in the local church, pedal to the metal.

I don't want to coast into heaven, you know, riding off into the sunset, just strolling into heaven. I want to be charging the gates of heaven like Paul did, like Jesus did, our forerunner, like the Apostles did who went rejoicing to their martyrdom. And like so many other godly men have gone singing, charging the gates of heaven, the speedometer on its way up.

So no matter where you are, this is the future that God has set before us today and in the things we've heard yesterday. Perhaps he's been reminding you off of it. Will you run to win? No slowing down, no setting it into neutral to retire in the Christian life.

Accelerating. And I'll tell you, in our generation, I say this unashamedly, unembarrassingly, I have not seen a greater example of that than my father. And so the things that you're listening, I have seen in his life for the 46 years that I've known him.

And the more I observe that life and bear witness to the teaching and the fact that those teachings are working in my life. I'm not here to sell you anything, but I hope that you lay a hold of those same teachings. He's been rejected by plenty.

He's been called all kinds of names over the years, even in this building. But God has borne witness to the work and the planting that he has done over the years and I believe will continue to do so. And he set an example for us, not to idolize him, not to make big out of a man, but that each one of us can lay hold of the truth and see a man following Jesus and say, I'm going to follow Jesus as he is.

As Paul did and as our forerunner Jesus. We see him who has pressed through the veil and is seated down at the right hand of God and that's my anchor. Lay hold of Jesus, my dear brother, dear sister, and run to win.

If you finish second, you will be disqualified. I believe that with all my heart. And don't fall for the compromising, easy-going Christianity that exists around us.

I believe God's word. If I finish second in my life, I will be disqualified. Read it in 1 Corinthians 9. So, it was a stern warning for me and a strong encouragement for me when I read this this morning that he'll send away the rich empty-handed.

I say, Lord, I want to come to you poor in spirit. The things we've heard, perhaps you say, I've heard every single word of those things. I can perhaps even almost predict what Zach's going to preach on.

But it's those who come with that attitude that go away empty-handed and say, I don't know what's so big deal about this teaching. And then those who are poor in spirit, who hunger and thirst for righteousness, who long for the new covenant life and want to take up their cross daily and follow Jesus, who latch on to

this and receive and say, where else can we go? These are words of eternal life. Amen.

Let's pray. Let's pray. I ask you in the quietness of your heart to not let the words we've heard fall on deaf ears or a hard heart or that the cares and the worries of this life will choke it out.

The devil is going to bring everything at you. He's already sent his birds to try to rob this and rob that. And he'll allow some hardness in your life to prevent the seed from bearing root, even if you have received it with joy today.

Or he'll bring the cares and the deceitfulness of sin and the world that you live in to choke out the word. Resist him. Satan, we stand against you in the name of Jesus.

Thank you, Lord Jesus, that you've given us authority over Satan. You said resist the devil and he will flee from you. And so we resist you, Satan, in the name of Jesus.

We bind your work and everything that you will bring to hinder you, hinder God from fulfilling his complete purpose in our lives. We bind your work in the name of Jesus. Thank you, Lord.

The devil has fled from us. He'll come back, but we will continue to resist him. And we put our faith in you, Lord Jesus, that these words we've heard will bear fruit.

These are words we've heard from you, Lord Jesus. Let them bear fruit. We lay ourselves before you.

Break whatever needs to be broken. Remove everything that we're leaning on like a crutch. Any earthly relationship, any earthly ambition, anything that's a hindrance, any unbelief, any worry, any anxiety, any love of money, any love of popularity.

Break it, Lord Jesus, I pray in the name of Jesus. You'll break us, Lord, that we can truly be molded. Break that stiffness that's there in us, in me.

Lord Jesus, I want to be like you. Make me tender. Give me your compassion, Lord Jesus.

Give me your nature. Give us godly homes, I pray. Give us godly marriages.

Give us godly children, Lord Jesus. Give us godly churches. Thank you.

You will do it. We believe you. I thank you for these dear brothers and sisters, so many have traveled from so far.

We bless you in the name of Jesus and we believe. This is not going to be just another weekend, just another conference. But we'll lay hold of eternal life, Lord, and that's a personal thing.

It's not a collective thing. I can't do it with my wife or my husband or my children. It's between me and you, Lord Jesus, and I come to you and I lay myself on the altar and I take it piece by piece and say, here is my body as a living sacrifice.

Do with it as you will. I believe your word that as you renew my mind and you un-conform me from the things of this world, you will transform me into your image. I believe your word.

Thank you. In Jesus' name. Amen.

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