

The Baptism of Fire

by Zac Poonen

The sermon emphasizes the importance of repentance, spiritual discipleship, and the baptism of fire as preparation for the second coming of Christ.

Duration: 58:53

Scripture: Leviticus 9:24, Psalm 139:23-24, Jeremiah 6:16, Jeremiah 8:8, Malachi 4:5, Matthew 3:2, Matthew 7:23, Luke 16:13, Galatians 2:20

Topics: "Repentance And Faith", "Spiritual Transformation"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of repentance and preparing our hearts to receive Christ, drawing parallels to John the Baptist's ministry of preparing the way for Jesus. It highlights the need for genuine repentance, understanding the seriousness of sin, and the danger of neglecting the message of turning from sin. The sermon stresses the significance of fathers taking responsibility for their children's spiritual upbringing and the necessity of being baptized in the fire of God for true transformation and spiritual growth.

Transcript

I want to turn to the Gospel of Matthew chapter 3 and the words of John the Baptist as he introduced the Lord Jesus.

You know he was the forerunner of Christ and he was sent by God specially to prepare the way for Christ and I see that that ministry is if we open ourselves to it is what prepares our heart to receive Christ as well just like John the Baptist was sent by God to prepare Israel to receive Christ that ministry the emphasis in his ministry is what prepares our heart to receive Christ as well and that emphasis is what the world needs to hear today to be and especially the church is to prepare itself for the second coming of Christ so that's why I want to look at this verse his message you know was essentially a message of repentance Matthew 3 and verse 2 he came in the wilderness saying repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand change your mind about sin that is my understanding of the word

repentance and I believe that's what it means change your mind about sin change your attitude to sin turn around from sin it takes time to get victory over sin maybe years sometimes with some habits that we have indulged in for many years but it doesn't take more than a moment to change our attitude towards sin to change our mind about sin and the tragedy today in Christendom is that we have heard about faith without repentance we hear about the grace of God without understanding the fear of God and we try to

understand grace without understanding law remember that God sent his message of grace to this earth after 1500 years of keeping people under the law that wasn't a mistake it was a preparation and that's why the people of Israel those who responded like Peter James John Paul and all

understood the grace of God I believe a thousand times better than a lot of Gentile Christians and a lot of Christians today because most Christians today have never heard much about the fear of God in their whole life right from day one what they hear is about the grace of God and the end result is that they haven't really seen the seriousness of sin I mean if you had to offer a goat as a sacrifice you know how expensive a goat is when you commit sin you understand the seriousness of sin pretty quickly because whenever it costs money we understand the seriousness of something and that's how the God taught those old testament people to understand the seriousness of sin but we have Christians today who've never spent one rupee when it concerns sin it's just one word Lord forgive me and

repentance is not understood I know many people who have come to this church who imagine that they were born again before coming here who told me that they really understood salvation only after coming here why we don't preach a different gospel than anybody else we preach that salvation is by faith not by works we got to trust in Christ he paid the price for all our sins in that way it's the same but we preach repentance we explain what sin is you can't turn away from sin until you know what sin is supposing you go to a strange group of people who never read the Bible and tell them turn from sin they don't understand what sin is you go to some headhunters they don't even think chopping off somebody's head is sin so unless sin is explained nobody knows what turning away from sin is and

that has been the problem with a lot of preaching in Christendom and that's why because Christendom has neglected the message of John the Baptist we have in many many cases people who imagine they are born again who are not really born again I've often thought of the words of Jesus to the Pharisees who sent their preachers all over the world they read in Matthew 23 anyway around the Mediterranean and he said you people cross land and sea in order to make one convert and when you convert that person he becomes twofold a child of hell than yourself how does a person become a twofold a child of hell everybody is all a single child of hell to start with he becomes double a child of hell and I fear I fear that is the condition of some people sitting here when you think you're born again you're

not really born again that's how a person becomes twofold a child of hell now there are lots of people in the world who don't even imagine they are born again well they are single children of hell the twofold children of hell are mostly found in churches that preach salvation without repentance so wherever you find a church that preaches about being born again without the message of John the Baptist to turn from sin change your attitude towards sin there's a great danger of a lot of people sitting there who are not really born again who imagine they are the Lord told Ezekiel I've made you a watchman if you see the enemy coming and you don't blow the trumpet I and the enemy comes and kills God's people I will require their blood at your hand but if you warn them you blow the trumpet and

they still don't turn then they are responsible not you that's the word the Lord spoken to my heart many a time your responsibility is not to take people to heaven but your responsibility is to tell people the way there the importance of repentance if you blow the trumpet you explain to people there are I've gone up to people and told them I don't think you're really saved and I'll tell you honestly a lot of our young people sitting here right now your children they're not saying it's all right they're three or four years old I'm talking about the teenagers and if you think that the Sunday school is supposed to bring them to Christ you're wrong if you think the young people's meeting is supposed to bring them to Christ you're wrong the Bible

says fathers bring up your children in the

instruction and discipline of the Lord that responsibility is not the Sunday schools it's not the young people's it is the fathers now then who is the Sunday school for the Sunday school is for children whose fathers are not converted who is the young people's meeting for the young people's meeting is for those whose parents are non-Christians not for those whose parents are Christians you're if you are a father and you're a member of this church and your child goes to hell I want to tell you the responsibility is 100 on you it's not on the Sunday school it's not on the young people and you have to take that responsibility it's no use going to the elders and say do something have some young people's meeting for for my son what do you mean have some young people's meeting for your son I've

heard people say that people who were never interested in young people's meetings when their sons were two years old and who themselves could have taken some interest for young people when they were young but not interested at all and now and their children are teenagers they say what are we doing for the young people what did you do for the young people brother when your children were two years old there were young people here it's your responsibility I want to put it squarely on your shoulder I want to blow the trumpet so that none of you ever think that it's the church's responsibility to bring your children to Christ it is you as parents who've got to bring your children to Christ and if you have failed in doing that you need to fall on your face before God and say God there's

something wrong with me as a father something wrong with me as a mother something wrong with me as parents everything that's happening in the world around us today points to the fact that Christ is coming soon I want to be ready I don't want a single one of my children to be lost and not only that I don't even want a single one of my child children not to be a disciple of Jesus I want them in their generation to lead other people to Christ do you have that burden I mean to get your children saved and go to heaven is the bare minimum that's like saying I managed to put my children in the kindergarten how many of you are happy if your children managed to get into the kindergarten is that all you want your children's education or do you want your children to go on from kindergarten to get a

degree perhaps as to be a disciple of Jesus spiritually and don't you want them to get a job to support themselves that means spiritually leading other people to Christ that's what we should desire for our children we should not be happy merely oh my children are saved you know I'll tell you something I want to say that very straight if you are satisfied my children have accepted the Lord they're saved I tell you the chances are please listen to me they'll be lost I've seen enough people who are just across the border and sitting on the border who you see them five years later they've gone back the other side of the border it's true don't be satisfied that your children have accepted the Lord and just crossed the border make sure they are way away from the border they become disciples of

Jesus and are following him there's no danger of their being lost and whose responsibility is it to exhort their children to be disciples my children are all in their 30s but even today I write to them almost every week urging them wholeheartedly to turn from sin to be disciples of Jesus I don't care if they're halfway around the world I tell them that do you do that to your children it's the father's responsibility to proclaim the message of John the Baptist to the children turn from sin change your attitude to sin do not love the world turn around from the world and you must know the condition of your children you must know what their spiritual condition is and you must pray for them pray that God will restrain them pray that God will break their bones in a road accident if there's no

other way that God can turn them around how many of you would pray that I pray if I hear that one of my children is going astray not following the Lord I'd even pray God would break their bones in a road accident so that they'll turn to heaven because I know that is nothing compared to going to hell that's nothing compared to living in the world and glorifying the devil see these things are serious and I believe we need to take it very much more seriously than we have taken it so far that is a word particularly for you and particularly for a lot of parents who've been in cfc for many many years and those of you parents who are lucky enough to hear this message when your children are two years old start now start now teach them to honor their father and mother teach them to respect older

people teach them the fear of God right from the beginning teach them the seriousness of telling lies teach them the seriousness of rebellion if you've got daughters be careful that they don't copy the fashions of the world even if you see other young sisters in the church following the passions of the world tell your daughters I don't want you to be like them yeah that's your responsibility that's what I'd do if I had a daughter and if she said but dad other people in cfc are like that I say I don't care whether other people in cfc are like that you're my daughter and you're not going to be like that how many of you have the courage to say that you have to you don't have to criticize anybody you don't have to find fault with anybody make sure that your children follow the lord you don't

have that responsibility for somebody else's children if somebody somebody else wants their sons and daughters to be worldly that's their business but you make sure that doesn't affect your children it's so very important john the baptist the reason I say this is because you know john the baptist came with a particular ministry the angel gabriel said in luke chapter one to his father before he was born he said that you're going to have a son and he's going to be filled with the spirit from the moment from the moment that leaves his mother's womb that means from birth and he will turn many of the sons of israel back to the lord and he will go this is luke 117 luke 117 he will go as a forerunner before jesus in the spirit and power of elijah and what's he going to do what's the ministry of

john the baptist those foretold before he was born he's going to turn the hearts of the fathers back to the children you know that's the ministry of john the baptist to get the fathers to take it more seriously with the bringing up of their children instead of just going to meetings and taking the children to the meetings he's going to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children to be more interested in their children and not just to be occupied with making money and a lot of other things in the world and he's going to turn the disobedient to the attitude of the righteous the attitude of the righteous they're going to change these disobedient people to have a different attitude towards sin which is the attitude of the righteous you know that's when we know we have really repented have

you repented it's not too late christ has not yet come there's still hope the day of grace is still there it's time for us to repent do you know what was the lord's last message to the churches the last message of the lord in the bible to the churches revelation two and three repent repent repent five times repent repent repent repent churches need to repent do you know what is the lord's last message to the elders of churches to five of the elders in revelation two and three repent repent repent repent i have regular elders meetings with all our 70 80 elders in our churches and that's what i preach to them repent repent some listen to me some don't yeah i have to tell you some don't and i see the result in those who don't i don't do anything it's god's church not mine but i see

the result in them when they don't repent when they don't judge themselves in secret when they think everything is all right in a little while their nakedness becomes manifest to everybody they themselves are

to hang their head in shame elders of churches so it with god there's no respect of persons i'm not a favorite of god neither are you god loves all of us equally and the laws of god are the same if i jump off the roof of this building i'll fall the law of gravity applies to me and if i exalt myself in pride god will resist me just like the law of gravity it doesn't make a difference who you are god resists the proud so it's good for us to hear these words and to humble ourselves in matthew chapter three there's another thing that john the baptist preached he said i'm only baptizing

with water but there's one coming after me who's this is matthew 3 and verse 11 i baptize you with water for repentance he would not baptize people if they didn't show some evidence of repentance some people came to him for baptism and he told them verse 8 you better bear fruit in keeping with repentance i'm not going to baptize you today a whole lot of people are baptized who haven't repented that's another problem in today's christendom as for me he says i baptize you with water for repentance but now there's someone coming after me whose shoelaces i'm not fit to open he will baptize you with the holy spirit and fire there is a baptism in water there's a baptism in fire there's a second promise in the new testament first one is he will save his people from their sins matthew 1 11

matthew sorry 1 3 1 21 and the other is here in matthew 3 11 he will baptize you in the holy spirit and fire now if i believe that if born-again christians who were so eager to be baptized in water would be just as eager to be baptized in fire we would have a different type of church but i see around the world a lot of born-again christians who are so eager to be baptized in water we're not eager to be baptized in fire i see fathers who are very eager to see their children as they grow up i hope my son and daughter will be baptized in water and you'll get a sense of satisfaction my child has taken baptisms almost as though a certificate your child will definitely go to heaven rubbish if you parents were just as eager that your water baptized son or daughter would also be baptized in

fire perhaps you might have had a different type of son or daughter how many of you can say honestly i'm eager my children are baptized in water and baptized in fire baptism in water is easy you just go to a man he just dips you we baptized a lot of people who we discovered later on are not even saved we thought they were i think i myself have baptized people like that philip baptized people in acts chapter 8 who later on we discovered were not saved but the holy spirit the jesus never baptizes anybody in fire and not saying i'll tell you that he never he's never made one mistake throughout the world every preacher has probably made mistakes in baptizing people in water we're not really saying we pass the bread at the lord's table and i'm absolutely convinced without a shadow of doubt

that number of people who break bread on sundays in this church are not saved i'm convinced but i don't stop them because i don't know the bible says that a man examined himself we warn people if they don't take it seriously that's up to them but if only if only those people who are so eager to take part in the lord's table and who never miss the sunday as the lord's table and who are so eager to come to the elders and say can i take part in the lord's table if only they were so eager to go to jesus and say lord baptize me in fire boy their lives would have been different baptism means an immersion we don't believe in sprinkling baptism is a word which is a greek word which means immersion we immerse in water but like john the baptist said i can only immerse you in water there's another

one who immerses in fire don't come to me for the baptism in fire don't come to me and say brother please lay your hands on my head i'm sorry i can't baptize you in fire i can baptize in water no problem but if you want the baptism in fire you got to go to jesus he's the baptizer in fire he's the only one who baptizes in fire who immerses in fire and i want to tell you dear brothers and sisters that is what we all desperately need

that was the message of john the baptist that is what we need to hear in these days as a preparation for the second coming of christ what is the preparation for the second coming of christ repent fathers turn your hearts to the children be let come to jesus to be baptized in fire this is what john the baptist preached that's what we need to preach because we

it's no use saying we're approaching the last days if we don't preach the message of john the baptist you know this quotation i just read to you from luke chapter 1 where john the baptist before his birth he his father was told that he would go in the spirit and power of elijah and his father zachariah was very well versed in the scriptures and he knew what that meant i mean you may not have known what it meant but he knew what it meant because that was the last promise in the old testament let me turn you to the last promise in the old testament in malachi chapter 4 malachi 4 we read in verse 5 the lord says i am going to send you this is the promise the last promise in the old testament i'm going to send you elijah the prophet before the great coming of the great and terrible day of the

lord he will restore the hearts of the fathers to their children and when the hearts of the children when the hearts of the fathers and the fathers take the initiative and realize it's their responsibility don't put the responsibility on the mothers when the fathers in the church realize it's their responsibility to turn their hearts to take the matters of their children seriously then and only then will the children also turn to the god of their fathers but if the fathers are lazy and careless and think everything is okay because my son's coming to the meeting then the children will be worldly wayward and will not turn to the lord but he will restore the hearts of the fathers the children the hearts of the children so the fathers otherwise i will come and smite the earth with a curse but

when john the baptist came in that spirit jesus said concerning him we saw this once before that if you receive him matthew chapter 11 i want to read this to you matthew 11 there's a big if if matthew 11 14 he told the jewish people if you are willing to accept john the baptist he was talking about john the baptist in verse 12 you're referring to the whole section he was talking about john the baptist he said if you accept john if you jewish people accept john the baptist as the fulfillment of that old testament prophecy from your prophet malachi that this is the elijah to come then he is the elijah to come but did the jewish people accept him no they killed him and they killed the one he foretold about jesus so that prophecy in malachi has not yet been fulfilled because they didn't and

that and that and then when we go back to malachi we see that the prophet elijah is to come before the great and terrible day of the lord the great and terrible day of the lord was not the first coming of christ there he came in grace when he comes a second time that will be the great and terrible day of the lord when he comes in judgment and just before he comes in judgment he said i'm going to send elijah the prophet and we know that john the baptist was not actually elijah elijah had gone up to heaven there's no transmigration of souls what the lord meant was somebody who comes in the spirit of elijah so john the baptist was elijah in this sense that he came in the spirit of elijah he was a completely distinct individual from elijah who lived 700 years before him but he came in the

spirit of elijah and it's the same thing that's going to happen in the last days there's going to be i believe more than one in the spirit of elijah because it was all right to have one elijah for a small nation like israel but when you think of the whole world and seven billion people one elijah won't do you need many people in the body of christ who come with the spirit of elijah prophets preachers preaching in the spirit of elijah i believe we need thousands maybe hundreds of thousands in the last days of people who will proclaim in the mess the message of elijah and the message of john the baptist repent fathers turn your hearts to your

children and come to jesus to be baptized in fire elijah too was a prophet of fire you know the way he proved to israel that jehovah was the true god

you know on the mount on mount carmel when he stood with 450 false prophets of bayal and i want you to know one thing those 450 prophets of bayal were all descendants of abraham isaac and jacob they were not strangers they were nominal jews like we talked today about nominal christians just like the pharisees in jesus time were descendants of abraham isaac and jacob and a lot of born-again people today who think they are born again who are the prophets of bayal in christendom today see the equivalent of bayal today is money why do i say that because elijah stood on mount carmel and said choose whom you want to serve jehovah or bayal you can't serve both and jesus came and said in luke 16 13 you can't serve god and money same thing what elijah said that's why i know that the new testament

equivalent of bayal is money now you may think how in the world did those old testament people imagine that they could serve jehovah and bayal that's crazy isn't it it's very easy to look back at the failures of people in another generation and see how in the world didn't they see it we think of people who lived before martin luther's time and see how in the world couldn't they see in the bible that salvation is by faith and not by works and it's not by putting money into some church offering box that your soul goes to heaven how in the world did people get that crazy idea it's easy to see the fault of another generation how in the world did people in elijah's time think you could serve jehovah and bayal love jehovah and love bayal let's apply it to our time today as i said jesus said the

equivalent of joe and bayal are god and money let me ask honestly do you think there are christians in the world who love christ and also love money who follow up to christ follow up to money who value jesus and also value money who love jesus love money who serve jesus and serve money forget all the other christians in the world ask yourself do you love jesus and money you got to be honest there then you can understand how those people believe they could love jehovah and bayal how they could serve joe and bayal we're doing the same thing i've seen numerous people i found it in my own life in my younger days i didn't have to look far a false preaching of the gospel has made so many christians imagine that you can love jesus and love money at the same time i'm not talking about using money

jesus used money but he never loved it nowhere in the bible does it say the money is the root of all evil money does a lot of good a lot of the gospel preaching is due to money poor people the bible speaks about helping the poor with money there's nothing wrong with that it's the love of money that's the root of all evil i don't know how many of you have read that in your bible the love of money is the root of all evil and do you know that every child of adam has it in their flesh if any of you think you don't have it in your flesh you're fooling yourself of all the sick people in the world the most sick are those who don't know they are sick yeah if you know that you're sick you seek to be free from it i've never heard of a person who knows he's got cancer and doesn't want to be

free from it i've known a lot of people who had cancer and never knew it for two three years till suddenly they went for a scan and discovered they got cancer and the doctor says you had it for three years have you ever had have you ever gone before the lord and the lord told you you had the money of love of money in your heart for 25 years ever since you were converted have you ever heard the lord tell you that or you never heard it or you imagine the moment you said those magic words lord jesus come into my heart love of money disappeared from your heart no it's not like that let's face up and be honest or have you imagined that it's only the rich people who earn a lot of money who are lovers of money show me one beggar in bangalore who doesn't love money i've never found one the other

poorest people in the city they all love money and you go to the richest people in the city they love money too so where does the love of money reside in the hearts of poor people or rich people i'll tell you you're a child of adam it is there in you and i thank god for the day when i recognized it and said lord i cannot serve jehovah and bea i cannot serve christ in money i cannot love god and money i will fool myself if i think i can serve one god one day jehovah one day and be all another day and joe one day and be all another day no i have to be free that's what jesus told the rich young ruler you got so many good qualities you want to serve the true god but you love money too you can't you can't be my disciple we got to see that brothers and sisters we've got to learn that there must

be only one god in our life there are many people from non-christian religions who would be willing to accept christ because they already have many gods and they just add one more christ is one more and very often we have to tell them no it's not enough you have to forsake the others and accept christ you can't have christ plus the others that's exactly what we have to say to many people who imagine they are born again you can't have christ plus money you can't have christ plus allah or christ plus krishna i mean if somebody chooses to worship the other gods fine but that's their choice if somebody wants to worship allah fine somebody wants to worship brahma or krishna fine or buddha fine but you can't have christ plus that that's all i say if somebody wants to worship money fine but you

can't have christ plus that i mean that's the gospel you've all understood but have you applied it to ourselves it's one of the greatest hidden idols among born-again christians and so hmm what does it mean to be baptized in fire right from the beginning of time you know there was no fire that we read off in the bible until sin came into the world we read in genesis chapter two chapter three sorry god is a consuming fire but adam could walk with him the very first day he was created and fellowship with him it's amazing adam could fellowship with a god who was a consuming fire but a day came when he sinned and then we read in genesis 3 that when god put adam out of the garden of eden he put verse 24 he drove the man out genesis 3 24 and at the east in the garden of eden he stationed a

cherubim some type of angel with a sword of fire not just a sword i mean a sword itself is pretty dangerous but a sword of fire guarding the tree of life there were two trees mentioned in the garden of eden the tree of life and the tree of knowledge and it's very interesting that god put a flaming sword only in front of the tree of life there is no flaming sword around the tree of knowledge here was a flaming sword with a cherubim then went round and round and round and round guarding every way to the tree of life if you want to go to the tree of knowledge there's no sword there there's no fire there anybody can go and partake of it you know the spiritual application of it when you come to the bible if you come to it as a tree of knowledge where you want bible knowledge it's a great

eagerness for bible study these days and people think they're spiritual because they like bible study there are many people who told me around the world they like to hear our bible studies there are two ways you can approach god's word as a tree of knowledge or a tree of life that's up to you the pharisees approached it as a tree of knowledge and they had fantastic knowledge and when you come to the bible as a tree of knowledge there's no sword that has to fall on your self-life there's no fire that has to burn up your self-life you can just increase in knowledge and your head can ooze with bible knowledge you can become a professor in a bible school and be the most selfish unconverted godless person in the universe you know it's possible and the greatest example is the devil who knows

the bible better than anybody else he could even quote scripture to Jesus in the wilderness imagine knowing the bible so well that you pick out the right verse out of all those verses in the old testament to

quote to Jesus he really knew the scripture is the devil and it's very easy for us brothers and sisters to come to meetings like this and to increase in knowledge you know in many places i travel i find many people eagerly take down notes that's good if the reason is to read those notes again and to remind themselves maybe i didn't get everything in the meeting or they listened to the cd again very good or read those notes again so they're reminded again so the message sinks in excellent but a lot of people take notes because they are preachers there are a lot of people who go to our

website to listen to messages because they want to preach those sermons what are they coming to the website for for knowledge not for life there is a price to be paid for life the sword has to fall on yourself life like it fell upon jesus that sword is a two-edged sword it fell on jesus and does to fall on us too not only christ was crucified but i am crucified with christ too it's only then that i live today a lot of people are seeking to live without being crucified with christ paul said in galatians 2 i'm crucified with christ and i live and the son of god lives in me and it was real in his life today a lot of people say the son of god lives in me but they are not crucified with christ i say how in the world did you bypass the sword and the fire and get to the tree of life that must be

a counterfeit tree it's not the real one the real one has got a sword and a fire around it paul got to it by being crucified with christ by having our old man crucified with him today a lot of people say the son of god lives in me but it's not the galatians 220 route that paul mentions seems to be some other route they took yeah there is another route but it doesn't lead to the real tree of life and that's why a lot of christians today their christian life is so unsatisfying oh brother i'm depressed i'm in a bad mood yeah you will be because you went to the wrong tree of life if you come to the real tree of life you will not live in depression and gloom and discouragement and defeat think of christians who are born again for 25 years still losing that temper yelling at their wives just

like they did 25 years ago you think such people have come to the tree of life no sir they have come to the tree of knowledge people watching internet pornography and then coming to the church and raising their hands and saying jesus you're everything to me rubbish you're everything to me he's not everything to you if he were everything to you you wouldn't go to that internet pornographic site you would hate it you would turn away from it when the devil tempts you to go to some internet pornographic site next time think of the devil telling you like this put your head in that toilet bowl and lick it and you do it once and the devil says one more time lick it and you lick it like a fool you still want to lick it tomorrow next week married people young people well if you want to lick it

that's your choice but i have to tell you the truth you haven't come to the tree of life you know what you need i'll tell you you need repentance and the baptism of fire it's a fire that was there in front of the tree of life you see in genesis 4 it says here i like this story because it's the beginning of two streams in the human race king and abel and the interesting thing is both streams here started with worshiping the true god cain came with an offering to jehovah what does it say in verse 3 it came about in the course of time that cain brought an offering to jehovah the true god not to some idol he was no idol worshiper he was no atheist who said there is no god he was a deeply religious person who took the best of his offerings he paid his tithes as it were and he brought an

offering to the true god and abel also brought an offering to the true god and it says here that the lord verse 4 the last part had regard for abel and for his offering the devil has twisted that round with so many modern preachers who teach it like this many bible schools they teach it like this see the subtle difference how the devil turns it around the lord had respect for abel's offering because it was a lamb with blood and

therefore he had respect for abel no that's not what the bible says read it carefully the bible says the lord had regard for abel and therefore for his offering is it like that in your bible it's the man this was not a sin offering this was an offering of thanksgiving and in an offering of thanksgiving even in leviticus you didn't have to have blood no people could

bring grain as an offering of thanksgiving cain's ground it says he was a tiller of ground he had a fantastic crop and he said i want to give an offering of thanksgiving to god here's my offering of because that was his job and abel he was a keeper of sheep he had his flock multiplied he said i want to give thanks to god he brought an offering from his profession both of them brought an offering from their own profession there was nothing wrong in that an offering of thanksgiving to god why did god accept one and not the other he doesn't say god rejected cain and cain's offering and therefore he rejected cain no read verse five he rejected cain that's why he rejected his offering so don't believe everything that you read in theological books in bible schools and for bible school

professors teach it's able and you know what verse in the new testament this has reference to what jesus said when you come with your offering to god and there you remember that somebody's guts you've hurt somebody and they've got something against you leave your offering there god won't accept it even if you say you're born again you come with the blood of jesus god will not accept your offering because you haven't set things right with your wife you haven't set things right with your neighbor you haven't set things right with your husband or somebody else your offering will not be accepted and god will not have regard for you or your offering that's what we read here he did not have regard for cain or his offering because there was something that god saw in cain's heart which was not

right how did cain know this is the point i want you to see how did cain know that god had accepted abel's offering i believe there was only one way fire came from heaven and consumed that offering and cain was waiting for the fire nothing happened the offering was okay but nice grain but no fire that is the difference between a religious person and a spiritual person a religious person comes with his beautiful hands lifted up and praise and all that there's no real fire a spiritual person has got a fire inside the fire of god not something he makes himself the fire of god comes and burns up his offering and he becomes like the bush in the wilderness burning with fire he may be a smaller bush than those big other bushes but i'd rather be a small bush on fire than a big bush without the

fire of god i want you to turn to leviticus in chapter 9 leviticus chapter 9 we read mooses and aaron offered up a burnt offering to god now let me tell you a little bit about the burnt offering verse 22 it says here he stepped down after making the sin offering and the burnt offering and the peace offering sin offering if you had to shed blood that's a picture of christ on the cross but burnt offering was a picture of our giving ourselves to god and the way god accepted a burnt offering we read is in verse 24 fire came from the lord and consumed the burnt offering that's the only way you know that god's accepted it the burnt offering if it was a bullock you had to cut it up into pieces the priest and to put every piece now picture this in your mind a priest is cutting a bullock and

putting it on the altar and he leaves one leg behind he said i think i'll take it home and eat it no fire and he prays and prays and prays and prays no fire because there's something he has withheld for himself and that's exactly the reason why there's no fire in the lives of many christians they put an offering but everything is not there and the lord who sees everybody's heart says i can see something in your life not yielded you can pray till eternity there'll be no fire they had to put every piece on the altar and once the last piece was laid there there was no delay fire you know a lot of people are waiting for the baptism in the holy

spirit they might as well wait a hundred years but you cannot come because you got to wait you god's what god is the one who's waiting for the last

piece to be put on the altar i remember one preacher who was seeking for the baptism of fire and he thought he had laid everything on the altar he's waiting waiting waiting nothing happened till the lord told him you want the baptism of fire to become a more famous preacher right don't get it then he discovered as god showed him that there was a lust in his heart to be like deal moody or charles hilly or someone like that who was ministry was changed when they were baptized in fire or like somebody else they heard of and he laid it on the altar and god met with him immediately you know the other day the lord spoke to me through a verse i just like to share it with you it's in the message translation of matthew chapter 7 and verse 23 which the lord speaks to those whom he sends

away in the day of judgment you know i will declare to them matthew 7 23 i never knew you depart from me you who practice lawlessness and the message bible says you know what i'm going to say to such people in the last day you missed the boat listen to this all you did was use me to make yourself important i tell you it shook me all that you did was use me the lord says to make yourself important you know how many preachers are doing that today using the lord's name to make themselves important musicians singers to make money to make themselves important to fool people plenty of them turn back to levticus chapter 9 we read there the fire fell and wherever the fire falls people are excited it's wonderful to have the fire of god fall but what happens when the true fire of god falls you see

aaron had two sons we read in the next verse levticus chapter 10 verse 1 they took their fire pans and put fire in them themselves and offered a strange fire before the lord that means this was not a fire that came from heaven they produced it themselves to fool people hey fellas here's the fire just like you saw yesterday my dad aaron bringing the fire down here we brought it to where his sons we got it and they had lit the fire themselves you can't play the fool with god like that it says fire came out from before the lord and consumed them verse 2 god judged them because they produced a strange fire and there's a lot of strange fire in christendom today the strange fire of emotionalism where people are brought into a meeting and they're great manipulators uh up there leading the

singing and master of ceremonies who know how to manipulate people to whip up their emotions through various ways and songs and certain type of songs and a certain beat on the drums and the guitars to whip them up and whip them up and whip them up and produce what they say is a fire it's not a fire it's a strange fire of emotionalism and there's a lot of it in christendom today and the proof of it is these fellows who imagine they got a fire in the meeting they go away from the meeting and commit adultery and lose their temper and watch internet pornography and love money and do everything to prove that they don't have a fire there's the false fire the bible speaks about lying signs and wonders not real signs and wonders jesus did real miracles most of today's miracles 99 percent of them

are fake i believe in real miracles i've seen some of them but more 99 percent of what goes on in the world today is fake false fires fooling gullible people that some miracle has happened when nothing has happened with hypnosis and the techniques of psychology to fool people don't be fooled a lot of preachers today are fooling people with the false fire of psychology let me turn to your verse in the old testament in jeremiah twice the lord says that in jeremiah chapter 6 and chapter 8 jeremiah chapter 6 and verse 13 let me read this to you from the message translation everyone is after the dishonest dollar or rupee the prophet and the priest everybody they're all after getting money jeremiah 6 verse 13 prophets and priests everyone in between are twisting my words and doctoring the truth

changing the truth and they're saying to people verse 14 it's not so bad you'll be fine things are just fine when things are not just fine and they have no shame and the lord says to the people verse 16 go and stand at the crossroads and look around for the old road the old way preached by the apostles but they said nothing doing we're not going to go that well god is patient he sends the message a second time in jeremiah 8 verse 8 the last part your religious experts have taken you for a ride the last part of verse 9 they know everything except the word of god and again in verse 10 middle everyone is after dishonest money prophets and priests are twisting the words and they are saying in verse 11 it's not so bad you'll be all right but things are not bad but things are not fine they're

pretty bad as false fire all over the world and they're saying to people verse 11 it's not so bad you'll be all right but things are not so bad as false fire be careful brothers and sisters don't be fooled i'll tell you some marks of the true fire your self-life will get burnt up fire always reduces things to ashes when the fire felt on that burnt offering there was nothing left it was burnt to ashes completely the fire will bring purity in the inner life and if it doesn't do that you've probably got a wrong fire let's seek god come to jesus be prepared for his second coming ask him to baptize you mercy you in fire let's pray let's bow our heads before god while our heads about in prayer if you can think of one particular area that god has spoken to your heart say lord that's the area

where i want to respond and show me the next step if you take the first step the lord will show you the second in a general way you can say yes lord i want this message but it won't work think of one specific area and say lord i want to take that area seriously and then you know that you mean business with god that area may be different for each of you may god have mercy on us heavenly father i pray you'll apply the truths we have heard today to the deepest parts of our being change our lives prepare us for the second coming of christ as we see the world sinking into greater chaos turmoil help us to be a people ready for your coming we pray in jesus name amen

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