

# The Baptism in the Holy Spirit ■ The Genuine and the Counterfeit

by Zac Poonen

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*This sermon emphasizes the importance of being filled with the Holy Spirit, highlighting the transformation from a life of defeat to one empowered by the Spirit. It stresses the need for humility, honesty, and a continual thirst for God's power. The speaker shares personal experiences of how being filled with the Holy Spirit changed his life and ministry, leading to a deep dependence on God for fruitfulness and overcoming sin. The message encourages listeners to seek God's power, be broken before Him, and lean on Him like a branch in a vine for continual fruitfulness and victory over temptations.*

**Scripture:** Genesis 32:24, Hebrews 11:21, John 14:16, Luke 24:13, Matthew 7:7, Romans 5:5, Acts 1:8, Psalm 139:23

**Topics:** "Empowerment by the Holy Spirit", "Dependence on God"

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## Description

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## Transcript

So, dear brothers and sisters, we are going to talk about a very important subject. The Baptism in the Holy Spirit, the Genuine and the Counterfeit. And as I thought about it, I said, Lord, who is sufficient to speak about this glorious subject? It is only Jesus who baptizes in the Holy Spirit, and he gives us the privilege and honor to speak about this amazing subject.

So, I want to approach it in humility, recognizing that I don't know everything, but it has pleased the Lord to fill me with the Holy Spirit, to see the evidence of it in my life and my ministry. And I long that, I can honestly say this, I long that every one of God's children will be filled with the Holy Spirit. Every one of you, my dear brothers and sisters, it made a world of difference in my life, and I'm not exaggerating, from just being an ordinary Christian to one being filled with the Holy Spirit.

It changed my life, it changed my ministry. When God met with me 46 years ago, I'd already been a for 16 years before that, born again, studying the Bible, I knew the Bible pretty well. And I was preaching, I was

in full-time Christian work, but I was defeated.

Discouragement, anger, my thought life, motives. And, you know, in the old covenant, they could only clean up your external life. Don't kill, don't commit adultery, don't steal.

But Jesus came to do something within, and he cannot do anything within, you or me, without the Holy Spirit's power. Now, I know there's a lot of human programs, psychology teaches a lot of human programs that can make you improve your conduct and your behavior. And there are yogic exercises people teach to overcome anger and so many things like this.

Yeah, but there's a lot of difference between that external being nice and good and self-controlled and having a changed heart within. Jesus didn't just come to make us nice in our behavior. He came to change us from within where our hearts are devoted in a fire that cannot be quenched.

Devoted to God, first of all, and so fervent in love for one another that any amount of cold water people throw upon us will not quench this fire of the Holy Spirit, will not move us out of love. Do you want such a life? See, Jesus said concerning the Holy Spirit in John chapter 7, and verse 37, on the last day, the great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried saying, if anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink. And then if he believes in me from his innermost being, not on the outside, from his innermost being, that means from deep within his thoughts, attitudes, motives, which nobody can see, from there will come gushing forth a spring which will be rivers of living water that flow in many directions to bless people.

That is God's will, not just for a select few, for every single one of God's children, but only those who are thirsty. That means those who are fed up with their dry life. I was fed up with my dry life.

That's why I began to seek God 47 years ago, along with others who were fed up with their dry lives. So if you're sort of satisfied with your Christian life, God's not really going to meet with you. It's like forgiveness of sins.

Why is it so many people in the world have no desire to seek God for the forgiveness of their sins? They don't realize how sick they are with sin. See, when a person is really aware of how serious his sickness is, you won't have to urge him to go to a doctor. He'll go immediately.

He'll go on his own. And it's the same way we seek for forgiveness of sins. When we realize how sin is ruining us and leading us on to an eternal hell, we'll go running to the Savior and say, Lord, save me, forgive me.

In the same way, when we realize that God has done so much for us through Christ dying on the cross, and there springs up within us a gratitude and say, Lord, how can I express my gratitude to you? That's how it came out with me. I said, Lord, you've done so much for me. How shall I respond? Like we sing in that song, by and by, when we look on his face, I wish I had given him more.

That's a song I sing many times to myself, by and by, when I look on his face, I wish I had given him more. And I say, Lord, it's been like that in past years, but I don't want it to be like that in the future. I don't want to wish I'd given you more.

I want to give you everything now, so that when I see you face to face, I have no regret. I believe all of you sincere children of God, you really don't want to have any regret when you meet the Lord face to face. I don't want to have any regret, because I don't have a second chance to live this life.

There's only one chance to live this life. And I want to say this very plainly. If you don't want to have any regret when you meet the Lord face to face, which will happen very soon when Christ comes back, you must be filled with the Holy Spirit every day.

It's not a once for all experience. It begins and then it's like a river. It starts flowing, and then it must keep on flowing every day.

See, this is what made the apostles so different. It was not some new teaching that they got on the day of Pentecost. So, you know, we, many of us listen to messages on YouTube, and perhaps some of you have heard hundreds of messages on YouTube.

But that instructs us. We've got the Bible in so many versions, and we see what it says in this word meaning and this translation and that translation. But all of that is nothing compared to being filled with the Holy Spirit.

If you really want to please the Lord, it's not enough to know the Bible. It's not enough to listen to hundreds of messages. That's all good.

You have to be filled with the Holy Spirit. And until you see the desperate necessity of this, you're not going to thirst for it. I feel the reason why many, many Christians are not filled with the Holy Spirit is they're not thirsty.

They're not desperately thirsty. They feel it's like a good thing. Yeah, if we get it, it'll be good.

It's like you already have enough. And for example, you're living in a nice house. Would you like a better house? Yeah, if possible, it'll be with more conveniences.

Sure. It's not so desperate because my present house is good enough. That's exactly how many believers are.

Yeah, my present life is pretty good. I mean, of course, I'd like it. I can have this fullness of the Spirit.

Some people talk about it. It'll be great. I'm not desperate.

It's not that urgent that I have to forsake everything and seek God for it. No. I want to tell you, I mean, God may be merciful and fill you with this Holy Spirit, but I doubt it very much because Jesus is not inviting everybody.

He's inviting those with thirst. It's like forgiveness of sins. He's not inviting everybody.

Those who are fed up with their defeated life, those who want forgiveness of sins, come unto me, all you who labor and are heavy laden. Those are the ones He invited. What about those who are quite comfortable and sitting back and saying, we're okay? He's not inviting them.

Come to me, all you who labor and are heavy laden. Come to me, all who are thirsty for something more than you already have, who reads the scriptures and finds that the apostles had something that you don't have. And you read the testimonies of other godly people, or you hear the testimonies of other godly people, and you discover that something happened in their life that changed them after they were born again.

And you discover it is the fullness of the Holy Spirit. This is how it was with me. After I was born again, I was in a church which did not preach the baptism of the Holy Spirit at all.

But as I read the scriptures, I found there was a need for it. And as I looked at my own life, and I saw my powerlessness and lack of authority and fear of Satan, and I wouldn't know what to do if a demon possessed person came in my way, and I was afraid to stand out and boldly proclaim Christ in the streets. I said, Lord, I'm scared to be a witness and then I read in the Gospels and in the Acts of the Apostles how the disciples were just like me in the beginning.

Not only in the beginning, after three and a half years of walking and talking with Jesus Christ. Imagine one would think that their lives would be completely changed after that. And that when the Lord said, go into all the world, they'd be ready to go, but they were not.

We read even after they saw Jesus risen from the dead, you read that in John chapter 20, they were in a closed door. And when the Lord appeared to them, they were locked up there out of fear. And seven days later, again, they were locked inside a door, they'd locked the door, they were afraid to go out.

And then Jesus appeared again. And even though they saw Jesus off and on for 40 days now and then, they were still behind closed doors. But one day, when they were filled with the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, they threw open the doors and nobody could shut it after that.

Then they didn't care who thought what about them, whether they were locked in prison or anywhere they went out in the world. And you know what happened? Those 12 disciples changed the world in such a way that the effect of it we see today 2,000 years later. What was it? Did those 12 disciples get a PhD in some biblical theology or something like that? No, thank God they never went to a Bible school.

That was their salvation. They didn't accumulate knowledge. You don't need so much knowledge.

Most of us, if you read the Bible, you've got more knowledge than most of the apostles. So we have a written Bible with us, we can read all the time in so many versions. They didn't have that.

But what did they have that we don't have? The mighty power of the Holy Spirit. Now John the Baptist is called the forerunner, one who came before Jesus to prepare the way. And there's a sense in which the Holy Spirit does the work of John the Baptist in us also preparing the way.

And he first, like John the Baptist in John 1, 29, pointed to Jesus and said, there is the one who, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. John 1, verse 29. Remember, this is John the Baptist preparing the way for Christ.

And think of John the Baptist's ministry now preparing the way for you and me to meet with the Lord. He first points to Jesus and says, John 1, 29, behold, that means look carefully, there, that Jesus, that is the Lamb of God who takes away your sin. And we look carefully.

And most of us have looked there and we saw him as the one who's taken away our sin on the cross. And we were free. What a difference that made when Christ came into your life.

And the burden of sin was gone. And we could say, he doesn't remember my sin anymore. I'm declared righteous now.

I'm accepted before God. I don't come with fear that God may punish me. No, he's accepted me.

I am his son. I can call him father. All that happened in a moment when we looked at the one who took away the sin of the world, John the Baptist pointed him out.

Then the next thing after that, that John the Baptist said is also, this is the one he said, behold, one who takes away the sin of the world, John 1, 29. But he said another thing. He is also the one, verse 33, who baptizes in the Holy Spirit.

The two things he said, pointing at Jesus, there is the one who takes away the sin of the world. And there is the one who baptizes in the Holy Spirit. He says, don't come to me.

I can't forgive your sin, John the Baptist says. And I say the same thing. Don't come to me for the forgiveness of sins.

I can't forgive your sin. Go to him. He's the one who forgives.

And I say, John the Baptist said, don't come to me to be baptized in the Holy Spirit. I'll baptize you in water, he said. But he's the one who baptizes in the Holy Spirit.

I say the same thing to people who say, Brother Zach, will you come and lay hands on me to be filled with the Holy Spirit? No, I can baptize you in water. He is the one who baptizes in the Holy Spirit. Jesus, go to him.

I thank God I went to him. No man could baptize me in the Holy Spirit. A thousand godly men laying hands on my head would not baptize me in the Holy Spirit.

It's Jesus. There was a day in my life when Jesus laid his hand upon me and filled me with the Holy Spirit. Ask him to do that.

If you have a thirst, if you have a longing because you find yourself defeated by sin. And what happened? These people spent three and a half years after that listening to Jesus, these disciples, and they were still not ready. They had so much information, all the wonderful truths in the four gospels.

Amazing truths. Think of Matthew chapter 5, 6, and 7. Think of John 14, 15, 16, 17, those chapters. What amazing truths.

The parables in Luke chapter 15. They heard it all. They were not ready.

Did they have a desire? Sure. Did they have a spirit of sacrifice? Sure. They had given up their jobs, their earthly jobs, in order to follow Jesus and proclaim the gospel.

They were not ready. You may know the Bible. You may be forgiven.

And you may have a great eagerness to preach the gospel. You may even have given up your job to serve the Lord. You're not fit.

There was one more thing they needed that was vital. They were very eager to go out and preach. And Jesus said, no, no, no, no, no, wait.

You think you've got zeal, you've got desire, all that is there, but you don't realize you're powerless. You'll go out and then you'll come back in fear after a little while or something or the other will happen and you'll give up. But if you are filled with the Holy Spirit, nothing will stop you.

Till the day you die, you'll go on serving me. So the Lord said, wait. Acts 1 verse 8. Wait, and that you will receive the power of the Holy Spirit when he comes upon you.

And then not you should go out and witness for me. No, you will be, it'll drive you. The Holy Spirit will drive you to be my witness.

It's an inner pressure that comes through the Holy Spirit. Have you experienced that? That's God's desire, an inner pressure and burden to sacrifice, to give up everything for Jesus. To forsake the attachments to this world, to proclaim the gospel to everyone possible, to lead people to Christ and to a godly life.

You will receive power to be witnesses unto me. And that will not only be with your words. He didn't say you will be, have power to bear witness to me.

You'll have power to be, to be means with your life first and then with your words. And so they waited and they didn't know when the Holy Spirit would come upon them. They waited, waited, waited.

And it says here on the day of Pentecost, suddenly Acts 2 verse 2, there came a noise. It doesn't say there was a wind. It was a noise like the sound of a wind.

And it filled the house. And the first thing that happened, listen to this, it was not speaking in tongues. If you read the scripture carefully, you will see that they did not first speak in tongues.

It's very, very important to see that. And I've hardly heard any preacher point this out, but I keep pointing it out all the time. The Holy Spirit came and tongues of fire, verse 3, rested on each one of them.

There was a tongue of fire on their heads, on all 120 of them. As it were, the Lord was saying, there's one part of your body from now on that I'm going to set on fire primarily. That's your tongue, not your hand or leg or eyes, anything, your tongue.

You're going to be my witnesses and your tongue will be set on fire by the Holy Spirit so that not just when you preach, but all the time your speech will be controlled by the Holy Spirit. So let's stop there before we go into anything further and ask ourselves, do you want that? Do you want your tongue to be under the control of the fire of the Holy Spirit, purifying everything that's unclean and dishonest and unloving from your speech every day, 24 hours a day? Do you want that? I don't know. A lot of people would like to have the anointing of the Holy Spirit to preach God's Word.

You hear some mighty anointed preacher and say, wow, I'd like to preach like him. I'd like to be anointed with the Holy Spirit to preach like him. Hang on.

What about the way you speak to your neighbors and friends and people in your office and your wife and your children? Do you want your tongue to be under the control of the Holy Spirit then? Well, I'll tell you my own testimony. I was defeated with my tongue in general life, anger, discouragement, words of discouragement, and etc. And my first prayer was not, I don't want to speak in tongues, Lord.

I never asked for speaking in tongues. But I said, Lord, I want my mother tongue to be controlled by the Holy Spirit. In other words, my ordinary speech that's what I see in Acts chapter 2 verse 3. Tongues of fire.

Your mother tongue will be controlled by the Holy Spirit. And I said, Lord, in my ordinary speech, I want to be controlled by the Holy Spirit. That's the thing that drove me to the Lord.

I'm defeated. Discouragement in my heart and an uncontrolled tongue, anger and other things in my tongue. I want that to come under the control of the Holy Spirit.

So that's what I see in Acts chapter 2 verse 3. Do you want that in your life? If so, seek the Lord. Thirst for it. Say, Lord, I do not want ever to speak words that dishonor you.

See this verse, for example. Take this verse as a challenge. I've done it myself.

In Colossians chapter 4. Colossians 4 verse 6. Let your speech always, 24 hours of the day, seven days of the week. That's the meaning of always. Let your speech always be with grace.

You know, it isn't. It isn't with all of us. That's how we start.

It's not with grace. It's with rudeness. It's with anger.

And it's with bitterness sometimes and spite and trying to hit people and jealousy and strife and everything comes out through the tongue. And here is the holding up a standard before us. Jesus said, if you love me, keep my commandments.

Let your speech always be with grace. Not most of the time. I mean, if you want it just most of the time, forget it.

This is not for you. But if you want your speech always to be with grace so that you will know exactly how you should answer every single person you meet or who talks to you. It doesn't matter if they speak rudely or kindly to you, you will know how to answer that person.

This is the meaning of having salt, it says in this verse, in your speech. That adds taste to the food. That adds taste to the good taste to our speech.

And if you need to just take that one verse, it'll drive you to seek the power of the Holy Spirit for the tongue of fire to be over you. And I know I began to seek God for that. And that's what drove me and made me, made the Lord meet with me.

And I'm very thankful. And it says here that then they also had the gift of tongues. They began to speak in tongues as God gave them tongues.

That's not a gift that God gives to everyone. It's very clear in 1 Corinthians chapter 12. Are all prophets, are all apostles, you see towards the end of 1 Corinthians 12, do all speak in tongues? They all interpret very clear that all are not apostles, all are not prophets.

You read the end of 1 Corinthians chapter 12 and you see that all do not speak in tongues. So don't think that being filled with the Holy Spirit will make you an apostle or a prophet or a teacher or make you speak in tongues, but it will give you the tongue of fire, control your mother tongue. And it will give you boldness to be a witness for Christ.

You shall receive power and not you should be. Now, Acts 1.8 is very clear. It doesn't say after you get power, you should be my witnesses.

You know, we have a lot of preachers telling people in the churches, God, you should be a witness for Christ, man. You should be a witness for Christ, right? You should be witnessing for Christ in your office

and in your school and everything and college. That's not what Jesus said.

He never said you should be my witnesses. I don't see that anywhere. You know the difference between somebody telling you, you should be this and you shall be this, especially when Jesus says you should be means, okay, Lord, I see an obligation.

I have to be your witness and I try to be your witness. That's how I took it until God filled me with the Holy Spirit. Then I became his witness.

You see, you don't have to push a river. You don't have to push a river saying, come on, flow. I remember in the early days of my life, when I was seeking to be a witness of the preach for Christ, it's like these hand pumps.

In India, we have in the villages where there's no running water in the houses, hand pumps that are in some streets. They keep a hand pump where the women in the village will come with their buckets and collect water. We've got a pump and pump and pump and the water comes out little by little.

That's how my Christian life was, pump and pump and pump and pump. That's not a river. Nobody pumps a river.

It just flows. How is it in your life? I praise God that the fullness of the Holy Spirit changed my whole attitude towards witnessing for Christ or wanting to love people and to love God. It wasn't somebody had to push me, come on, love them and come on, love God.

Come on, read the Bible. Come on, listen to God. No, it all went.

There was an inner urge. It was not pumping, pumping, pumping and getting a few drops out. Even my preaching was like that.

It was pump and pump and pump and pump and pump and little water comes out. But boy, when I was filled with the Holy Spirit and I continued to live the fullness of the Spirit, there's a world of difference. I'm not saying you'll all have my gift.

My gift is teaching. God gives different gifts, but whatever gift God gives you, He didn't say here, you will all be teachers. You will all expound the word.

No, you will be my witnesses. And there are different ways in which the Holy Spirit makes us witnesses, but you will be a witness. Not you should witness.

No. When the Holy Spirit fills you, you should be a witness. No, you will be a witness.

There'll be that inner urge that pushes something out. You can't stop it. It's like a woman giving birth to a baby just pushed out and like a river flowing.

That's a better illustration. A river just flowing out, flowing and flowing. Boy, you can't stop it.

That's how it is. It's like a fire that keeps burning. And there's a verse in the Song of Solomon that I love to think of in relation to this fire.

Jesus spoke about the Holy Spirit as the rivers of living water. John the Baptist called it a baptism of fire. Here it says here that in Song of Solomon, the last chapter, chapter eight, verse seven, many waters

cannot quench the fire of love.

Even rivers cannot quench it. Imagine such a fire that you send a river through it and the fire just dries up the river and keeps on burning. Think of that picture in Song of Solomon, chapter eight, verse seven.

What a picture that is of the fire of the Holy Spirit, that no opposition, rivers of opposition, rivers of temptation, the fire keeps burning. Don't you want a life like that? That's what happened to the apostles in the day of Pentecost. You couldn't shut their mouths after that.

You couldn't put fear into their hearts after that. The rivers of fear and discouragement and all were wiped out with the fire of the Holy Spirit. That is a baptism of fire.

And not only that, another thing happened was, you see, before that, even on the last day that they spent with Jesus at the Lord at the table, at the last supper, they were not united. They all wanted to be the leader. And they were all fighting with each other for leadership.

And what a difference when they were filled with the Holy Spirit. They were united, those 120 people became one. See, it was individuals were set on fire, a fire that many rivers could not quench.

But also, this fire burnt burnt these 120 people and made them into one body. It's like 120 pieces of iron, all individual strong pieces of iron thrown into the furnace and come out as one piece. You couldn't separate it.

These 120 pieces of iron had become one. That's the other thing that happens through the baptism means immersion of the Holy Spirit. Baptizer is a Greek word that means immersed.

Be immersed people in water. That's called baptism water. Immersed in the Holy Spirit is to be filled with the Holy Spirit.

It's like standing under a waterfall. You're immersed. The waterfall from heaven symbolizes the Holy Spirit.

And so when they experienced this, it says here, there's amazing words in Acts chapter 2. When Peter stood up to preach, we were all standing alone. Have you noticed this little expression? Acts 2 14, Peter took his stand with the 11th. The 11th, the 12th had become one.

Peter was just a spokesman, but they were one body. It's like the mouth speaks, but the whole body is cooperating in the mouth speaking. And Peter was just the mouth.

It's amazing what the whole fullness of the Holy Spirit does. That's how our churches should be. That's what we need to emphasize in our churches.

That everyone should be filled with the Holy Spirit. The sad thing is so many Christians are content with something much less than that. They don't have it.

They don't have a tongue of fire. Their speech is all uncontrolled, but they're quite happy. They're quite happy as it is.

And if you're happy, of course you never make any progress. I mean, it's like the man who's happy in a sinful life. He dies and goes to hell.

You have to have a desire to turn away from sin to come to Christ and be saved. In the same way, you have to be fed up with your defeated life to be able to seek God for power, fed up with your lack of boldness, fed up with your lack of control of your tongue and control of your thoughts and fed up with the inability to love people. That's the other thing.

Jesus said, all men will know you are my disciples when you love one another. If you find an inability to forgive somebody who hurt you badly, you know what you need? Not 10 sermons on forgiveness, being filled with the Holy Spirit. You read in Romans in chapter five, I believe this is the primary mark of being filled with the Holy Spirit.

I know some Christians say it is speaking in tongues. It is not. Speaking in tongues is one of the gifts.

God gives it to some people. It's a useful gift if God gives it. God gave it to me 46 years ago.

I didn't look for it. He just gave it to me and I use it in my private devotion to the Lord, never in public. But it is not the biggest thing in my life.

Here is what is the biggest thing in my life. Romans five and verse five. When the Holy Spirit is poured into my heart, it's the love of God that fills my heart.

That is what I seek for. In heaven, we're not going to speak in tongues, which shows that it is only a temporary thing for here on this earth. In heaven, we're not going to prophesy or have teaching or healing or any such thing.

Those are all temporary, the gifts of the Holy Spirit. But there's something that's eternal and that's love. And it says here, the love of God is poured out through the Holy Spirit given to us.

That is the fire. The fire that burned in Jesus' heart was a fervent love for his father and a fervent love for God's people and for all people. And he was filled with the Holy Spirit.

And this is the same spirit he gives to us. He said, I'm going to send you another helper. What does it mean to have the love of God poured in our hearts? I see it like this.

First of all, it's the assurance the Holy Spirit comes into my heart and says, God is not angry with you. You know, the number of Christians who constantly feel God has got something against me all the time. He's such a strict, demanding person.

Who tells you that? The devil. And the devil has convinced so many believers who live in constant tension. What's God angry with me? Every morning you get up and say, what is God angry with me today? Well, I'm telling you, he's not angry with you.

He loves you and he wants to assure you of his tremendous love. He who gave his only son for us, how will he not with him also freely give us all things? We read in Romans 8. That's the first part of the love of God with which the Holy Spirit. I remember in my life, I lived with this tension of, oh, I'm not pleasing the Lord.

He must be angry with me. And there must be something wrong with me all the time thinking there must be something wrong with me. He was looking at me.

He's not looking at me with a very loving way. There's a frown on his face every time he looks at me and says, ah, you're not all that you should be. I remember I had a dream once.

And in that dream, I saw myself coming back from a meeting at which I had spoken, coming back to the house in which I was staying somewhere in some distant place. And I felt I had poured out my heart, done my best to preach the word that day. And as I came back, I heard a voice from behind me saying that was not good enough.

That was not good enough. And I was so discouraged after having served the Lord so wholeheartedly to hear the Lord saying it was not good enough. And I said, Lord, why are you saying that? When you, when I speak to you face to face, you always encourage me.

When you speak from behind my back, you say it's not good enough. And the Lord said to me in my dream, turn around and see who it is who's speaking. And I turned around in my dream and I saw it was a devil, some black figure that ran away as soon as I turned around.

I learned something that day more than 45 years ago, and I've never forgotten. The voice that says that was not good enough is always, always the devil. You think it is the Holy Spirit trying to challenge you to a higher life.

No, that's the devil trying to discourage you. You parents who keep telling your children, that's not good enough. That's not good enough.

It's the voice of the devil coming through you whether you realize it or not. God's voice is very different. He encourages us.

Yes, that was great. Well done. Of course, he challenged us to do better next time.

Sure. Just like you want your child to go from second standard or second grade to third grade to fourth grade. You want your child to go on from one standard to the higher.

So does God want, but he doesn't keep saying to us that was not good enough. No, that's not God. So the first thing that the Holy Spirit does assure you, God loves you perfectly.

He loves you like he loved Jesus. That was the revelation that came to my heart from John 17, 23. As the father loved Jesus, he loves me.

And the Holy Spirit brought that. It brought such rest into my heart. And I want to live there.

The second thing in which it says the love of God is poured in our hearts is secondly, first, this foundation of God's love for me. And the second is the Holy Spirit produces in me a fervent love for Jesus. And he's kept that fire going in my heart now for 46 years to love Jesus more and more and more, the flame becoming more and more and more and more.

So that in your waking hours, even in the middle of the night, when you wake up, you say, Lord Jesus, I love you. And your heart is full of love for Christ. And you're willing to sacrifice anything in the world for him.

God so loved the world that he made the greatest sacrifice possible. He gave his son. A sacrifice is one of the great marks of love.

If you love Jesus, you'll be willing to make any sacrifice for him. And the Holy Spirit does that. When you think of the great saints and missionaries who make tremendous sacrifices for the sake of Christ to spread the gospel.

He said, boy, how did they do it? I'll tell you. The Holy Spirit moved them within, giving them a love for Christ. That's the second part.

And the third is the Holy Spirit comes and fills our heart to love other people, God's children and others. And that enables us to forgive those who hurt us. Like Jesus forgave people on the cross.

See the worst sin that any human being has ever committed against another in the history of the world is the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. There was never a greater sin that anybody committed in this world at any time since the beginning of creation than the crucifixion of the son of God. And that sin, the greatest sin ever committed on this earth.

Jesus looked at the people who committed it. And he said, Father, forgive them. They don't even know what they're doing.

What a gracious way to say, didn't they know when you kill a man, you mean you don't know what you're doing? Of course they knew it, but they didn't know who they were killing. They don't know what they're doing. They don't know who they're killing.

Forgive them, Father. Even if they knew it, forgive them. Many people hurt you and me, have hurt you and me, knowingly and sometimes unknowingly.

But even if they did it knowingly, forgive them. You see, it's difficult. I know it's difficult.

You know what you need? You need to be filled with the Holy Spirit. When you are filled with the Holy Spirit, it will be as easy for you to love the person who did the worst crime against you as it was for Jesus to forgive those people who did the worst crime ever committed on this earth, the crucifixion of the son of God. The worst crime anybody did against another, the crucifixion of the son of God, Jesus immediately forgave them.

He didn't take time. Father, forgive them. And he meant it from his heart.

And so any of you finding it difficult to forgive somebody who did some harm to you or to your children or to your family, your son or daughter, sometimes many years ago and you still hold that grudge, you're ruining yourself. The devil wants you to keep that grudge in your heart and ruin yourself. Go to God, say, Lord, fill me with the Holy Spirit.

Everything we read in scripture must drive us to seek God to be filled with the Holy Spirit. For example, when I read Matthew 5, 6, and 7, and I read this impossible standard, it is an impossible standard to attain. You read Matthew 5, 6, and 7 honestly, and you will say this is an impossible standard.

It is. Jesus said in Matthew 5 and verse 20, your righteousness must exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees. And he said, I'll give you an example.

The righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, verse 21, Matthew 5, 21, is don't commit murder. My standard is don't even get angry. Anger equals murder.

How many of you believers know that anger equals murder in the new covenant? In the old covenant, anger is not equal to murder. It's just murder, the 10 commandments. So if there's a new covenant list of commandments, it is don't get angry, not don't kill.

That's old covenant. That's what he said in verse 22. Your righteousness, he's explaining, verse 20, your righteousness must be more than that of the Pharisees.

And he says, let me give you a few examples. One, they don't murder, you must not get angry. Exactly the same.

And if you did get angry with somebody, and then you come to pray to God, verse Matthew 5, 23, leave your offering, stop praying, go to that man, settle it, then come and pray. It's so serious that God won't even listen to your prayer. If you have hurt somebody and you did not settle with him, this is so very important.

And he says, I'll give you another example. The righteousness of the Pharisees, verse 27, don't commit adultery. But I say to you, if you look once with your eyes at a woman somewhere on the street, you don't even know who it is, and you lust, or in a magazine, you look and you lust, or in a video, you look and you lust, you have committed adultery.

That is new covenant standard. And in both those cases, in verse 22, he says, anger can lead you to hell. And verse 29, he says, lusting can lead you to hell.

Is it that serious? That getting angry can lead you to hell? Yes. Lusting after a woman can lead you to hell? Yes. Read verse 22 and 29.

And there are many other things he says here. You must always speak the truth. You must love not only your neighbors, but you must love also your enemies, verse 44.

And then all these amazing things when you pray, don't let anybody know about it. When you fast, don't let anyone know about it. And don't get anxious and don't be worried.

You read all these things and say, Lord, how in the world can I live this life? Have you ever felt like that when you read Matthew chapter five and chapter six? Lord, how can I live this life? I'm surprised. I'm really surprised that so many Christians read Matthew five and six, just casually read it as if it's a newspaper or a report about something. It's not.

It's God's command to you. You should never get angry. You should never lust with your eyes.

You must love all your enemies. You must bless everyone who curses you. And you say, Lord, I can't do it.

I'm thirsting. Jesus, give me that life. That's how I saw God.

And that's what it says at the end of the Sermon on the Mount. Here's the answer. You come to the end of the Sermon on the Mount and you've just got a nice teaching, then you don't have a need for this verse.

But at the end of the Sermon on the Mount, for those who feel, Lord, this is a standard I cannot attain to. Jesus said, Matthew seven, verse seven, ask, ask, and it'll be given to you. Ask for help to live this life.

It'll be given to you. Seek for help to live this life. You'll find it.

Knock at the door and say, Lord, give me this. Everyone who asks like this will receive. Everyone who seeks like this will find.

Everyone who knocks like this, it'll be open and be filled with the Holy Spirit. And then he goes on to say, let me tell you how good God is. If you being evil, verse 11, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your father give what is good? What is the good thing that, what is the greatest good God can give you? The Holy Spirit.

The power to live this life is found in Matthew five and six. The power to control your tongue, a tongue of fire for the Lord. See, if you were expecting to come to this meeting to learn of a technique to be filled with the Spirit, I see there is none.

But if the Holy Spirit has, through what you heard today, created a hunger in your heart, then that is what he wants to accomplish. A thirst that can never be quenched until God meets with you. See, there's a great example in the Old Testament, which I want to point out to you.

If you turn with me to Genesis, Genesis and chapter 32, please turn with me. It's a very lovely passage, Genesis 32. There we read of a man who was a very crooked man.

I'm thankful that God speaks, gives us examples of people who were not so great and upright. There were great and upright people like Daniel, Joseph, but Jacob was not in that category. Jacob was a crook.

He knew how to cheat his brother of the birthright. He came out of the mother's womb, grabbing his brother's leg, wanting to come out first, missed it, and says, okay, I missed coming out first, but I'm determined you're not going to get the birthright. I'll get it.

And he cheated him by offering him some soup to get the birthright. What a shrewd guy he was. And then he goes to work for his uncle and cheats him of all his flock of sheep.

A crook. Do you identify with him? I'll tell you, there's a crookedness in all human beings, in you and in me, whether you know it or not. You may cover it up with a nice polished behavior, but there's a crookedness just like Jacob in every one of us, in you and in me.

It's wonderful that the Bible speaks of God meets with a man like Jacob. Thank God he met with Jacob, he can meet with me. That's the hope I have.

And we read in Genesis 32 that his brother Esau, he thinks he's coming to kill him and he's scared. And he says he gets alone with God. Genesis 32 verse 24, before he meets Esau.

Wonderful passage of scripture. Genesis 32 verse 24 to 31. Please read it.

Jacob was left alone. That's the first thing. You have to be alone with God to be filled with the Holy Spirit.

There may be other people, you can go to a meeting where 100 people are praying, but you've got to be alone with God there. Your eyes are shut and everybody's cut out, as if you're alone. The best is if you're all alone in your room or if you have no room and alone at night in the bed when everybody's asleep and you're crying out to God in your heart, without making any noise, you're crying out in your heart, Oh God, I want to be filled with the Holy Spirit.

That's how I did it many, many times. Lord at night, Lord fill me with the Holy Spirit. Jacob was left alone.

You've got to be alone. It's a sad thing that our life is so busy that we don't have time to be alone with God. No wonder we don't live the life that God wants us to live one day.

We pass out of this world and we've wasted our life because we didn't spend time alone with God during this time. We had the opportunities, but we didn't take it. Maybe you spent too much time watching television or scouring the internet or doing so many other things.

Some things are good, but if it drives out time alone with God, something's wrong with your life. You're a Christian. And God met with him and God tested him.

It's pictorial language here. Somebody struggled with him. God was trying to teach him, you're struggling with me, Jacob.

And Jacob would not yield. And God says, okay, I've got to break you now. And he dislocated the socket of Jacob's thigh, Genesis 32, 25.

He broke him. And sometimes God has to break us. I know he had to break me before he filled me with the Holy Spirit.

It's like the alabaster vial of perfume, which the woman brought. A lot of lovely perfume inside, but the aroma of that perfume couldn't come out until the vessel was broken. And it was broken.

The aroma filled the house, we read. It's like the atom. There's a parable in nature.

The atom is the smallest thing, so small that we can't even see it. You can't even see it under a microscope. But when that teeny weeny atom is split, what tremendous power is released that it can give electricity to a whole town.

One little atom being split, giving electricity to a whole town. Can you beat that? That's a parable in nature. Brokenness.

You remember when Jesus prayed with the five loaves and two fish, nothing happened. You know that? Nothing happened. But when he broke it, it became thousands of loaves.

Brokenness, that's the secret. When the rock was there, no water came out. When it was hit, when it was broken, rivers came out of that.

It was rivers that came out of that rock because two million people in the wilderness had to be satisfied with their thirst. Jacob had to be broken. And you need to be broken.

God has to do something to break you. Your pride, especially. Because you can't fill a proud man.

Man has to be broken and humbled. Maybe you have accomplished some wonderful things in life. That's why you need to be broken.

Maybe you think you're a very holy type of person. You haven't committed gross sins like other people. Well, thank God for that.

But that's made you so proud that you've got the worst sin of all. Worse than those people who committed adultery. You're proud that you haven't committed adultery.

That pride is worse than adultery. You need to be broken. The next thing we see there is verse 27.

The Lord asked Jacob, what is your name? Tell me who you are. You know the meaning of Jacob? Jacob means deceiver. So the Lord's asking you, what's your name? Lord, I'm a deceiver.

Can you say that? Can you say to the Lord, honestly, the crooked, deceiving person you are inside and confess it to God? Lord, I'm a luster. I'm a person full of anger. I'm a person full of bitterness.

I'm a deceiver. I'm a lover of money, Lord. I love this world, really.

I'd like to have a little religion and go to heaven, but I really love this world. Be honest with God. Well, when all that happened, God met with him, touched him, and said, okay, you're going to be different from now on.

You will not be a deceiver. Your name will be, verse 28, Israel, a prince of God, because you have had power with God and with men. It's a picture of man being filled with the Holy Spirit, alone with God, broken, honest with God.

Are you willing to go through that, being alone with God, honest with him, allowing him to break you? I'm saying this final thing that Jacob says when he tries to depart. He says, verse 26, I will not let you go unless you bless me. That's the final thing I want to say.

To come to God and say, Lord, I will not let you go. Break me, humble me, do what you like. Dislocate my thigh, if you like.

Humble me in the presence of others, if you like. But I will not let you go until you bless me. And the blessing I want is being filled with the Holy Spirit.

And the Lord says, you will not be the same person anymore. You'll be a different person from today. And I remember that happened to me 46 years ago, and God met with me, and I became a different person.

And not only that, my whole ministry from there began to flow like rivers, that I could, as I look back on my life, I say, Lord, I thank God I didn't waste my life doing a lot of good things. No, I'm glad I could fulfill your plan for my life. Dear brothers and sisters, I want to tell you very lovingly, God has got a very specific plan for your life.

You cannot make a better plan for your life. That was planned before you were born. He wants to fulfill that in you.

He wants you to fulfill a wonderful purpose before you leave this earth. And you may say, well, I've already wasted so many years of my life. Let me give you one word before I get there to complete the Jacob story.

Jacob was, his tie was dislocated. He said, I will not let you go until you bless me. And God blessed him and changed his name and said, you're a prince, you have power with God and power with men.

That's what he said in Genesis 32 to him. Power with God and power with men. You pray that that will be true in your life also exactly like it was Jacob like he said in Genesis 32 and verse 28.

You have power with God and power with men. I want that Lord. And then we read because his tie was dislocated, he had to take a staff.

He was a young man compared to the length of life people lived those days. He was a very young man and he was walking. Imagine a 25 year old person walking with a staff.

He was walking with a staff. And we read in Hebrews chapter 11. In the midst of all the wonderful miracles mentioned in Hebrews 11, amazing miracles, the Red Sea split open and the walls of Jericho pulled down and lions being mouth shut and people being raised from the dead, all mentioned in Hebrews 11.

In the midst of that is this amazing miracle. Jacob, verse 21, leaned, Hebrews 11, 21, leaned on the top of his staff. And he said, what type of miracle is that? Does that come in the same category as other miracles mentioned here of splitting the Red Sea and pulling down the walls of Jericho? It's a greater miracle because here is a man who was so broken to the end of his life.

He leaned upon his staff as it were to say, Lord, I've got to lean upon you every single day. And it's a great miracle when God does that in your life, where you say, Lord, I cannot do a single thing without leaning upon you. I've got to stop.

I'm going to lean upon it every single day. I've got to lean upon the Lord. Or to use a better illustration, like Jesus said, you're like the branch in the vine.

This is how I always picture myself. Jesus is the vine on the tree. I'm only a branch.

And if my connection with the tree is broken even a little, nothing comes out of my life. I don't have to produce a single fruit. I have to just stay in the tree.

And the sap, a picture of the Holy Spirit, will flow from the tree into this branch and keep on producing fruit. And you look at this branch and say, hey, how do you produce all these wonderful mangoes or these wonderful apples? The branch will say, I don't do anything. I can't produce a single mango.

I can't produce a single apple. I just remain in the tree. Go and ask the tree how it happens.

The tree just faithfully sends this sap into me all the time. I've got to make sure that the connections are all open and not blocked. The flow of the sap must not be hindered by any blockage in the branch.

Keep it open always. Every sin confessed. And the continuing hunger and thirst for the power of God.

Yes, continuing. And the sap will keep on flowing. And you won't even know how the fruit is produced.

That is my testimony. As I look back over these 46 years, I can say, I never planted a church. I never produced any fruit.

I'm like the branch. I've tried to stay in the vine, in the branch, in the tree. And the sap keeps flowing.

And I myself am amazed when I see the fruit. That's how your life will be. And I want to be like that.

Till the very end, till the Lord comes, I want to be like that. A branch bearing fruit, completely dependent upon the Lord. Even when I get up to speak, when I have to speak a word, I say, Lord, I'm like the branch.

I don't know what to say. You've got to say it to me. Of course, I prepare studying the Bible and all that.

But in utterance, if the Lord doesn't speak, it's not going to accomplish anything. You remember when the disciples were walking to Emmaus, you read in Luke 24. This has been my pattern for speaking God's word.

In Luke 24, we read, the disciples walked to Emmaus, and that was a seven-mile, 10, 11-kilometer journey, as we read in Luke 24, 13. And Jesus walked with them, and that distance of seven miles, 13 kilometers, 11 or 12 kilometers would take about three hours. And Jesus spoke to them for three hours.

And at the end of it, they said, boy, Luke 24, our hearts were burning within us when he spoke to us for those three hours. And I said, Lord, if the Holy Spirit could do that through you, you've given us the same Holy Spirit, can't you do it through me? That when you speak through me, even if it is for three hours, people won't get bored, but their hearts will burn. I can't do it.

I can say clever things, but I can't make people's hearts burn. That's the Holy Spirit. What God did through Jesus, he can do through you and me.

I believe that. Do you believe it? That's why Jesus said, I will not leave you alone. I'll give you another helper.

Read John chapter 14. I don't have time to speak about all these things, but if you have a hunger and thirst and say, Lord, I want to walk as Jesus walked. I want to have a love in my heart for you, a fervent love for you that will be willing to sacrifice anything, a fervent love for people that will forgive everybody who ever did any harm to me and to bless people wherever I go.

Till the end of my life, I want rivers of living water to flow through me. Break me, break me, break me. I want to lean upon this top, lean upon the Lord and be like a branch in the tree always.

I want to live that overcoming life where sin cannot rule over me, where I don't live in fear, where I'm not discouraged, where I don't live in anxiety and tension. Temptations come and I'll reject them in the power of the Holy Spirit. Like water off a duck's back.

You can throw any amount of water on a duck and it just drops off. It doesn't stick to it. That's how temptation is to be.

Temptation will come. In fact, when Jesus was filled with the Holy Spirit, the very next thing is he was tempted and you'll be tempted, but Jesus overcame and you can overcome too. This is the wonderful life into which God wants to lead you.

I cannot give it to you. Like John the Baptist said, don't come to me. He is the one.

Go to Jesus. He's the one who can fill you with the Holy Spirit and set you on fire. May God bless you all.

Let's bow our heads. As we bow our heads, if there's anything you feel is stopping the flow of God's power, just very quickly say, Lord, I'm willing to give it up. I don't know what it is.

If there's anything else, I want to give up everything. I want every blockage in my heart to be removed. I want the river of God to flow from heaven through my heart from today onwards as a beginning till the day you come.

The end of my life on earth, I want rivers to flow through me. Will you pray that prayer? I can't do it for you, but Jesus can. I point to him.

He's the one who baptizes in the Holy Spirit and fire. Go to him. Set me on fire, Lord, a fire that will never be quenched.

Help me to forgive everyone who has hurt me right now. I open my heart, Lord, to you. Fill my heart with prayer.

Thank you, Heavenly Father. Thank you, Lord Jesus. You know our hearts.

You know the hearts of everyone who's praying here. Answer and meet the needy, pray. Heavenly Father, we pray in Jesus' name.

Amen.

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