

The Breath of God

by Zac Poonen

The sermon emphasizes the importance of being born again and having the Holy Spirit come into our lives to make us different from the world around us.

Duration: 44:14

Scripture: Psalm 23:1, Isaiah 55:1, Matthew 6:33, John 4:14, John 7:37, Romans 8:37, Hebrews 12:2

Topics: "Deeper Life"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the importance of trusting in God rather than relying on the government for security. He contrasts the situation in Canada, where the government provides support, with India, where there is no such assistance. The speaker shares a personal story of giving away all his savings and experiencing freedom as a result. He also emphasizes the significance of reading the Bible slowly and allowing God to speak to us through specific verses. The sermon concludes with a reference to Jesus breathing on his disciples, drawing a parallel to Adam receiving a conscience in the old creation.

Transcript

It's a great joy for me to be here. The only reason I'm here today is because Jeremy and Ethan came so frequently to our conferences, all the way, driving all the way to Colorado and Pennsylvania. And I heard today he even came to Kent when Ethan was just seven weeks old.

And I felt that, boy, if someone travels that distance, I've really got to go and see the church. So, God's ways are amazing. And I praise God for those who have a hunger for his word.

You know, a lot of people think that anyone can come to Jesus. It's true. He said in John 6, 37, If anyone comes to me, I will not cast him out.

That's a great verse. It's the verse that gave me assurance of salvation 52 years ago. Though I grew up in a family where my father would send me to a church where I could hear about being born again, I really never knew whether Christ had come into my life or not.

I was told as a little child to ask Jesus to come into my heart. I must have done that 500 times, but I never knew. Did he really come? How do I know? And I think that's the experience of a lot of people brought up in God-fearing families.

We teach our children at an early age to receive Jesus as their Lord. And I wandered in that doubt for maybe six years. And then one day I was reading, and I was 19 and a half.

I read just this one verse, John 6, 37, The one who comes to me, I will certainly not cast out. And I said, Lord, I've come. I must have come about 500 times.

He said, I didn't cast you out. It was as simple as that from that verse. And it's amazing.

What was it that made a difference in my life that day? I used to read the Bible regularly, pray, but something happened. That's why I believe even faith is a gift of God. I had faith that day to believe that verse.

For me, it was like an anchor that I dropped that day that has never shaken in all my up and down experiences since then. I never doubted. Thank you, brother.

I never doubted that Christ had accepted me. And then I came from an Orthodox church that was sprinkled as a little baby, which they call baptism. And it took me about a year and a half after that to be convinced that there was no such thing as child baptism in Scripture, that I had to be baptized by immersion.

The word baptism itself in Greek meant immersion. It was a Greek word. So that year and a half later, I obeyed the Lord in water baptism.

And that, again, was a very significant step for me because I was the first person in my family to be baptized in water. I came to it through reading the Scriptures and seeing that this was what God wanted me to do. And it didn't matter what my church background taught about it.

It didn't matter if other people in my family were not baptized. I had to obey God. And I found a significant development in my life from that point onwards because God began to show me other things.

The next thing he showed me was restitution, like Zacchaeus. I thought back to things I had to set right in my life. I had cheated the government of taxes in my previous life, my unconverted days, and I totaled it all up.

And, you know, I tried to calculate and make it the minimum possible. And I was tossing around in my mind two figures. Should I pay this much or this much? And one figure was about 20% more than the other.

And, you know, a human tendency is always to take the lower figure to pay back restitution. Till I read one day in the book of Numbers that when a man makes restitution, he's got to add 20% to what he had to give. It was such a direct word to my heart.

I said, Lord, it's amazing how you speak to me so specifically in these matters. So that took me many months of working to earn that much money. A number of months I saved up that amount, and one day I emptied my bank account and gave it all back.

My bank account was empty and my heart was full. I was free. These little things, another thing the Lord told me then was that when I was a little boy about 10, 12 years old, I used to collect stamps.

And we used to exchange stamps with others, and I had stolen a stamp from another boy 10 years earlier. I'm sure I'd stop collecting stamps, and he'd stop collecting stamps too, I'm sure. And the Lord told me to write a letter of apology to him.

Now that sounded so stupid, to write a letter of apology for stealing one worthless stamp 10 years earlier. But I think what the Lord was testing me on was whether I would humble myself to obey him. I'll tell you, that was a little more difficult than paying back all those thousands of rupees that I owed.

But I did it. I said, Lord, I'm going to do it. Now when I look back, I see that if I hadn't done those couple of little things then, I would have been dragging a chain on my feet all these years.

Sometimes the Lord tells us a little thing, go and apologize to that person. You hurt that person by what you said, go and humble yourself and ask forgiveness. One of the things the Lord's made very clear to me, see God's given us a conscience.

It's the thing that distinguishes us from the animals. God made the animals on the same day as he made man. I thought about that.

Why didn't God finish up with the rest of creation by five days and makes the sixth day special just for man? After all, man was the crown of God's creation. And he had made the fish and all in the previous day. He could have made the animals the previous day too.

I said, why did he mess it up by making animals on the same day as man? It was only years later that I understood. Man is not like the fish of the sea. There's a lot of difference between us and the fish in the sea, in our physical being.

But there's a lot of similarity between man and the chimpanzees and even dogs and all the internal organs. There's so much similarity between man and animals. We're made of the same dust.

And once animals and man are dead and buried, years later it's the same dust. You can't make out which is the animal or the man. And the internal organs are so similar.

And I felt that the reason why the Lord made man the same day as the animals was to tell him that the... And he breathed into... He didn't breathe into the animals. I mean, they had breath by themselves when they were created or when they were made. But when God made man, he didn't have breath.

He was just a clay model. And it says God breathed into him and he suddenly became a living soul. And the message I got from that was it's only that breath of God that makes us different from the animals.

That's the only thing. And that's what gave Adam a conscience. And if I don't live by my conscience, I'm going to be like an animal.

Just like the animals. That's why you see human beings around. Any person, even if he calls himself a Christian, he can sit in a church and give other people a good impression.

But if he's not sensitive to the voice of his conscience, which is a result of the breath of God coming into him, which made him a living soul and gave him a spirit, which no animal has. If he ignores that, it's just a matter of time before he begins to behave like an animal, bark at his wife or husband like animals. That's what we see all around.

And so, I realized that this very precious gift God's given me, my conscience, first of all. And I have to be very, very careful to listen to the voice of conscience. And that's something that through the years, God's kept on reminding me of, and even today, all the time.

And when the Holy Spirit comes into us, when we are born again, and we yield ourselves completely to the Lord and are filled with the Holy Spirit, that conscience becomes even more sensitive. Because way back in the beginning, you read in Genesis 1 that God breathed into Adam, and he became a living soul. And the same God, the second person of the Trinity, Jesus, who was there in Eden, breathing into Adam, you read on the day of the resurrection, the first day of the week, on the day he rose up from the dead, he came into the midst of his disciples in John chapter 20.

And when he came into their midst, he said, it says in John, Gospel chapter 20, he, after he had said, peace be unto you, John 20 verse 22, he breathed on them. This is exactly what he did to Adam, way back, 4,000 years earlier. But now, that was the beginning of the old creation.

Adam got a conscience. He didn't have the Holy Spirit. He had a conscience.

That conscience is what made him feel guilty when he disobeyed God in eating the forbidden tree, from the forbidden tree, and his wife had a bad conscience too. It's what made them realize, hey, we're naked, and they try to cover themselves. But this was more, this was one step higher.

When he breathed on these disciples, he said, receive the Holy Spirit. This was leading them to a higher level. So I compare this with what was there in Genesis 1, where God, that includes Jesus, the second person of the Trinity, he was not known as Jesus then, breathed on Adam, that immediately raised Adam above the level of all the animals who were created on the same day.

I mean, let's look at even the worst of human beings. He's so much better than an animal. Anybody would say that.

What's the difference between a human being and an animal, even the best of animals? The difference is amazing. What's the difference between a man and a dog? A good dog, a good cat. It's tremendous, the difference between a man.

What is it that made that difference? The breath of God that came into Adam. Now apply that to John chapter 20. Jesus breathes on his disciples and says, receive the Holy Spirit.

You know what I get from that? The difference between me and a human being who has not received the Holy Spirit should be as great as the difference between man and animal. You got it? The difference between me and a man who has not received the Holy Spirit should be as great as the difference between any man and an animal. That's what I need to ask myself.

When I'm really born again, I receive the Holy Spirit. We can't be born again without the Holy Spirit. If you haven't got the Holy Spirit, I don't know, I don't think you're really born again.

You may have said the words, Lord Jesus come into my heart, but God hasn't breathed into you. That's why you find so many people who claim to be believers, but you look at their life and they behave just like other ordinary human beings. You look into their homes, the husbands and wives are fighting just like in any other home of people who don't even claim to be born again.

That's like a man living at the level of an animal. It's like that. What difference did the breath of God make to Adam from all the animals who were created in the same day? Boy, what a difference there was in him.

He was intelligent. He had a sensitive conscience. If the animals disobeyed, they don't get convicted in their conscience.

The animal can train a dog to feel guilt, but it doesn't naturally feel any guilt. And if there is to be such a difference between man and animals, we need to ask ourselves, we who claim to have become part of this new creation, if any man be in Christ, 2nd Corinthians 5, 17, he's a new creation. Behold, old things are passed away and all things are become new.

Something like telling Adam, hey, you're different man. I know your body is made of the same dust as those animals you see, but you're different. You're way above those animals.

You're made in the image of God. That's what we need to see, the real new creation. Our life must be so different from the lives of unbelievers around us, as anybody can distinguish the difference between man and animals.

You know how you would be, imagine if you had a child who was always wanting to live in the pigsty, dry, dirty, and move around with pigs. You'd be terribly grieved and never seems to grow up from that. I believe that's the way God is grieved when he sees people who claim to be his children living at the level of other human beings.

It's a very common excuse that a lot of Christians say, well, after all, we are human. The very common expression whenever a believer falls into something or does something wrong, he says, well, after all, we are human. It's like Adam saying, well, after all, we are animals.

That's what the people who believe in evolution believe, that man's just an animal. Maybe a little higher level than the chimpanzee. Isn't that what the people who believe in evolution believe? That man just developed from the chimpanzee.

He's a little higher level than the chimpanzee is above the donkey. The monkey's got a little better brains than the donkey and man's got a little better brains than the monkey. That's about it.

Is it just an improved level that man is above animals or a totally different creation? I don't know whether you've noticed this, but in Genesis, there are two words. One is for created and the other is made. God created the heavens and the earth in a moment and the earth got corrupted by the sin of the angels who became Lucifer.

And then God made many things, but when it came to man, it says God created man, Genesis 1.27, in his own image. There was something in man that was created. The animals, their body was made from the dust and man's body was made from the dust, but that's something inside man that was created.

In the same way, in the new covenant, there's something special created in me by the Holy Spirit, which no unconverted human being has. That's what makes me, if I'm really born again, and especially if I've yielded my life and I'm like, the Bible says, baptized in the Holy Spirit and fire. See, I'm sorry that so many people have such a prejudice against the term, the baptism in the Holy Spirit and fire.

And I'll tell you why. Because that term has been so counterfeited and abused by many of our dear Pentecostal charismatic friends. I'm not a Pentecostal charismatic.

I'm not against them. The only one I'm against is the devil. But I disagree with them.

That's all I say. But I believe in being baptized in the Holy Spirit and fire because John the Baptist said, this Jesus, he said two things about Jesus. In John 1, he said, the Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world.

Remember, he was the forerunner. And in Matthew 3.11, he said, he who baptizes in the Holy Spirit and fire. The two ministries that the forerunner of Jesus said about Jesus, he is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.

And he baptizes in the Holy Spirit and fire. And so, I say, Lord, I want both. If you came to take away my sin, I want that.

You're my Lamb of God. And if you baptize people in the Holy Spirit and fire, I want it. You see, this word baptism, unfortunately, has become a very religious word.

And that's why there's so much confusion. Because it's not originally an English word. And if you go to folks in my country who have never been exposed to a Bible, 98% of India is non-Christian.

And they haven't read the Bible. They don't know these religious words that Christians use. But many of them know English very well.

Now, if you were to go to them who know English very well, whose English may be better than yours, and tell them, you know the meaning of baptism? They'd say, I never heard the word. It's not an English word. That's true.

In secular English, there's no such thing as baptism. It's a Greek word, baptizo, which has been imported into the English language and converted into an English word. And all it means in the Greek language is immersed.

So, if we have a prejudice against that word baptism, let's eliminate that word and let's say immersed. That Jesus will immerse me in the Holy Spirit. Just like I'm immersed in water, in water baptism.

The other way is to stand under a waterfall. If you went and stood under the Niagara, you'd be immersed thoroughly with this waterfall falling on you. This is a greater waterfall than Niagara.

The river of God that you read of in Revelation 22 is a picture of the Holy Spirit that flows from the throne of God down upon earth. And under this waterfall, if I stand, I'm immersed in the Holy Spirit. This is one of the things Jesus came to do.

Nobody could have that immersion in the Old Testament. Just like there was no water baptism in the Old Testament, there was no immersion in the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament. The Holy Spirit just came upon a few people for a particular task but never changed their inner lives.

Samson, for example, he had a tremendous power of the Holy Spirit to tear lions to pieces, to kill 300 Philistines with the jawbone of an ass. But when it came to the lion of lust inside his heart, he couldn't overcome that. One Delilah was stronger than 300 Philistines.

What did that prove? David was anointed by King Saul. He could kill Goliath. But when he saw Bathsheba, he was defeated.

There's something in those people there. The Holy Spirit came upon them to do a mighty task on the outside but it couldn't help them inside. Elijah, such an anointing, they could bring fire down from heaven.

But when one woman, Jezebel, threatened him, the guy got scared and ran for his life and sat under a tree and said, Oh God, I'm fed up with life. Take me away from here. Imagine, can you imagine Elijah running from threat of a woman, a man who could stand against 850 false prophets? You see, the Holy Spirit didn't come inside these great prophets and deliver them from depression and discouragement and fear, fear of a woman threatening.

It would suddenly act bold in the presence of 850 prophets and run at the threat of one woman. This is how it was in the Old Testament. But I can't imagine Jesus doing that.

Jesus didn't run at the threat of any woman or any man. In fact, when Pilate, the most powerful man, the Roman representative in Jerusalem, said to Jesus, Don't you know that I've got power to crucify you or release you? Jesus was calm. He wasn't scared like Elijah.

I think he smiled back at Pilate and said, You don't have any power over me, sorry, unless my father gives it to you. The only power you have over me is what's given you from above. That was a dignity there.

Dear brothers and sisters, this is the calmness, serenity, and power that the Holy Spirit can bring into your life. Whatever trying circumstances you face, the threats of men or the threats of circumstances or recession, it's easy to find our security in a country like Canada, in the fact that the government will always take care of us if we run out of money. You don't really have to trust God.

The government is good enough. But if you live in a country like India, the government doesn't take care of you. Nothing.

If you're poor, you're poor. If you starve, you starve. There are no food stamps, there's no social security, because the population is so huge.

Did you know that in India a child is born every second? That's right. By the time I finish speaking, 3,000 babies would have been born in India. It's so huge, the government will get bankrupt if it tries to provide for every needy person.

Man, we got already 1,200 million people. So, when believers in India in our poor villages are stuck, there's only one place they can turn, to God. And that's better to turn to God.

God is more reliable than any government. So, don't feel sorry for the people who are in those poor circumstances. They probably feel sorry for you.

You don't have such opportunities to trust God as they have, because you have another source to fall back on. So, the Holy Spirit brings such a wonderful, calm and peace. Now, that's what makes those believers in our village churches different from the other human beings in those village churches, who, when they get into a similar situation, they're in a panic.

They complain against people. They complain against their circumstances. And just like there's a difference between Adam and the animals, there's a difference between these believers and the other

human beings, because they've got the Holy Spirit within.

They're baptized in the Holy Spirit. They're not just strengthened for a ministry. They've got the Holy Spirit within, empowering them from within.

Oh, it's such a wonderful gift. Any man be in Christ, he's a new creation. Jesus breathed on them and said, Receive the Holy Spirit.

And, when, just before he went to the cross, before he had breathed on them, he had told them about the coming of the Holy Spirit. He said in words like this in John 14, he says, I'm going to ask the Father when I go up to heaven, in a few days I'll be ascending to heaven. And when I go up to heaven, the very first thing I'm going to ask the Father is to send the Holy Spirit.

John 14 and verse 16. I will ask the Father and he will give you another helper. It's called a helper, comforter, strengthener, advocate.

There's many translations of that word. Another person to come alongside me, to help me, to strengthen me, so that I never have to face a situation in my life. The meaning of that word in the original is someone called alongside to help.

You know, it's like if I have to carry a very heavy load or push a very heavy cart up a mountain and a muscular man comes along and says, hey, Zack, I'll help you. And he pushes it and does 99% of the pushing. And I just got to put my little finger there.

I say, I hope you'll never leave me. This is great having you here. That's the Holy Spirit.

And I'll tell you something, very easy to grieve him when he's no longer there. He says, don't grieve the Holy Spirit. Every burden, every trial, every circumstance, every temptation.

Some temptations are so difficult to overcome, particularly for young teenagers, young men in their 20s, and even married men. To overcome the temptation to lust in our heart, sexually, immorally, it is a very, very difficult thing to do, particularly in the world in which we live today. I tell you, it is impossible to conquer it unless you have this helper who comes alongside and says, I'll help you.

I'll give you the strength to resist this. God won't protect us from temptation and trial because that's the way we're made strong. Why did God allow the Israelites to face so many enemies in the Old Testament? If you read the Old Testament history of Israel, right from the time they left Egypt in Exodus chapter 17, immediately, they face Amalek, the enemy.

That's just after they left Egypt. They're a bunch of ragged slaves and they've got 600,000 slaves. They haven't got any training in military warfare or anything.

And they're going to fight this trained enemy, the army of Amalek. And they overcame him. And do you know how they overcame him? Moses would stand on the mountain and lift up his hand and pray and Joshua would defeat the Amalek.

And every time Moses dropped his hand down, Amalek would win. And then Moses would lift up his hand again and Joshua would win. And he was tired.

So it says, Aaron and Hur lifted up Moses' hands and then Amalek was thoroughly routed. Yeah, a bunch of ragged slaves defeated a trained army. That wasn't their strength.

It was so obvious. The moment Moses' hands dropped, the enemy won. It was 100% dependent upon God.

That's what he was trying to teach them. You can overcome enemy, any enemy, if you depend on me. But you don't.

You'll never win. It's entirely dependent on you're seeking my help. And the entire history of Israel, all the way from there to the Babylonian captivity, the end of 2nd Chronicles, the entire history of Israel and all those 1500 BC up to 600 BC, 900 years, it's a history of battle, battle, battle.

That's all you read in the two books of Kings and Chronicles. One enemy would come and another enemy would come. Sometimes Israel would win.

Some Judah would win. Sometimes we defeated entirely dependent on whether they leaned upon God or they leaned upon themselves. And the same today.

Just like God allowed those enemies to come against Israel, make them dependent upon God so that they wouldn't trust in their own strength and Israel would become strong and have faith that with God's help we can overcome any enemy. We read of a time in 2nd Chronicles where a million people came against the Israelites in the days of Asa, the king. And he defeated them.

But later on, the man got so proud that when another enemy came against a much smaller enemy, you read about that in 2nd Chronicles chapter 15 or something it is, he didn't trust God that time. He went and sought help from some of his neighbors and he got defeated. That's when a prophet came to him and told him, You remember that old time when those million people came against you and you defeated them? Why didn't you trust God this time? And that's the place where we have this beautiful verse in 2nd Chronicles 16.9 which you probably know.

The eyes of the Lord move to and fro throughout the whole earth to show himself strong, to support strongly those whose hearts are completely his. It was said in that context, 2nd Chronicles chapter 16. That means, now many people misread that verse.

They read it as though the eyes of the Lord are going to and fro throughout the whole earth looking for those whose hearts are completely his. That's not what it says. He doesn't have to look because he already knows whose hearts are completely his.

He doesn't have to search. God doesn't search for anything. He's not looking to find out whose hearts are completely mine.

He already knows it. But what it says there is, he already knows those whose hearts are completely his, 2nd Chronicles 16.9. He's looking around to see how can I support this child of mine in this place and this place and this place and this place. He wants to support him all over the world.

And the eyes of the Lord move through and fro throughout the whole earth that he may strongly support those whose hearts are completely his. I've often told, you know, in our Indian culture, in our Indian culture, boys and girls are not supposed to meet together and talk to each other. Traditional Indian culture

is supposed to be separate.

And lot of young men have a question then, how in the world if I cannot court or, I mean, dating is out of the question, not even court or talk to a person privately, how in the world will I ever be able to find out if someone is suited for me to be my wife? This is the verse I quote for them. I said, do you think your God is a prisoner of any culture? They didn't have courting and dating in the first century. How did God provide partners for them? How did God pick out Joseph for Mary? The eyes of the Lord move through and fro throughout the whole earth and I said, God can bring somebody from the other side of the earth to be your wife or husband if you trust Him.

It all depends on whether your heart is completely His. If your heart is completely His, nothing is impossible for God. His eyes will move through and fro throughout the whole earth to support you.

So in the New Testament, God allows us to face difficult situations, trials, temptations, difficulties and the whole purpose is just like in the Old Testament to see where are you going to turn for help? Are you going to turn to God or are you going to turn to man? That's the question. Don't misunderstand me. I'm not saying that if the government helps you, you should refuse it.

Get all the help you can because the earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof means everything on the earth belongs to God in any case. All the money belongs to God. It's just God's money that's coming to you in any case.

We don't cheat, we don't steal but everything that we can legally receive, we receive but my dependence should not be on man. I, in no area must our dependence be on man for anything. God may use men to help us but we never depend on man.

We depend on the Holy Spirit who stands there to help us in every situation. There is no problem that God cannot solve. One of the great messages I get from the Gospels is this.

I never see a single person coming to Jesus with any problem under the sun that puts Jesus in a fix and says, hey, I don't know how to solve that one. Never. It doesn't matter what it is.

It could be a storm in the middle of the lake. It could be not enough food at a wedding. It could be sickness, death.

It doesn't matter what the problem is. Anything. Every single time I see the Lord's got a solution.

Sometimes His disciples don't have a solution. One man had a demon possessed son and he brought, he comes to Jesus and says, Lord, I brought this son of mine to your disciples. They couldn't do anything.

Lord says, that's okay. Bring him to me. That has been a tremendous encouragement to me.

A message I get right across from Matthew, Mark, Luke and John is that there's no situation, circumstance, trial, problem where Jesus doesn't know what to do. He says, bring him to me. Bring the problem to me.

I'll handle it. I never see him scratching his head and saying, I don't know what to do here. And the Bible says he's the same yesterday, today and forever.

And I've proved him now for 52 years, there's never been a problem that he's not been able to solve. By my unbelief, I've sometimes limited him. But over the years my faith has grown and I've come to see that Jesus can solve every problem.

He can handle any situation. He can help me to be, like it says in Romans chapter 8 verse 39, more than a conqueror. I mean, conqueror itself would be good enough for me.

But more than a conqueror? Boy, it's fantastic. But I see so many believers around me defeated who cannot honestly say, like it says in Romans 8 verse 37, that they are more than conquerors through him who loves us. They don't seem to have that power of the Holy Spirit within to help them be overcomers in all situations.

They live at the level of others. I mean, if in a trial, whether that trial is financial or a health problem, we have all types of trials in this world. But in a trial, if my reaction is exactly like the atheist who lives across the road, like he's in a panic and he turns somewhere to man for help, I'm in a panic and I turn to man to help, what's the difference between me and him? He's not certainly free from anxiety and I'm not free from anxiety either.

He's in a panic and I'm in a panic. He gets upset and I get upset. That's like Adam being at the level of the animal.

I need to see that and I'm not saying this to condemn anybody. Please, there is no condemnation in Christ Jesus. The word of God has not come to condemn us but the word of God is always challenging us.

When I read the New Testament, I don't get condemned. I'll tell you that. I finished with condemnation long, long ago.

I'm in Christ. I'm surrounded by the love of a heavenly father. He's my father and I have no condemnation.

But, I see things in the word of God that challenge me. I say, hey Lord, I'm not, Lord, I'm not living the level I should be living as one on whom Jesus has breathed the Holy Spirit. I seem to be living at pretty much the same level as my neighbor.

I mean, the only difference is he watches television on Sunday and I go to a church meeting on Sunday. He doesn't sing the songs I sing. He doesn't read the book I read but my level of life is the same as his.

You know why? Because I'm not filled with the Holy Spirit. It's the only reason. How is it possible that almighty God could breathe into Adam and he begins to live like the level of a dog or a chimpanzee? Impossible.

How can it be possible that Jesus breathes the Holy Spirit in me and I'm living at the same level as somebody around me? That is impossible. Perhaps I need to seek God. You know, as I said, a lot of people think that anybody can come to Jesus.

Yes, he'll receive us. When it comes to the power of the Holy Spirit, he used an expression like this in John 6, 37, sorry, John 7, John 7, 38. Sorry, John 7, 37.

I mean, this is a little one step higher than John 6, 37 is John 7, 37. If anyone is thirsty, Jesus said, let him come to me and drink. Now, let's stop for a moment.

I've been encouraging people nowadays to read the Bible slowly. Don't be in a rush to get to the next verse because the Lord may have something to say to you from the first verse. I've sometimes, in my daily reading of the Bible, I've read a verse and it's almost as though there's a stop light in front of me and I can't move.

It's almost as though the Lord's saying, don't go to the next verse. It's a red light and a traffic light. If the light is red, I don't move and if it takes a long time to turn green, I wait.

Otherwise, you'll get into a collision. So, I read a verse and there's a red light in front of me and I stop. It means God's got something to say to me and my whole meditation that morning is at that verse.

And the next morning, I get up and I want to continue and there's a stop light again and I'm still in the same verse which I was on yesterday. That's how I've got revelation on verses of Scripture which in the olden days, I had to somehow complete the chapter in one day because I had to move on to the next chapter in the next day. I don't read the Scripture like that anymore.

Yeah, it's good to read through the Bible. I always say in Bible reading, it's good to have two ways of Bible study. One is reading through large sections of Scripture when you have time and then reading small sections, maybe one verse and meditating on it.

You must do both together and I often do that. Read large sections of maybe a whole prophet in the Old Testament, one of the prophetic books and then meditate on one verse of Scripture. That's how I've discovered amazing things that I would never have discovered in Scripture and which I never discovered in the early days of my Christian life because I was in a rush to get through the Bible.

Now, I want the Bible to go through me. One of the prayers I prayed is, Lord, before I leave this earth, I want to obey every single commandment that is in the Bible for me. Now, there are commandments like killing lambs and offering grain offerings and circumcision and all in the Old Testament which I don't have to obey but every commandment which is for me in the New Covenant as a New Covenant Christian, I want to obey before I leave this earth or before you come back and if you say His coming is near, we better hurry up and obey those commandments quickly.

And the other thing I pray is, Lord, I want to claim every promise there is in the New Testament in the Bible for me. If there are promises which are not for me, I'm not bothered but if there are any promises in the scripture for me, I want to claim it before you come back. I don't want to just read scripture and I don't, I'll tell you absolutely honestly, I stand before God and say this, I don't want to leave this earth either through death or the coming of Christ before I have obeyed every single commandment that is meant for me before I have claimed every single commandment that's meant for me.

God's not given me this book to waste my time. This is the only book on earth that God wrote and if I reverence it and respect it like that, I'll obey it. I find, for example, a lot of believers have a, have got a fanatic devotion to the King James Version.

I say, brother, you take whatever version you like, please obey every commandment in it, that's enough. Take whichever version you like but claim every promise in it. That's the main thing.

What's you saying, I use the King James Version and I read it and you don't obey the commandments? Another guy who uses another version may be miles ahead of you spiritually because he's obeying the commandments. Oh, how the devil gets us all taken up in minor points like the Pharisees tithing dirt and

dill and mint and come in and you shouldn't carry your bed on the Sabbath day and all this type of stuff and miss out on the main things. I believe a lot of Christians are in that condition.

We can glory in what we are externally. I believe for example in women dressing modestly. I'm very strict on that in my home church but it's no use dressing modestly if you gossip and backbite and fight with your husband.

It's worthless. Good for nothing. It's the inner man.

Jesus said, what's use just cleaning the outside of the cup? It's the inside of the cup that matters. You know, I go into the villages in India and some of those people are so poor, they give me a cup of tea and sometimes the outside of the cup is really dirty. I just make sure the inside is clean and I drink it.

I'm not much bothered whether the outside is so clean or not. I'm okay. I'm very particular that the inside should be clean.

It doesn't matter if the outside is not so attractive. It's the inside that matters and that's what the Holy Spirit has come to help us in. If any man is thirsty, does that apply to everybody? Is everybody in the world thirsty? Thirsty for what? Listen to this.

He who believes in me from his innermost being will flow rivers of living water. I want to ask every one of you sitting here, I think most of you or if not all of you are born again to receive Christ as Lord of your life. Praise the Lord.

Are you thirsty for rivers of living water to flow out from you? Ask the question. Boy, was I thirsty when I was a Christian. The early days I went to a church where we studied the Bible.

We heard good evangelical church where I heard the scriptures taught accurately but the meetings were dead. It was truth but it was dead truth. They gloried in the fact that they were dead right in their doctrines but they were all dead and right.

What's the use of that? You're dead right in your doctrines but you're dead and right. That's no use. I wanted to be living and right in my doctrines.

I knew something was missing and that was the mighty power of the Holy Spirit. Jesus breathing. You know, when Jesus breathed on them they didn't suddenly develop some new doctrine.

They believed the same doctrine that day that they believed the previous day. Something happened and I knew that I needed that. A thirst came into my heart.

You know, a lot of people as I said have a controversy over terminology. They say, I don't want to be baptized in the Holy Spirit. I want to be filled with the Holy Spirit.

I said, call it what you like, brother. One person says, I was converted. One person says, I was born again.

One person says, I accepted the Lord. One person says, I've repented and trusted Christ. One person says, I come to know the Lord.

Are these five different experiences? No. Each is expressing in his own language that he came to know Jesus as his savior. I'm not going to get into a controversy because I say, I was born again and that fellow

says he came to know the Lord.

Have you got two different experiences? No. He's using another language. God permits us to use different languages, different terms.

You know that even the apostles, even though all scripture is inspired, God allowed those apostles to express it in their own terms. Let me ask you a question. You read the Bible, New Testament.

Who uses the expression crucified with Christ? Or old man crucified and flesh must be crucified. Who uses that expression? Paul. Why doesn't Peter use it? Never.

Not even once. Why doesn't John use it? Why doesn't the writer to the Hebrews use it? Weren't they inspired? And Paul hardly ever uses the expression born of God. That's John.

But all these folks were really speaking about the same life in Christ. Even though they expressed it in slightly different terms. So all I want to say that, my brother, don't get into an argument with a person over terminology.

You can miss out on what God has for you if all your argument is about terminology. In the early days, I did that. When I was a child, I spoke like a child.

I thought like a child. When I became a man, I put away childish things. And one of those childish things is arguing about terminology and about versions of the Bible.

I say, listen, I'm more interested in obedience to scripture, claiming the promises of scripture. And I want rivers of living water flowing out from me. Call it what you like.

Is the ministry of the Holy Spirit bubbling up and flowing out through me? Making me triumphant in every situation more than a conqueror? I say, Lord, that's the life I want. Always to be fresh. I never want to be dry.

It's not God's will for me to be dry a single moment of a single day. I saw that. I'm supposed to look at Jesus, the author and finisher of my faith and run the race always looking at him.

And when I look at him, the author and finisher of my faith, I see that he was never depressed or discouraged or in a bad mood or grumbling or complaining. Never. He never hated anybody.

Nobody could make him hate them. He disagreed with a lot of people. He whipped the money changers out of the temple.

He'd do all that, but he never hated anyone. And I said, that's the life I want to live, Lord. He was never anxious or in a panic.

That's the way I want to live. What a wonderful way God wants us to live. Way above the level of other human beings just like Adam lived.

Way above the level of animals. Why? Because Jesus wants to breathe in me. Whether you call it the breath of God or the river of God, the answer is this.

If any man thirsts, he's not inviting any Tom, Dick and Harry to come. Only those who thirst, who are desperate, who say, Lord, I want this life at any cost. Now, I'm not going to get in the hang up over

terminology.

I want rivers of living water to flow out from me. That's all I came to the Lord and said. I said, Lord, I don't want to be like those people or these people.

I want rivers of living water to flow out from me. Your word says that any man, it's not one particular group, any person that I've got to be thirsty. And I think the reason why many people never come into this life is because they're not thirsty.

What does thirst mean? I mean, right now, we may all be a little thirsty and if I were to offer you a glass of, would you like a glass of water? You say, yeah, I don't mind a glass of water. But would you travel 50 miles right now to get a glass of water? Oh, you say, I'm not that thirsty. But if you had been wandering around in the desert for seven days, boy, you travel a thousand miles if necessary to get a glass of water.

That's thirst. When you're so desperate, because your life depends on it, that is the type of thirst spoken of here. When you get that thirsty, the Lord says, come to me.

If you're not that thirsty, wait. I hope you're thirsty. You come to the Lord to seek him.

Say, Lord, this is my inheritance. This is what Jesus purchased for me on the cross. He not only purchased forgiveness of sins for me on the cross, he purchased a life of continual freshness.

I never knew it for 16 years of my Christian life after I was born again. I never knew this life because I wasn't thirsty enough. I was happy that I had a good testimony before other people in my church and that satisfied me.

And the Lord said, you're happy with that? Stay there. And I stayed there and I was a backslider until I got so desperate and said, Lord, I'm not happy with that. I want a life where rivers of living water will flow out from.

Let's bow our heads before God. The Bible says, call upon the Lord when he is near. Seek him when he can be found.

We can know he is near if we heard his voice loud and clear. And he must have been very near you if you heard the voice loud and clear. That's the time to call upon him and seek him.

Heavenly Father, we bow before you. We thank you for the wonderful things you have purchased for us on the cross which I, human eye, cannot see. Human ears cannot hear and human minds cannot understand.

Which you revealed to us through the Holy Spirit. I pray there will be some or many here who call out to you now, Lord, for a life way beyond what they've experienced so far. We humbly ask in Jesus' name, Amen.

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