

# The Believer and the Triune God

by Zac Poonen

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*Zac Poonen's sermon emphasizes the believer's intimate relationship with the Triune God and the transformative power of the new covenant.*

**Duration:** 57:02

**Scripture:** Matthew 28:19, Luke 18:7-8, John 17:3, Acts 2:4, Romans 6:14, Hebrews 4:15-16, Hebrews 12:1-2, James 1:13-14

**Topics:** "Holy Spirit", "Trinity"

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## Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of knowing God as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. It highlights the transformational power of surrendering to the Holy Spirit, seeking the baptism in the Holy Spirit for empowerment in ministry, and the need to open all areas of our hearts to God's work. The speaker shares personal experiences and insights on how knowing God intimately can lead to a victorious Christian life.

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## Transcript

Well, we don't have a special guest. He's more like our father, our brother, our pastor. He's been preaching and teaching and pouring into Abundant Life for 20 years.

You can be seated. This is really for our first time visitors and our special, you are our honored guests. And for those who just joined the church, Pastor Zach has been pouring into Abundant Life, like I said, for 20 years.

He's planted over 50 churches in his homeland, India. He's a great man of God. We love him.

Pastor Zach, will you come up? Praise the Lord. The purpose of our coming together as a church is a number of things. We come together to give glory to God's name and to give him thanks as we have done right now, but also to hear his word so that we come into the fullness of experiencing all that Jesus Christ provided for us.

For many Christians that I've seen around the world, it is, my sins are all forgiven. I'm on my way to heaven. Praise the Lord.

But if you read the New Testament, there's a lot more than that. The Bible speaks of Jesus having inaugurated a new covenant, which was different from the old covenant that God made with Israel. So, I want to speak a little bit about that and I've titled my message, The Believer and the Triune God.

Now, why do I say that? Do you know that under the old covenant, they never knew God as a trinity? You read the entire Old Testament and nobody ever speaks about the three persons in the Godhead. There are people even today among Christians who don't believe there are three persons in the Godhead, believe it or not. They are living in the old covenant.

In the old covenant, there was only a knowledge of God, but not in his three persons. There are many things about God they didn't know. They never knew how much he loved us.

That was revealed on Calvary. But when Jesus came, right at his baptism was the first time that you see the trinity. The Father speaking from heaven, this is my beloved Son in whom I'm well pleased, the Son of God being baptized in the water, and the Holy Spirit descending like a dove.

There you have the whole trinity. And when Jesus was about to ascend to heaven, he told his disciples, when you go into all the world and make disciples, you got to baptize them in or into the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Those are his almost his last words.

So in other words, wherever you go, it's not just enough to make them disciples. Baptism is important and it must be into the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. So right from day one, every believer was to know about the trinity.

And in the Acts of the Apostles, when it says they were baptized in the name of Jesus Christ, a lot of people confuse that. Let me give you a little principle of Bible study that I've discovered after 57 years of studying the Bible. And that is never get a doctrine from a historical event or section of the Bible.

Jesus healed everyone. If you make that a doctrine, you're going to live in a world of unreality. Because the fact of the matter is Jesus does not heal everyone today.

He can, but he doesn't, for various reasons. I'm not going to go into that. That's just one example how you can take a historical statement, make a doctrine out of it.

Or Acts 2.4, they all spoke in tongues. There again, you can get a lot of people into bondage. I believe in speaking in tongues, but it's not for everyone.

God determines whom to give it to. Another historical section, historical statement is they baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. It's a historical statement.

The commandment is what we must go by. If you replace the command of Jesus by a historical statement, you're going to get into confusion. So when I baptized in India, if I only baptized people in the name of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, a non-Christian, he could go home and his Hindu father could say, that's okay.

Father, Son, and Holy Spirit is Brahma, Vishnu, and Shiva. You haven't changed your religion. You're still a Hindu.

Because they have a trinity in Hinduism too. Everything that we have in Christianity is counterfeited by the devil. The Egyptians have got a trinity.

The Greeks have got a trinity. The devil's counterfeited everything. So when I baptize a person in India, I baptize him in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, not any other heathen trinity and the Holy Spirit.

So historically, I mean as a record, you could say I baptize in the name of Jesus Christ because I was identifying the Son as the Lord Jesus Christ. Now more than that, that's just a statement by way of fact. In the old covenant, they were under law.

And I find lots and lots of Christians still live under law. The law demands, whereas love invites. Under the law, the commands are always, thou shalt, thou shalt, thou shalt not, thou shalt not.

But when you read the commands of Jesus, notice this difference. He never says thou shalt, thou shalt not. Try and look for those verses in the Gospels.

He doesn't say that. He says, if you love me, keep my commandments. If any man wants to come after me, let him take up his cross and follow me.

It's an invitation. It's not a demand. You must do it.

So the reason why I say that is because I find a lot of Christians look at the New Testament like demanding certain things from them. And the result is, you know, we become like the God we worship. And if your God is one who demands, you will be like that yourself.

You will make demands on your wife. You'll make demands on your husband. And this is the number one reason for miserable marriages, because they worship a God who demands and who expects implicit obedience.

And that spirit of inviting that Jesus has is not there. That's just one thing I want to say. Under the law, there were commands that God gave, but no enablement to keep them.

Whereas under grace and in love and the new covenant, Jesus says, take my yoke upon you. We work together in trying to keep this commandment. Again, if you're under law, we will give commands and not work together.

Husbands who expect their wives to do things and never help them. Parents who tell their children to do something and never teach them how to do it or work together with them. They're under law.

Their God is like that. They never experience working together with Jesus. Jesus helping them.

And it's as if the Lord has just told them to do something. They're left on their own. Now, if we enter into the new covenant, all that changes when we come to know God as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

And that's what I want to share with you. Let me show you, first of all, a verse in John chapter 17. Here is another word that many Christians don't understand.

Eternal life. For many people, eternal life means to live forever. But people who go to hell live forever too.

But they don't have eternal life. What is the scriptural definition of eternal life? It's one that Jesus himself gave in John 17 and verse 3. And if you don't have this, you don't have eternal life. Let me tell you that.

Eternal life is a gift of God through repentance and faith. But John 17 verse 3 says, this is eternal life. This is Jesus' definition.

That they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent. And that, if you read the whole section there for chapter 14 to 17, is through the Holy Spirit. So, eternal life is knowing God.

Knowing God is different from knowing about God. You may know about the governor or the president, but you may not know them personally. There's a lot of difference between knowing about someone and knowing him.

Many Christians know about God and about Jesus Christ, but they know him personally, intimately. Let me tell you something else. If you read the Old Testament, the word know is a special word.

It's used in the relationship of a man, the physical relationship between a man and his wife. Adam knew his wife, and they had a son called King. It's used to speak about that most intimate physical relationship between man and a wife.

You apply that to the spiritual realm. To know Jesus Christ is to know him in our spirit, intimately, as intimately as a husband and wife know each other. Anything less than that is not eternal life.

Let me show you another verse in 1 Timothy, in chapter 6. You know, there's so much we miss if we don't read the scripture carefully. Here's another thing. 1 Timothy, in chapter 6, in verse 12.

1 Timothy 6, 12. Paul's writing to Timothy was already about 45 years old, and been with Paul for maybe 25 years. Wholehearted person.

Paul tells Timothy in 1 Timothy 6, 12. Fight the good fight of faith and take hold of eternal life. What does that mean? Was it because Timothy was not born again? The guy's been with Paul for 25 years.

Paul says he's my finest co-worker. I mean, if you got a letter like that from Paul, and you were there saying take hold of eternal life, what would you do? Now, you read that verse, I'm sure. If ever you read 1 Timothy, you came across that verse.

Take hold of eternal life. What did you do when you read that verse? You just ignore it? You say, I've already got it? You've already got it. There's no need to take hold of it.

But when you realize that eternal life is not just living forever, it is knowing God, like Jesus said, personally. Knowing Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. That's something you've got to take hold of more and more and more and more and more.

So, let me break that down. First of all, knowing the Father. This is something unique in the New Covenant.

Not knowing about the Father, but knowing the Father. I shared a little bit about that last month when I spoke here. In the Old Covenant, nobody, nobody means nobody, could ever call God Father.

Nobody could look up and say, Father, because they were not sons. Did you know that no one could be a son of God until the day of Pentecost? Great prophets like Moses, Samuel, Elijah, the greatest, John the Baptist. None of them could look up to heaven and say, Dad.

He was not their dad. He was Almighty God, and they were his servants. They were his prophets.

They were his servants. But Jesus came and brought us into a relationship, Almighty God, that he became our Father. It's like a master becoming a father.

It's like one who was a servant in the home, suddenly becoming a son. I wonder whether we've seen the privilege we have compared to all those Old Testament people. That's why Jesus once said concerning John the Baptist, he said he was a greatest under the Old Covenant.

But he said, I don't know whether you've noticed this verse, let me show it to you. Matthew chapter 11, when he was speaking about John the Baptist, he said, John the Baptist was the greatest person that ever lived under the Old Covenant. Has not arisen, Matthew 11 verse 11, there has not arisen anyone greater than John the Baptist.

But, but what? The one who is least in this new covenant kingdom of heaven is greater than him. Now think of this. In the entire history of the world, right from Adam up to Jesus, the greatest was John the Baptist.

And then he says the least person who enters into God's kingdom, they didn't have God's kingdom or the kingdom of heaven in the Old Covenant, is greater than he. Why? Because a son is greater than a servant. Today, I've heard many people talk about so-and-so as a servant of God, as if that's a great thing.

And then you look at somebody else and say, oh, he's only a son of God. What do you mean? If I were to introduce you to my, in my home saying, this is my servant and this is my son, who would you think is greater or more important? We sometimes think a servant of the Lord. Wow.

Oh, I'm only a son of God. We've devalued this. We haven't understood the value of being a son of God.

We inherit. A servant doesn't inherit things. A son is a servant as well, but he's a son first of all, because God has become our father.

And all that that involves. In John 17, 23, we see an amazing verse, which I personally, after studying all the 31,175 verses in the Bible, I consider this to be the greatest verse in the whole Bible, that God loves me as much as he loved Jesus Christ. That is the greatest truth I have found in scripture.

John 17 and verse 23, it says, I in them and thou in me, that they may be perfected in unity so that the world may know that you sent me. And when people hear me and see me, they must know that the world sent, that God sent Jesus Christ and that God loved me as much as he loved Jesus. I want to ask you whether you have seen that, seen the importance of the way you live and the way you speak, the way you relate to people.

People must see you're a loved person. You're someone who's tremendously loved by Almighty God. And they will see that when they see a security in your life, when they see that you're secure in yourself, that you don't feel inferior to anyone, that you don't act superior to anyone, because you're secure in your Heavenly Father.

You're different from others. Others may have more than you, but you don't envy them. Others have less than you.

You don't look down on them because you realize that your Heavenly Father has determined what you are to be. There's a security in knowing God, that God loved me as much as he loved Jesus. There's a tremendous truth in this, because there's so many implications of this.

If God loves me as much as he loved Jesus, he will do for me everything that he did for Jesus. That's what I mean by knowing the Father. If you don't believe that, you don't know God is your Father.

I mean, you may know about him. You may repeat the prayer, Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, like a parrot, but you don't know God is your Father. I did not know God is my Father.

I'll tell you honestly, I received Jesus Christ as my Savior in 1959, when I was 19 and a half years old. But for 16 years after that, 16 years after that, I was sincere, wholehearted. I avoided so many sins and all that, but I never knew this intimate relationship with God as my Father.

And so what was the result? I'll tell you what is the result in my life. I was frequently discouraged. I was very insecure.

I always wanted to prove myself to people that I was more than I really was. I wanted to act holier than I really was inside. When I preached, I was not seeking to help people.

I wanted to impress them. That's the mark of an insecure preacher. An insecure preacher is always interested in impressing, impressing how people are impressed by my message.

I was like that. I don't judge people. I mean, I was like that for years, but I got so fed up with that type of life.

And I said, Lord, you got to meet with me, and God met with me in a fresh way and filled me with the Holy Spirit. 16 years after I was converted, I had experienced that fullness before as well, but it was a renewal at that time. And then one of the things I said to the Lord when he filled me up fresh with the Holy Spirit was, I said, Lord, if this is a real infilling of the Spirit, when I read the Bible, I'm going to see things in it I've never seen before, even though I'd already read it for 16 years and studied it.

And I have to say I did. For example, I discovered that Jesus came not only to forgive my sins, but to save me from my sins. Sin shall not rule over you, for you're not under grace.

I never knew grace properly before that. I knew grace as forgiveness, but I never knew grace as help to overcome every sin, help to overcome my anger so I don't get angry again, help to overcome lusting after women so I don't lust with my eyes, help to overcome bitterness and complaining, and all the sins that plague Christians who claim to be born again. The Lord says in Jeremiah 29, you will seek me and find me when you search for me with all your heart, Jeremiah 29, 13.

And it's because I did not seek the Lord with all my heart to be free from sin in my inner life that I was defeated. I just accepted it as normal because people around me were sinning and it was normal. And I thought that's about the best there is in the Christian life, this endless cycle of sin, repent, ask forgiveness, be cleansed, sin again, repent, confess, and ask forgiveness and go endless, endless like this year after year after year.

If Christians are honest, I believe 90% of them will say that is their life. But I want to say that's not meant to be their life. Christians are slaves who should be kings.

They are bound who should be conquered. But I never knew that until I began to seek God with all my heart. You shall seek me and find me when you search for me with all your heart.

Think of the things we pursue on earth with all our heart. Think of businessmen who work day and night to improve their business and dream about it at night as to where they can open new stores, etc. Think of the growth of a stores like Walmart.

It started so small and people would dream to make it bigger, bigger, bigger. There was a passion. I don't find that type of passion among many Christians.

I've had a lot of Christians are just happy. They go to church on a Sunday and sing a few songs and live a reasonably good life, but defeated like everybody else in most areas. And they're very passionate about making more money.

That I've seen. It's very unfortunate, but it's the truth. There was an infidel in France in the 18th century called Voltaire.

He was an atheist. He didn't believe in God. And he looked around at the different denominations of Christianity.

There were in the 18th century Protestantism and Calvinism and Lutheranism and the Catholicism. And he looked at them and he said, he examined them and he said, they've all got different doctrines, these Christians in different groups. But when it comes to money, they've all got the same religion.

He said, they all run after it. This is an atheist observation of Christians. I want to ask you, if an atheist observed your life, would he say that you were different? Would he say that you were different? That's the challenge that came to me when I read that.

I said, if an atheist could look into my financial affairs and all my private life and everything else, would he say this Christian is different? He's not running out of money. Jesus said, there's only two gods, God and money, true God and money. When you know the father, you become secure because you know that God takes care of all your needs.

Wealth does not mean having a lot of money in the bank. The richest person in the universe is almighty God. He doesn't have a bank account.

He doesn't have a wallet, but he's the richest person in the universe. Why? Because he has no lack. He has no need of anything.

The richest person in the world is the one who has no lack and no need of anything and who's not hankering after something. God is not hankering after anything. And Jesus said, if you seek God's kingdom first in your life, you'll be like that.

You won't have to hanker after things, be worried about something, anxious about something. Everything you need will be added to you. Your life will be relaxed and secure because you know God is your father, because he knows that he loves you as he loved Jesus.

And when I look at Jesus' life, and I see it not only as his life, and I say, this is how God loves me. You remember the time when Jesus was speaking in the synagogue, and he had just begun his sermon, and they got so angry with his saying that God would bless the Gentiles as well, that they pulled him down from the pulpit and wanted to take him to the cliff in Nazareth. You read that in Luke chapter 4, to throw him down.

And all you read there is, I mean, how would you feel if 200 people grabbed you to throw you down a cliff? Jesus was so much at rest. You know what it says there? He just quietly walked through midst and went away. I said, God, my dad, you love me like that.

One day if 200 people grab me and want to throw me over a cliff, I want to have that confidence in you that you love me like you love Jesus, and I can walk through that midst without fear. There was never a time that Jesus was in a panic. There was never a situation where he had to scratch his head or say, oh, I wonder what I'm going to do now.

Because he was secure in the love of his Father. This is what it means to know God. This is what it means to know the Father.

And my dear brothers and sisters in Jesus Christ, let me tell you, this is your inheritance. This is how you're supposed to live. The devil has robbed you of your inheritance.

He's cheated you like some crooked lawyer, cheating you of your inheritance, and you're living at a much lower level when you shouldn't be living there. The Lord says to you today, come up higher. There's much more I have for you, my son, my daughter.

Don't let the devil rob you of what Christ purchased for you at such tremendous cost at Calvary. So I'm saying this because I lived so defeated so long, and I knew that to live a life of constant discouragement and depression was not God's will for me. To murmur and complain and to have demands on people and to be upset when those demands are not met was not the way God wanted me to live.

And I got fed up of it. If you're not fed up of it, you'll remain there. There's a story that Jesus once said about a widow.

You read that in Luke 18, who went to a judge and said, my enemy is taking advantage of me. I get the picture of a widow whose property, the neighbor was an enemy, was just encroaching more and more upon the property, moving the boundaries and taking over her land. And she didn't know what to do.

She had no male member in the house. So she goes pleading with the judge, you read in Luke 18, and bangs at his door, wakes him up at two o'clock in the morning and disturbs him, disturbs him. And the judge said, I'm not going to do anything.

Finally, he gets so upset that he's being disturbed by this widow. He's okay, I'll let me do something for her. And do you know what the widow pleaded for? Give me justice against my enemy.

Those are her words. She wasn't asking for anybody else's property. She was just saying, what is my property? Don't let the enemy take it away from me.

And Jesus said at the end of that, if an earthly judge can do that for a widow, don't you think your God will do that for those who cry day and night to him? Luke 18 and verse 7. Luke 18 verse 7. Shall not God bring about justice for his elect? That's you and me. Who cry to him. Why do they cry to him day and night? Because they are desperate to live a life that glorifies God.

And they look at their life and their inner life, their thought life, their home life. And they say, oh my father, it's not glorifying you. The enemy is taking advantage of me.

The enemy is coming into my home. The enemy is messing up my relationship with my wife and husband. The enemy is messing up my children.

The enemy is messing up so many things in my home. Give me justice. Will not your father give you justice if you cry day and night? Will he delay long over them? He will not.

Verse 8 says, Luke 18 verse 8, I tell you, he will bring about justice for them quickly. But when the son of man returns, will he find anybody with such faith on the earth? Will he find you like that? Who's got faith that my father in heaven will give me justice over my enemy Satan, that he will have no power over me or over my home or over my children. This is your inheritance.

This is what it means to know God as a father who fights for us, who cares for us. We're like little children. I mean, if a father sees his little two-year-old being beaten up by some big man, what will he do? He won't just sit back and watch it.

No, he will run to his defense. And I often think of myself, I'm 76, but I still think of myself as a two-year-old sitting on my heavenly father's lap. I say, Lord, I'm insecure without you, but perfectly secure when I'm sitting in your lap.

I always want to be there. I have a father in heaven. You have one, but you don't realize what a privilege it is.

He loves you as he loved Jesus. Everything that he did for Jesus, he will do for you. You remember how when Herod was planning to kill Jesus as a baby long before the soldiers could get there, God warned Joseph to take Jesus away from there.

You think God will warn you like that when the enemies of the gospel come to try and harm you? He's done that for me. I've experienced it exactly like that. Yes, if you trust God.

You know, the thing is, we cannot experience these things if you don't trust Him. If you think God is up there and He's not really bothered about all your problems and all the things you're going through, well, you won't experience it. According to your faith, be it unto you.

You don't believe that God loves you as you love Jesus. He will not do for you what He did for Jesus. Okay, according to your faith, be it unto you.

You'll be very, very miserable, but that's not the new covenant life. We can know God is a father who loves us as He loved Jesus and be secure like Jesus was. That's number one, to know God is a father.

Let me know the triune God secondly. I hope you're clapping because you've got gripped with that truth. And secondly, to know Jesus Christ.

What does it mean to know Jesus? It's an intimate knowledge of Jesus because it's like the first person in the trinity is our father. Jesus is described in the scriptures as our bridegroom. The relationship is like a husband to a wife.

It says in Romans 7 about our being married to Christ. That's a relationship in Ephesians 5 as well. Like a husband loves his wife, like Christ loved the church.

The relationship is so intimate. It's the closest relationship on earth, husband and wife. In other words, Jesus wants to be one with me, as intimate with me as a husband wants to be with his wife.

And just like a wife would share everything with her husband, the husband, it says about husbands that they must live in an understanding way with their wives, recognizing they are weaker vessels. I believe the Lord lives like that with me. He lives in an understanding way with me, knowing that I'm a weaker vessel.

And he cares for me, provides for me, and I can share everything with him. And we do everything together. That's the way a husband and wife should do it, together.

Sin came in the garden of Eden because Eve decided to do something on her own. A lot of problems when you start doing things on your own. The same thing in the Christian life.

So to know Jesus is to see that he wants me to work with him together. He says, take my yoke upon you and learn from me. And that's a picture from in the villages in India.

We see that frequently, a yoke upon two bullocks as they plow a field together. And I picture this, a senior bullock teaching an inexperienced new bullock how to plow a straight furrow. This is the picture I have of Jesus.

And the yoke is upon his neck and mine. And the Lord says, let's do it together. It's wonderful.

Everything the Lord says, don't try and do it alone. Let's do it together. You can do nothing without me.

Anything that you think you can do without me will finally amount to nothing. Paul says, I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me. He got under the yoke.

And that's one of the wonderful things I've discovered in everything. Take the matter of preaching. You see, I started preaching about 50 years ago, a little over 50 years ago.

But I remember in the early days, it was such a struggle to preach because I had to impress people. It's always a struggle when you have to impress people. And it was a struggle.

It was something like getting water out of a mostly dry well, drawing it up, pumping it up. But I read in the scripture that our life must be like rivers of living water flowing out from within. And I said, Lord, I want it like that.

And I realized that the Lord would help me. If he had not called me to be a preacher, of course, then he wouldn't help me to preach. He would help me to do whatever he called me to do.

If you're called to be a mother, he'll help you to be a mother. He'll work together with you to be a mother and be a first class mother of as many children as you have. In my case, he called me to be a preacher.

So he worked together with me. And I tell you, it's made all the difference in my life when I decided to work together with Jesus in sharing his word. I said, Lord, you know the people.

And I remember the Lord said to me as I was seeking how to be effective. The Lord said, first of all, you've got to love the people you're speaking to. If you despise any of them, I won't give you my word.

You've got to love them. You've got to love all of them, whether they are rich or poor or whatever their social level. However, whatever their understanding, lack of understanding, you've got to love them.

So if your heart is filled with love for my people and your heart is filled with my word, I will always give you a word for my people. And I've seen that through many, many, many years. So I want to say to all of you, whenever you share a word with someone, I don't mean just from a puppet, even if you're talking to someone who's visiting your home and you want to help them or counsel them.

Here's the first thing. Fill your heart with God's word. That's something you've got to do consistently.

Every day meditate on God's word and let it fill your heart. And then love the person you're serving. If your heart is filled with God's word and filled with love, Jesus will work with you and your service will be a cooperative service.

It won't be all alone. You'll never do it alone. God, I want to tell all of you, dear brothers and sisters, that there's nothing in your life that the Lord wants you to do alone.

Everything, even your secular work. The Lord wants you to bring him along and work with him. He will help you in your secular work too.

One of the wonderful things I discovered after seeking God like this, I discovered in scripture that Jesus loved me so much. We already saw how much the Father loved us. Jesus loved me so much that he became a man just like me and was tempted just like me in order to be an example to me.

That is an amazing truth. You know, I feel if you look at earth from heaven, earth will look like a slum, a filthy, dirty slum or a sewer. That's what this earth looks like because it's so full of sin.

And here we are living in this, in the midst of this muck. And for the Lord to love me so much to come and live in this muck just like me and live a pure life so that he can be an example to me, it's amazing love. And the Lord says, I did that to show you that it's possible in the midst of that muck and filth all around you to live in purity.

That's the thing that really helped me. I'll tell you my honest testimony there. Like I said earlier, I was defeated in so many areas, even after being born again for so many years.

And I was ashamed to let people know it, just like many of you are defeated, but ashamed to let people know it about how you're defeated in your home life and your language and your thoughts and everything else and your attitudes to people and the murmuring and complaining and grumbling and many, many other things. I was like that. But I said, Lord, I know this is not the way I'm supposed to live because nevermind people don't see it.

Maybe I can keep a good front before people and impress them that I'm living a pretty good life. But who am I fooling? I read in the book of Job, which I believe is the first book of the Bible. Job lived 500 years before Moses, who wrote Genesis.

So Job is the first book of the Bible. And what I read in the book of Job is not what people thought about Job. Well, what did Satan think about him? You know, when God was talking to Satan, and I can imagine Satan was saying, God, look at all those hypocrites on earth who claim your name, but look at the way they live.

And God said, that's right. But have you seen Job? There was one man he could point out to Satan. And Satan had observed Job's life so carefully.

And that's what I discovered. The important thing is not my testimony before people, my testimony before Satan, when God can point me out to Satan and say, have you seen him? Have you seen the way he lives? Have you seen how he lives at home? Have you seen how he speaks to his wife? Have you seen how he handles money? Have you seen how he handles the different trials in life? You don't see that. Most of us see only 10% of each other's life.

It's very easy to impress others with 10%, because 90% they don't see. And very often we are thankful they don't see the 90%, because we can keep up that front. But you know, the devil sees, except our thought life, the devil sees 100% of our life.

And are you satisfied that people have a good opinion about you? When the devil can keep on taunting God about you and saying, that person who appears so holy in church, God, see how he's living at home. See how he handles money in the office. See how he gets upset when everybody else is having road rage on the road.

He's also having road rage. What's the difference between him and all the others? You think the devil doesn't see that? You think you're alone in that car? No. The devil's watching you.

Why? He's not watching you for any other reason than to point you out to God and say, you claim that that person is your child. But he's behaving just like any rotten old unbeliever. Devil said, just like one of my children.

What's the difference between him and your child, your children and mine? Look at the way he behaves. And I say, Lord, I don't want to bring dishonor to your name. The prophet Nathan once came to David and said, because you committed sin with Bathsheba, the expression he used there in second Samuel, verses 11 and 12 is, you have given great occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme.

You have given great occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme. Of course, he was only talking about earthly enemies. But I've often thought of that expression in relation to my life.

The enemies of the Lord, today we are living in a spiritual realm, in the heavenly places, the demons and the devil. Is there anything I do in secret, in private, which gives the enemies of the Lord occasion to blaspheme and say, God, this guy claims to be your son. Not only that, he claims to be a preacher.

Look at the way he lives. Look at the way he speaks. I don't want to do it.

And Jesus, therefore, became a man like me, tempted like me in every area, so that he could be an example for me. Turn with me to Hebrews in chapter 4 and verse 15. It's talking about Jesus as a high priest.

Hebrews 4.15. We don't have a high priest who cannot sympathize with us. In other words, we have a high priest who can sympathize with us in our struggles, in our weaknesses. You know where we are weak? In temptation.

That's the area where we are maximum weak. But he was tempted, listen to this, in all things as we are. Little expression, tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin.

If you can remember that and be gripped by it. Tempted in all things, not just tempted in all things, as we are, yet without sin. Everything I'm tempted with, he was tempted with.

Not only that, in the same way I am tempted and he did not sin. The next verse, verse 16. Therefore what? Very important to know.

Therefore, let us also draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we can receive mercy, which is forgiveness for our past sins, which Jesus didn't need. But find the same grace to help us in our time of temptation, in our time of need. Memorize these two verses, Hebrews 4, 15 and 16.

I'll tell you in my life, these are the verses that led me to a life of victory over sin. When I discovered that Jesus was tempted exactly like me, to know Jesus. We must know the Father and know the Son.

And I want to know Jesus as one who was tempted like me. So as a young man, when I came into this discovery, I was around 35 then, tempted with all the passions of young men at that age. And when I was tempted, I would say, Lord Jesus, when you were in Nazareth as a young teenager, or in your early 20s, you were tempted just like I am being tempted now.

I want to know what you did. And I want to do the same thing, because you overcame. You got help from the Father.

I want the same help from the Father, in any temptation. And I want to say to you, my dear brothers and sisters, that you should not give in and say there's no hope. There's no way of coming into a victorious life.

There is. The devil has robbed you of an inheritance here. Jesus Christ, your Savior, came to earth as a man just like you, not just to die for our sins.

That's one part of his ministry, but to be an example to us, so that in our daily life, when we are tempted, we can say, Lord, you were tempted. You can sympathize with me in my weakness. And you have set an example for me.

What does it mean when it says, let us run this race looking unto Jesus, Hebrews 12, verse 1 and 2, the author and finisher of our faith, who carried the cross every day, and finally reached the throne of God. What does that mean in Hebrews 12, 1 and 2? Let us run the race looking unto Jesus. Looking unto Jesus what? Not just one who's at the throne of God now, but before that, it says there, who endured the cross on earth in the time of temptation.

He denied himself, and he says to us, follow me. There's a lot of difference between believing in him and following him. The word that he used most frequently was, follow me, follow me.

So let me use an example. Supposing an angel from heaven came to earth, wanted to teach us swimming in a swimming pool, and he flies across and says, follow me. I'd say, hang on, I can't do that.

That's very impressive. I can admire you, but I can't follow you. So if I look at Jesus living a perfect life without being tempted by me, without being pulled down by temptation, I would have to say, I can admire you, Lord, but I can't follow you because you are not like me.

You lived on earth as God, who can never be tempted, who can never sin. But was he like that? God cannot be tempted, it says in James 1. It says very clearly in Scripture, Jesus was tempted. He didn't give up deity.

He was a God on earth. That's why people worshiped him, and he accepted it. But he gave up the privileges of God.

He never used them. He never used his heavenly credit card to get something for himself on earth. He lived like us, with our limitations, so that he could be an example for us and say, I use only the resources you have.

And I overcame, I overcame anger, I overcame bitterness, I overcame murmuring, complaining, lusting with the eyes, love of money, jealousy, everything. And you can also, according to your faith, be done to you. So that's what we see in Jesus as our example.

There's a little hymn that I wrote when I was gripped by this truth. Can you put it up there when these truths gripped my heart? When bowed with burdens and with care, your soul is in despair. You don't have to fear.

God is very near. He loves you as he loved his son, and he will help you too. Just trust his word of promise, and he will see you through.

And then the chorus, this is the good news. Good news means gospel. This is the good news, what God can do.

What he did for Jesus, he'll do for you. With mighty power, he'll strengthen you. There is no end to what God can do.

And then the next verse, though sin and evil fill this world, and you are overcome, yet God's word is true. Romans 6 14, sin cannot reign over you. And when temptations pull us strong, God's grace will be your stay, so you can walk like Jesus in victory every day.

And the next verse, when pain and sickness, even our physical needs, God cares for us. When pain and sickness come to you and touch your loved ones too, God knows how you feel. He has power to heal.

Your father will provide your need. He's faithful, and he's true. And listen to this wonderful truth, and as he cared for Jesus, he will care for you.

And then the last verse, what a glorious comfort this, if you have come to know Jesus, not only as your Lord, but your elder brother too. For all God has is now your own, and he won't let you go. And now that God is for you, who can be your foe? God, I was inspired to write that hymn by this truth that gripped my heart, that God loves me as he loved Jesus.

He'll do for me what he did for Jesus. He'll care for me as he cared for Jesus, that Jesus is not only my Lord, but my elder brother. This is the new covenant, and I want to really urge all of you to enter into this.

Then thirdly, to know God, know Jesus is the Son of God, and to know the Holy Spirit. Why do you think there's so much confusion concerning the baptism in the Holy Spirit, or the fullness of the Holy Spirit, or the ministry of the Holy Spirit, and christened them today? Why so much counterfeit? Because the original is very valuable. People don't make counterfeit brown paper or toilet paper.

People make counterfeit gold, counterfeit diamonds, counterfeit... I don't think anybody even bothers making a counterfeit one dollar bill, only a hundred dollar bill. See, people don't make counterfeits of something which is cheap and worthless. They make counterfeits of what is valuable.

So if there are people say, oh, there's such a lot of counterfeit gifts of the Spirit. Ah, then the original must be really valuable. Sure.

I was turned off from so much of the ministry of the Holy Spirit in my younger days as a born-again Christian, because I saw extremes. I saw people who talked about the gifts of the Spirit, and they were such lovers of money. I said, they can't be servants of God.

No. I saw a lot of people who speak in tongues, who would just be demanding money from their poor congregation. Their focus is always on money.

And I said, that cannot be. I mean, your focus is on money when you're unconverted. But when you're filled with the Spirit, you've got to be more like Jesus.

And Jesus never spoke about money. It's amazing. So I got turned off from a lot of these things about people who talked about the Holy Spirit and counterfeit gifts.

And when people said they were speaking in tongues, it just appeared to me like a little babbling, two or three syllables back and forth. And I got completely turned off. And after many years of my own defeated life, I saw that the answer was in the Holy Spirit.

The Lord said to me, don't let your understanding of truth come as a reaction to the extremes of error that you see in others. But let it come from your study of the New Testament. So I realized my understanding of the Holy Spirit's ministry was coming as a reaction to the extremes of error I saw in certain groups and certain people.

So I decided to go to the Scriptures. And I saw a weak person like Peter, who would deny Jesus even before a sermon go, suddenly transformed into a powerful apostle and pointing his finger at the chief priests and saying, you denied the Holy One. I said, Lord, I want that type of boldness.

And I began to seek God for the baptism in the Holy Spirit. Baptism just means immersion. There are two ways you can be immersed.

One is in a tank or a river. You go down and baptize in water. The other is if you stand under a waterfall, you get immersed as well.

So the Holy Spirit's picture like a waterfall. And this is what Jesus said. This is the last words to his apostles before he went away.

Wait till you're endued with power from on high. You shall receive power. So I wasn't seeking particularly for any gift except prophecy, which is preaching God's Word, which I wanted to because that's what God called me to.

But I said, Lord, I want power. I want power. And I began to seek God.

And I had this unbelief, this thing at the back of my head, unbelief, wondering whether God would give it to me. And I was praying with a brother and he said to me, Zach, it's unthinkable that God would call you to serve him and refuse to give you his power. It was a simple statement like that.

Delivered me from my unbelief more than 40 years ago. And I said, thank you, Lord, I believe. I believe you'll baptize me in the Holy Spirit, fill me with the Holy Spirit right now.

And he did. And I believed and I thanked him. He also gave me the gift of tongues to speak, to communicate with God.

I use it only in private as a private love language between me and my Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ. But I found a great release in my ministry as well. And I discovered that to try and serve God without the anointing and the baptism in the Holy Spirit is like thinking that I can do it.

And it's not something this is another area where I disagreed with a lot of my dear Pentecostal fellow believers. And that is it's not a once for all event. I discovered just like you need to fill your gas tank in the car regularly, not that it was 10 years ago.

I need to be filled with the Holy Spirit all the time. So I see God every day to be filled with the Holy Spirit. And the Holy Spirit makes me sensitive.

The Holy Spirit is the third person of the Trinity on earth, just like the second person of the Trinity was on earth for 33 and a half years. The second person of the Trinity right now is in heaven. The first person of the Trinity is in heaven.

The third person of the Trinity is the one on earth right now. And he wants to come into all our lives. We've all received Christ.

And when you receive Christ, the Spirit of Christ, the Holy Spirit comes in, but into one room, the guilt room, where he removes the guilt of our sin through the blood of Jesus Christ. But then there are other rooms in our heart. For example, he knocks at the door and says, can I enter into your television room and sit with you and tell you what programs to watch and what not to watch? Can I look through your DVDs and ask you to throw away certain movies that you shouldn't be having in your home? And you say, Lord, please don't come into that room.

It's a bit embarrassing. Just forgive my sin. The guilt room, I want you to flood that with light.

Okay. He's a gentleman. He will not walk in where he is not welcome.

Then he says, can I come into your finances room and check up how you're earning your money? Is it all upright and righteous? And not only that, I want to see, are you generous with your money or you're miserly and tight-fisted? And you say, Lord, don't come in there because I'm embarrassed about some of the things you may discover. Can I look through your library, the Lord says, and the type of magazines and the books you read. You say, no, Lord, don't come in there.

We have shut so many doors in our heart and cry out, Oh God, fill me with the Holy Spirit. You won't be filled in a hundred years because you bolted so many doors. But if you open those doors, the Holy Spirit's more than eager to come flooding them.

That's the reason why so many people pray and pray and pray and pray, nothing happens. Or they get some emotional experience, some tickle down the spine and say, I got it. What did you get? If you really got it, you'd be more like Christ in the coming year.

And your wife will say, darling, you've become more Christ-like in the last one year. What happened? That is a test. The Holy Spirit glorifies Christ and makes us like him.

Thank you for listening, brothers and sisters. I pray that you will know God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen.

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