

The Genuine Baptism of Fire

by Zac Poonen

Zac Poonen emphasizes the necessity of total surrender to God for experiencing the genuine baptism of fire, contrasting it with the imitation experiences prevalent in many churches today.

Duration: 27:48

Scripture: Genesis 22:2, Leviticus 1:9, Matthew 6:7, Acts 1:8, Acts 2:3, Romans 12:1, 1 Corinthians 6:19-20, Philippians 1:21, James 4:3

Topics: "Holy Spirit", "Surrender To God"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of offering ourselves completely to God, drawing parallels between the burnt offering in Leviticus and the surrender of our lives to God as seen in Romans 12:1. It warns against seeking imitation fires or fake experiences in charismatic churches, stressing the need for genuine surrender and devotion to God to receive the true baptism of the Holy Spirit that transforms lives and frees from sin and worldly desires.

Transcript

There are many false fires. I want you to turn with me to Leviticus chapter 9. Leviticus 9. The book of Leviticus is made up of many offerings that people have to make to God. And we read here in verse 22 about a burnt offering.

And that burnt offering was a picture, was different from the sin offering. Sin offering was for my sin. And peace offering mentioned there is to have peace with God.

But burnt offering was saying Lord I give everything to you. And that is a very important offering. It's like Romans 12.1 where it says present your body as an offering to God.

It's like Romans 1.2 where it says present your body as an offering to God. And when they put this offering before God. Verse 24.

Fire came from heaven from God and burnt up the burnt offering. Nothing is mentioned about the other offerings but the burnt offering it got burnt up. And the people fell on their faces.

See that fire coming from heaven was God saying I accept this offering. That's what happened on the day of Pentecost. Fire came from heaven.

Tongues of fire on top of their heads. And they were filled with the Holy Spirit. And they got a power in their hearts.

And God melted them into one body. All those 120 people. Now the great danger when we see a fire coming from heaven.

Is you say I want that. Which is a good desire. I want that fire in my life.

But you may not be willing to pay the price that that person paid to get that fire. See God will give that fire to everyone who is willing to pay the price. And the price is that we have to give everything to God.

Wherever God sees a man or a woman who has given everything to him. Where he can really stand before God and say I love you Lord more than I love my parents. I love you more than I love my wife.

More than my husband. I love you more than I love my children. I love you more than I love my job.

I love you more than I love my house. I love you more than I love the opinion of my relatives. There is nothing on earth I desire but you.

And even when I get to heaven. I am not looking for any reward. I have you.

It's enough even in heaven. I don't want any mansion. I don't want any crown.

That's a man who has given everything to God. God will send a fire on such a man or a woman. Now what happens is this.

Some brothers and sisters see this. Boy that person has got a real fire on him. I want that same fire.

But they are not willing to pay the same price. They don't want to give everything. They have got other desires in their heart.

Which they have not given up. That person gave up everything and got a real fire. So what happens is this person wants to imitate that fire.

95% of what is happening in Pentecostal charismatic churches today is that imitation fire. I am sure of it. I have seen it.

They babble something and call it the same tongues as on the day of Pentecost. No. I am not against the gift of tongues.

I speak in tongues myself. But what I hear in the Pentecostal church is not the real thing. It's a fake.

I have no hesitation to say that before the Lord. It's a fake. Imitation fire because they see somebody else has got a real thing.

So we read here in next verse. Nadab and Abihu They saw their father putting an offering on the fire coming from heaven. We also want to have some fire.

So they took their fire pans and they made their own earthly fire and offered it to God. Artificial fire. That is what is happening in many charismatic Pentecostal churches.

And then another fire came from the Lord. Verse 2. To punish them. Verse 2. They got killed.

And that's the spiritual death that has come today upon many churches. Because they produce an artificial fire. The reason for the spiritual death in many Pentecostal charismatic churches is because they produce this fake fire.

Now you say brother Zach, how do you say this so called baptism in the Holy Spirit that these people claim is not the real thing? Because I know what the baptism in the Holy Spirit did to the early apostles. And a few people I have met in my life who were really baptized in the Holy Spirit I know what it did for them. It freed them from the world and made them devoted to God where the things of God became primary.

I know what happened to me when God baptized me in the Holy Spirit. It will free you from the world and particularly from the love of money. But I see most of these Pentecostals they love money more after they are baptized in their so called spirit.

How do I say that? I have watched Christian television in India. And most of the preachers in Christian television are charismatic Pentecostal people. They are the biggest lovers of money in Christendom.

They are bigger lovers of money than the Roman Catholic priests. I have never seen a CSI priest who loves money as much as these Pentecostal pastors. I have never seen a brethren assembly worker who loves money as much as these Pentecostal charismatic people.

Nobody begs for money like the Pentecostal church people. I see. Then what spirit is that? Is it the Holy Spirit? Holy Spirit should make us like Jesus.

Jesus was not a lover of money. He wasn't going around asking people for money. Then how is it these unconverted priests in other churches are more free from the love of money than these people who say they are speaking in tongues.

Money is the test. If a person is really baptized in the Holy Spirit he should be more free from the love of money than those CSI priests and all those other denominational churches. Show me a person like that.

I believe that he has really got baptism in the Holy Spirit. The rest is all fake. I don't want it.

I remember from my own experience. I grew up in a brethren assembly where they didn't preach baptism in the Holy Spirit. But I read in the Bible that there is baptism in the Holy Spirit.

I didn't know where to go. Who will help me? This is 1963. That is 54 years ago.

They said that only Pentecostals will help you there. I didn't know who was Pentecostals. So somebody said here is a brother who is Pentecostal.

He will take you to one Pentecostal pastor. So I said okay. If he can help me I will go.

I travelled 70 kilometers on a scooter to meet that man. Because I wanted baptism in the Holy Spirit. I was willing to go anywhere.

This is when I was in Kerala in the naval base. Those days I was working. I went to this man who is a senior Pentecostal pastor.

He said now I will pray for you and you keep on saying Hallelujah. What, two or three times? No, no, no, no, no. You keep on saying Hallelujah till your tongue will trip and then you will speak in tongues.

I said that's not what they did on the day of Pentecost. Nobody told Peter and Paul to come on keep on saying Hallelujah. In fact Jesus taught don't use vain repetitions in Matthew chapter 6. So I am not going to say that.

I am not going to do that. He got so angry with me. His baptism spirit did not deliver him from anger.

I don't know what type of spirit it is. He said go away. I said thank you, I am going.

I went Sunday to the Pentecostal church another one nearby. And I saw all this noise. People saying babbling something.

All the babbling was just two or three syllables. Ba, sha, ra. That's all.

Ba, sha, ra, ba, la. You know you put a small one year old baby in front of a mike that is what you will hear. You put a one year old baby in front of a mike you will hear the baby babbling like that.

You know I was earning a lot of money those days. I used to give money to these pastors and they were very happy. Even if you are not baptized in the Holy Spirit, they let me speak there because I gave them money.

I came to my room in the naval base and I knelt down before God and I said, Lord, I don't want that. I am willing to wait 10 years to get the real thing. I am not here to tell other people I got baptized in the Holy Spirit.

I am not interested in that. I want you to give me an assurance. I want the same baptism in the Holy Spirit which the apostles got on the day of Pentecost.

The anointing that will give them boldness to proclaim God's word. God met with me in my room, not in any meeting. Because in a meeting you can get all worked up with the emotion and shouting of others, you get some fake thing.

See, it's not just love of money. Many people think Holy Spirit means you make a lot of noise. There was a man who came to CFC Bangalore, one Pentecostal man.

First time. And he came to me after the meeting and said, you don't have the Holy Spirit here. I said, how do you know I don't have the Holy Spirit? Do you know how I speak to my wife at home? That is the proof whether I have Holy Spirit or not.

Do I know how I am handling money at home? That is the proof whether I have Holy Spirit or not. He said, not all that. You are not having enough noise in this meeting.

I said, ah, now I know. Your trinity is Father, Son and noisy spirit. My trinity is Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

You keep your trinity, I will keep mine. Noisy spirit will make you make noise. Even a drunkard can do that.

Holy Spirit will make you holy. Free you from dirty thoughts. Free you from anger.

Free you from sin. That is the baptism in the Holy Spirit I want. And that is the baptism in the Holy Spirit I preach.

Evil spirits make you evil. Unclean spirits make you unclean. Holy Spirit will make you holy.

Even a child knows the answer. But you say Holy Spirit will make you noisy. I will never forget, I was in a charismatic meeting in 1975 In Bombay.

They asked me to preach. I don't like to sit on the platform, but they made me sit on the platform there. No, but that day they made me sit on the platform.

So I saw all these people in the singing time. And there was one man standing over there who was shouting and singing so loudly and wonderfully. So, I was very young those days.

And I thought, boy what a spiritual man, I must go and meet that man. He is so happy and raising his hand. So after the meeting I went to him.

And within six feet I could smell the alcohol smell coming from his mouth. I said, this is some other spirit, not Holy Spirit. So I learned something from there.

To make this noise and shout and raise, you don't need Holy Spirit, this alcoholic spirit will do it for you. What a deception is going on in Christendom today. Learn one simple thing.

Why did God call him Holy Spirit? Why is it called baptism in the Holy Spirit? That's not my words, God has chosen that word for the third person of the Trinity. I know what it did for me. It freed me from sin.

I can also make a lot of noise. I can make a lot of noise when I preach or pray and shout and I can do that. They taught me that in the military, in the parade ground to shout.

I didn't need the Holy Spirit for that. But that is, some people are quiet, some people make a noise, but both can be filled with the Holy Spirit. So I am just trying to protect you from false teaching.

Like if there are a lot of fake 2000 rupee notes going around in town, I will have to take a 2000 rupee note and say, when you get a 2000 rupee note, look for this sign, this sign, this sign, this is the mark of a real 2000 rupee note. Because most of the 2000 rupee notes going in this town are fake. That's all I am saying here.

Be careful of the fake. I am not saying there is no real 2000 rupee note. I am saying just be careful.

There is a real baptism in the Holy Spirit, which brings the real fire of God into your heart. And it will increase and increase and increase as you grow older. If I live up to a 100 years old, I believe the fire will be more in my life than today.

I never want it to cool down. It's a baptism of fire. Don't make a fake fire.

So that is why I tell people, if you are really hungry for it, get alone before God, in your room. I have heard people like this. They went alone in their room and said, Lord, I want you to fill me with the Holy Spirit.

I will tell you one story, a true story. Many years ago, we had a series of meetings in Bangalore. And in one of those sessions, I preached on baptism in the Holy Spirit.

And there was one brother who could not get leave to come for those meetings. So he heard the tape. And he said, Lord, I'm so sorry, I couldn't go for this meeting.

And alone in his room, he said, Lord, but you can meet with me here. You can baptize me in the Holy Spirit here, even though I'm not in a meeting. I'm going to pray, you fill me with the Holy Spirit, Lord.

And show me what is it that I have not laid on the altar. Only when everything is on the altar, the fire will come. The burnt offering was one offering where you had to put everything on the altar.

Leviticus 1 is about the burnt offering. And it says, you must cut it into pieces, verse 12. And put it on the altar.

And see the sentence in the middle of verse 13. The priest must offer all of it. All.

Not even one part of that bullock must be taken out. Everything there. And then it is an offering by fire to the Lord.

So the fire comes only when you put everything on the altar. So this young man, he said, Lord, is there anything? I think I've given everything to the Lord. And he waited before the Lord.

He didn't just repeat Hallelujah, Hallelujah, he never said anything. He said, Lord, show me what is it in my life I have not yielded. Why is the fire not falling? You have to put everything, the fire will come.

Show me, what is it? And the Lord showed him something. Not something sinful. But something which was not sinful.

Which the Lord asked him to give up. You know like Abraham asked, God asked Abraham to give up Isaac. That is nothing sinful there.

Isaac was a good boy. Sometimes we have to give up the good things also to the Lord. So he said, Lord, this young man said, Lord, even that I give it up to you.

And immediately he was baptized in the Holy Spirit. He just heard a message, he wasn't even in the meeting. But what did he do? He sincerely searched his heart to see if there was anything he held back from God.

About a 140 years ago, there was a very famous preacher in America. In a town called Boston. He heard about people preaching about baptism in the Holy Spirit.

This man was a pastor. And he prayed, Oh God, I also want this. And he prayed and prayed and prayed and prayed, nothing happened.

And he also asked the same question, what is it I have not given? And the Lord said, you want to be a famous preacher, that is why you want baptism in the Holy Spirit. Give up that desire. And he realized he wanted the part of the spirit to become a famous preacher.

And that was a sin to desire that. To desire that was a sin. He was seeking honor for himself.

That happens to many people. They hear of somebody who is filled with the Holy Spirit and is a mighty preacher, they say, I also want that. What for? Because they want to be mighty preachers.

They will never have a genuine experience. They may get some fake fire. But this man said, Lord, I don't want to be a famous preacher.

I just want to please you. And God filled him with the Holy Spirit. And God said, now give up this job as a pastor here.

Go and work with the poor people. And he did that. So, when we give up everything, God meets with us.

There is no partiality with God. The fire from heaven will come to any of you. If it has not come, you go before God and ask him, what is it you have not given up? And maybe you had it once and you lost it.

That's because you put something on the altar and took it back. Let's pray. You know, I don't think you can pray for the baptism of the Holy Spirit here.

Because it will be an emotional thing. You need to get alone with God in your room. If you don't have a room in your house to be alone, lie down in your bed at night when everybody is asleep and talk to God.

When everybody is asleep, you say, Lord, show me, what is it I have not yielded to you? I want a real baptism of fire in my life. I don't want any honor in the church. I don't want anything for myself.

I want Jesus Christ to be glorified in my life. So, Lord, fill me with the Holy Spirit. Get alone with God and pray.

God will meet with you also. And He will set you on fire with the real fire from heaven. He will free you from the love of money.

He will free you from anger and bitterness and all types of sins. Only He can do that. Heavenly Father, help us all.

We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/Q0l1ry-60h4.mp4>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/zac-poonen/the-genuine-baptism-of-fire/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net