

# The God of Encouragement

by Zac Poonen

---

*This sermon emphasizes the importance of not letting discouragement and self-condemnation hinder our faith. It highlights the need to reject discouragement and self-condemnation as 'no entry roads' in our lives, drawing from the example of David encouraging himself in the Lord in times of distress. The message urges believers to seek the power of the Holy Spirit, to love one another, and to stay true to the teachings of Christ, avoiding false leaders and influences that lead away from the truth.*

**Scripture:** 1 Samuel 30:6, 1 Samuel 30:18, Matthew 11:28, Romans 15:5, Acts 1:8, 2 John 1:8, 2 John 1:9, 2 John 1:11

**Topics:** "Overcoming Discouragement", "Encouragement in Faith"

---

## Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of not letting discouragement and self-condemnation hinder our faith. It highlights the need to reject discouragement and self-condemnation as 'no entry roads' in our lives, drawing from the example of David encouraging himself in the Lord in times of distress. The message urges believers to seek the power of the Holy Spirit, to love one another, and to stay true to the teachings of Christ, avoiding false leaders and influences that lead away from the truth.

---

## Transcript

So as we come to this closing session we don't want to make this very long. The devil's one of his greatest weapons is called discouragement. Don't let the devil ever discourage you.

Discouragement is a no entry road and if you obey traffic laws you see a sign no entry you don't enter there. That is a one-way traffic coming out from there. There's a no entry sign over discouragement.

As soon as you're tempted to be discouraged you say no. That's a no entry road. I'm not going to go down that way.

There's a verse in 1 Samuel chapter 30. There was a time when David the king, before he became king, when he was still wandering around being chased by Saul, there was a time when he got into a situation where some people had stolen his property and his wife and he had wives they were all stolen and we read here in 1 Samuel 30 when David and his men came to Ziklag the Amalekites, the enemies had made a raid there and they had taken captive all the women verse 2 and carried them off and when David came to the city it was burnt with fire. Wives and sons and daughters had been taken captive and David and the people who were there verse 4 lifted up their voices and wept.

Imagine this, wept until there was no strength to weep. They had lost their wives and children and property and it says David was greatly distressed, terribly discouraged because the people were going to stone him, their leader saying you're the cause of all this. But it says here David strengthened himself or encouraged himself in the Lord.

In the King James Version it says David encouraged himself in the Lord when things looked so desperate and hopeless. Please remember that verse 1 Samuel 30 verse 6. David encouraged himself in the Lord and do that when everything seems to have gone wrong in some situation. You may not need that word today, maybe there's a day coming in the future, sometimes the word in the church is a prophetic word that prepares you for something that's coming up in the future and when that happens, remember this, David encouraged himself in the Lord and we read he said the next thing he did was he sought the Lord.

Lord in this messy situation maybe I'm to blame. Verse 8 what shall I do? And the Lord spoke to him what to do and he went and recovered everything. We read here further down.

Verse 18 David recovered everything that he had lost. So remember these two verses 1 Samuel 30 verse 6 and 1 Samuel 30 verse 18. David encouraged himself in the Lord and David recovered everything that was lost.

And the God who lived in David's time is just the same today and the God who helped David will help you. Remember that discouragement is a no entry road. The other road that is a no entry road is the road of self-condemnation.

That's another no entry road. These are the two I usually stress, discouragement and self-condemnation and I'll tell you why I say that because I was like that. I went down this no entry road endless times, discouragement.

I went round this self-condemnation road, no entry self-condemnation road so many times thinking it was spirituality to condemn myself. Oh I'm so rotten, I'm useless, I'm a failure and I thought I was being humble. No, I was not being humble, I was unbelieving.

Those are not the words of a humble person. Those are the words of unbelief. I'm useless, I'm good for nothing, I'll amount to nothing.

Sometimes some fathers say such things to their children, foolish fathers. Oh you're good for nothing, you'll amount to nothing, when are you going to learn? I feel sorry for evil, I call them evil fathers. Just like those fathers who molest their children.

These are evil fathers who tell their children, put negative thoughts into their mind, you'll amount to nothing and you're so hopeless, don't tell me you did all that again. Be like those fathers who will say when a problem, when a child comes with a problem, okay son, don't worry, we'll fix it. Don't worry, we'll fix it.

We'll solve that problem. Encourage your child to have hope. God is a God of hope and encouragement.

There's no situation which is impossible for God. Jesus demonstrated that in his life. There was never a situation, I told you, where he scratched his head and said, I don't know what to do and he's the same yesterday, today and forever.

If I go to him with any problem, he will not say, I don't know what to do there. Even if the mess was made by you, he'll solve it. There are many messes I made and God solved it.

And that's what gives me hope. He doesn't say that, well, if the mess is made by others, I'll solve it. But if you made the mess, I'm sorry, I can't do it.

That's not the God I believe in. I believe in a God who says, it doesn't matter who made the mess, let's fix it. That's always his word is, let's fix it.

I'll fix it for you. And I thank God for the number of times in my life where he's fixed it for me. And that's what encourages me to face the future.

See, I don't know what other mess I'll make of my life in the days to come. I'm not perfect. I can slip up and make blunders.

I make less and less blunders as I grow older. But I can't say I'll never make another one. But I serve a God who says, I'll fix it for you.

That's the same God you have my brother, sister. As you go away from here and you face situations, listen to that word where the Lord says, I'll fix that for you. Don't condemn yourself.

Don't get discouraged. Encourage yourself in the Lord. Condemnation is from the devil.

The Old Testament ministry was a ministry of condemnation. You're not good enough. You're not good enough.

I'll never forget a dream I had in the early days of the church meeting in our home. Those days the Lord would give me dreams with a message in it. Not so much nowadays.

I used to worry about that. You know, I used to tell the Lord, Lord, in my younger days, you would say so many things to encourage me and little little things, everything you'd say, do this, do that. But now I don't seem to hear you.

And I used to get discouraged. Why is the Lord speaking to me less now? You know what the Lord said to me? For a little child, you have to say, brush your teeth, go to bed, put on your pajamas, go to school. Have you done your homework? But you don't tell your 25 year old, brush your teeth, change your clothes.

That's why I'm telling less and less to you. You've grown up. Oh, hallelujah.

Thank you, Lord. So I discovered that if I hear less and less, it's because I'm growing up. My father doesn't have to tell me so many things because he sees I'm doing the right thing.

If I'm going astray, he will still tell me, not that way. So don't get discouraged. Anyway, one of those days, and I had a dream.

And in that dream, I was coming back from a meeting I was speaking at. And I was coming back to the place where I was staying. It was in some other place, not in my hometown.

I was alone. And I was coming back. I was so encouraged by the great freedom I had to speak in the meeting.

And as I came back towards my room, I heard a voice behind me saying, that was not good enough. You could have done better. That was not good enough.

And whenever I heard, in those days, when I heard a word like that, I said, that must be the Holy Spirit telling me that was not good enough. I could do better. I mean, the devil would never say such a thing.

That was not good enough. Do better. But I was getting discouraged.

I said, Lord, I poured my heart out. I did everything possible. And you say to me, that's not good enough.

And I heard a word saying to me, look back and see who's talking to you. And in my dream, I looked back, and it was a dark figure that suddenly ran away. It was the devil.

Because I'd asked the Lord, Lord, whenever you speak to me from front of me, you're always encouraging me. But when I hear a voice from back, it's always discouraging me. Not good enough, not good enough, not good enough.

That's the day I discovered something. That the voice that says not good enough is not the Holy Spirit. I mean, imagine if your little three-year-old or four-year-old writes a birthday card to you.

Happy birthday, dear daddy. And the E is spelled, you know, written the other way around. And the D is spelled, written the other way around.

It's all crooked. And some of the spelling is wrong. And the grammar is bad.

And this dear child wrote that at night and early morning comes and gives it to you. And you say, hey, the spelling is not right. Would you be a father like that? With all the trouble that little child took to greet you on your birthday, you're seeing whether the D is straight and the E is straight.

You will never do that. You'll hug that kid and say, thank you so much. I want to tell you something, dear brothers and sisters.

God is a better father than you are. Don't insult him by saying that he's a worse father than you are. If you don't discourage your child like that, God will never discourage you.

Even if you wrote it all crooked. It doesn't matter. He's not a God of discouragement.

He's the God of all encouragement. And also a God who never condemns. Listen to this.

Remember these verses, John chapter 3 and verse 17. God did not send his son into the world to condemn the world. To judge in the sense of condemn.

God did not send his son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world. And the Holy Spirit has now been sent not to condemn you or judge you, but to save you. Did you make a blunder? Okay.

He's come to save you from doing it again. Not to condemn you for what you did. Please remember that.

So don't think you're becoming holier by condemning yourself. I used to think that foolishly. Oh, if I condemn myself, then I say, oh, I'm rotten.

I'm good for nothing. But that's not humility. You think that's humility.

Sometimes we pat ourselves on the back. I'm saying I'm rotten. I'm good for nothing.

I'm a humble person. You're not a humble person. You're an unbelieving person.

That's what you are. Condemning yourself. God did not send his son into the world to condemn the world.

Who's condemning you then? The devil. God's not expecting you to be perfect overnight. It takes years and years and years to be perfect.

And even if you're not making much progress, think of a handicapped child in a class or as they say challenged, someone who's differently enabled as they say nowadays, intellectually challenged. How patient some earthly unconverted teachers are with these handicapped children to encourage them. God is much better than that.

He will never discourage. Not all children are the same. Not all of God's children are the same.

Those of you who are fathers, you know that not all of your children are the same. But God also knows not all of his children are the same. And I want to say to you, never, never let the devil discourage you.

Never, never let the devil condemn you. He did that with me for years. But I want to say he can never do it again.

I've seen those as no entry roads and I refuse to enter those roads. The moment I'm tempted to be discouraged, I say, no, no, no, I see that sign. No entry.

The moment I tend to condemn myself, I see another sign. No entry. Okay, great.

I have stopped entering those roads for many years now. And that's made my life a happy life. Not because I'm perfect.

Not because I never make a mistake. I still make lots of mistakes. But I don't get discouraged.

In the olden days, I made a mistake, got discouraged and made more mistakes. Now the difference is I make a mistake, I don't get discouraged and I don't repeat those mistakes. I don't make so many mistakes.

It's the devil's tactic to make you make more mistakes, to get you more depressed and fall more into sin, get you depressed, condemn yourself and make you think you're holy. And you say, well, Isaiah, when he saw the Lord, he said, woe is me for I'm condemned. I'm living in a man of unclean lips.

Yeah, there may be occasions like that, when suddenly you see the holiness of God, you feel really rotten for the sin you committed, but then you don't condemn yourself. You don't get discouraged. What do you do? You confess your sin.

That's what I'm supposed to do at that time. Lord, I blundered. I made a mistake.

Forgive me, cleanse me and it's gone. There's a lovely verse I like in the Bible, which says in Lamentations, do you know where Lamentations is? It comes after the book of Hezekiah, right? Have you found the book of Hezekiah? Lamentations comes after Jeremiah. It's a small little book, there are some lovely verses in it.

Lamentations chapter 3, it says here, Lamentations chapter 3 verse 22 and 23. His compassions never fail. His mercies never fail.

They are new every morning. Lamentations 3, 22 and 23. His mercy or compassion is new every morning.

I love that. God's mercy to me is new every morning. In practical terms, what does that mean? That means it's as if He'd never been merciful to me before.

I mean, He's been merciful to me a million times. But today when I ask Him for mercy, Lord, I blundered. This is all.

That's the first time you did something wrong. I forgive you. His mercies are new every morning.

Well, that's the way I take it and it's blessed my heart. Why don't you take it like that? His mercy is new every morning. Because He's promised your sins and iniquities, I'll remember no more.

We are such evil people that we remember other people's sins and iniquities. God is not like us. When He says, I will not remember, Hebrews 8, 12, I will not remember your sins and iniquities.

He means it. He's not like us. He does not remember the sins and iniquities we did.

And He keeps His word. His mercy is new every morning. And I look at it like this.

It's like the Lord looking at me and saying, well, you haven't sinned for 79 years. Wonderful. But you slipped up today for the first time.

Thank you, Lord, for forgiving me. His mercies are new every morning. And the Lord says to me, be like that to other people as well.

When you meet others who blundered umpteen times, and now they blunder again, let your mercy be new to them as if they are doing that mistake for the first time in life. Be merciful to others. You know, sometimes I, when I'm going, when I come away from my church for a long time, and I give some of those people some work to do in the church office.

If I'm going away for a week or something, and I'm coming back, I tell them this before I go. Remember, do your best. And if you don't finish what you're able to do, or you do it all wrong, don't get discouraged.

The only thing serious in life is sin. The fact that you didn't complete a job in time, or couldn't do it perfectly, it's not serious. Don't sin.

The only thing serious in life is sin. I tell you, I tell them, my brothers who work there in the office, I will not be upset if it's not done. I will not be upset if you do it wrongly, because this is not the most important thing in the world.

Just don't sin. That's all. And so I say to myself also many times, the only thing serious in life is sin.

That's the thing I want to avoid. Mistakes, we all make mistakes. Accidentally, I may say 2 plus 2 is 5. My calculation is wrong.

Mistake. It's not a sin. We make blunders.

We make mistakes. God overlooks them, forgives them. He's far more a gracious Father than we think.

Because we are such evil people ourselves and holding people to such high standards, we think God is like that. He's not like that. He's extremely merciful.

He's more merciful than He is strict. His mercies are new every morning. See Isaiah in chapter 61.

It says in Isaiah 61, this is the words that Jesus quoted when He was in the synagogue in Nazareth. You read about that in Luke chapter 4. The Spirit of the Lord, Isaiah 61. The Spirit of the Lord is upon me because He has anointed me to bring good news to the afflicted.

He sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and freedom to prisoners. Every sentence there is an encouraging sentence. Good news to the afflicted, bind up the brokenhearted, liberty to the captives, freedom to the prisoners.

To proclaim. Now listen to this. I want to paraphrase it.

To proclaim 365 days of favor and one day of judgment. You got the proportion right? 365 days of favor and one day of judgment. And the Lord said to me, that should be the proportion of your relationship with other people when they make blunders and mistakes.

365 days of favor, mercy, forgiveness. One day of strictness. Yeah, we need to be strict with our children.

But I'm sorry to say, many fathers and mothers, it's 365 days of strictness and one day of encouragement. No wonder your children turn out the way they are. Why not reverse that and be like God a little more? 365 days of encouragement and one day of strictness.

The proportion. I'm not saying it should be exactly like that, but I am absolutely convinced that most parents do not encourage their children enough. They correct them much more than they encourage them.

That's not God's way. He's not called the God of all correction. Look in the Bible.

You will not find it. But look for the God of all encouragement. That's what He is.

The God of all encouragement. Romans 15, I think it was 405. He's the God of all encouragement.

He comes to encourage, to say to you, His mercies are new every morning. Your sins and iniquities I will not remember anymore. He does not remember the past.

He wants to lift us up. He's the lifter of our head, not the one who pushes our head down. In the Psalms, David says, My glory and the lifter of my head.

He lifts up my head. And I want to say to you brothers, don't go away with head hanging down. If it is, ask God to lift your head before you go away from here.

There may be things that God spoke to you and convicted you of during this weekend, but He wants you to go away with your head lifted up, looking unto Jesus. That's how we are supposed to live. The Bible says, let us run the race, looking unto Jesus.

And if you look unto Jesus, it's not down, up. With your head lifted up, looking unto Jesus, we run the race, believing that He will help us to endure until the end. He will.

I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me. Let that be our confession as we go. There may be areas in your life that the Lord has pointed out to you in these days, not to condemn you, not to discourage you, but to give you hope.

The Lord says, I will help you to do that better in the days to come. Without God's help, none of us can make it. Even Jesus, everything He did was with the Father's help.

That's why He prayed. When we pray, it's an expression. Do you know what prayer is? Prayer is an expression of my need.

Lord, I can't make it without You. Do you know how much Jesus prayed? Jesus prayed more than you and me, because He was more aware that He needed the Father's help as a human being. We are not so aware.

That's why we don't pray so much. We think we can make it on our own, and that's why we fail so much. If Jesus did not fail, it was because He was so aware as a human being, I cannot make it without the Father's help.

So He was constantly saying, Father, help me, help me. There's nothing to be ashamed of in saying that. And the people who come to the Lord like that constantly are the ones who walk in triumph on this earth.

I believe God wants you to be like that, my brother, sister, and that's to be an encouragement to people around you, to lift up the broken spirits around you. May the Lord encourage you and wherever you are, that God will help you to gather a few people of like mind. Encourage them.

I often tell people, if you can't lead them yourself, you can't share God's word that's edifying, pick up one of the videos that you watched. Play 15 minutes of that. Don't give too much.

Play 15 minutes of it and then, if somebody is interested in listening, say, what do you think, what do you get out of that? Start a little fellowship in the place where you are. That's how we started. Two families, we started in 1975.

It's grown to thousands now. You never know what will come out of it. The day of small beginnings.

Start something small. Don't give up. Don't say, God can't use me.

No. A couple of verses before we finish. 1 Corinthians chapter 1. 1 Corinthians chapter 1 and verse 26.

God has chosen the foolish things of the world. Are you one of those foolish things of the world? To shame the wise. He's chosen the weak.

He's chosen the base things and the things that are despised. Whom does God choose? The foolish, the weak, the base, the despised and those who are nothing. I like that.

God has chosen the foolish, the weak, the base, the despised and those who are nothing. You qualify? I qualify. He chose me.

Don't look at what God has done through me. Look at what the type of person I was when God chose me. You may be like that and God can do a mighty work through you.

Just humble yourself and say, Lord, I will not depend on my ability. The reason why God does that is so that one day when God does something through you, you will not be able to boast about it. Verse 29.

So that no one can boast before God. If you can boast, that means you think you are somebody very clever. One more verse.

James chapter 2 verse 5. Listen, my beloved brothers. James chapter 2 verse 5. Didn't God choose the poor of this world to be rich in faith? Whom does God choose? I mean when God blesses you, He may prosper you in many ways. He may even make you a millionaire.

That's up to Him. But when He chose you, you were poor. He chose the poor to be rich in faith and made them heirs of His kingdom.

What I see in all these scriptures, when Jesus was selecting His disciples, apostles, He didn't go to the Bible school, Bible college in Jerusalem. No, He didn't choose one person from there. There was a great professor called Gamaliel running a Bible college in Jerusalem.

Saul of Tarsus studied there. Jesus didn't call any of them. He went to those unlearned, humanly speaking illiterate fishermen and said, I pick you up and you will be my apostles so that nobody will ever say God picked up clever people and made them apostles.

You know, today people try to get theological degrees from the letter of Peter, but he was a fisherman who wrote it. Don't forget that. He deliberately picked up such people and He deliberately picked you and me.

Nobody is in the world and said, I'm going to do a work through you. If you believe that, if you say, no, no, no, I'm nobody. Don't say that.

If God called you, don't say anything. Don't say, I'm nothing. You know what the Lord told Jeremiah in chapter one, Jeremiah chapter one, the Lord said to me in verse seven, and I want to say that to all of you young people, especially the Lord said to me, I said to the Lord, the Lord said in verse five, I formed you in the womb.

You were born before you were born. I consecrated you. And the Lord said, he said to the Lord, Lord, I don't know how to speak.

I'm a young person. And the Lord said to me, don't say I'm a youth. Don't say I'm foolish.

Don't say I don't know anything. Don't say that. If I have chosen you and I send you, I'll tell you what to say.

Don't be afraid of anybody. I'll be with you. Can you take that word? I have gone to this passage many times when I was young and the Lord said to me, don't say you're young.

Don't say you can't speak. Don't say I don't know what to say. I will be with you.

I'll tell you what to speak. I'll give you every sentence to speak. Okay, Lord, if you're willing to do that, I'll be like the branch in the tree.

You keep supplying the sap. I yield to you. I won't block the sap by my disobedience.

I'll do whatever you tell me. And you'll be, don't be afraid. You'll be amazed to see my brother, sister, what the Lord can accomplish through a weak person like you.

Don't judge other people. Leave them alone. We are not called here to judge anybody, condemn anybody.

Judge yourself and say, Lord, I want to walk in lowliness before you. There's one type of person whom the Lord says you must avoid. You know who that is? Among Christians.

Whom should you avoid? There are some Christians you must avoid. I obey scripture. I don't try to be friendly with everybody, I'll tell you that.

Because if God says avoid somebody, I avoid them. I'll show you Romans 16 and verse 17. Romans 16 verse 17.

I urge you, brothers, the Holy Spirit is saying, I urge you, keep your eye on those who cause divisions in the church. You know somebody who's caused a division or a split in a church? Who don't like the teaching that you heard? Turn away from them. That's what I do.

Oh, you're so unfriendly, brother Zach. No, I'm obeying the Holy Spirit. I care more for the Holy Spirit than for what you think of me.

I turn away from them. It's not the right friendly way to treat people. People say, that's fine.

Let them say what they like. I turn away from people who betray the church, who stab the church in the back, who cause divisions. And I'll tell you, after 60 years, I've never regretted doing that in many, many situations.

I look for the lowly and the humble people who judge themselves and who want to follow the Lord in humility. The arrogant and the proud, I stay away from them. God resists the proud.

I want to be like God. I resist the proud. God turns away from those who cause divisions in the church.

I turn away from them. I want to be like God. He turns away from those who betray Christ, like Judas Iscariot.

I turn away from them. I don't try to be a worldly, friendly type of person. If you do that, you're seeking honor for yourself.

You're wanting a reputation for yourself. Oh, you're so nice and so friendly, not like those other Christians who turn away. Shame on you that you seek to get a name for yourself and reject the cause of Christ.

May God have mercy on you. That's all I say. It'll never go well with you.

It'll never go well with you. It'll never go well with your children because they see your bad example. Turn away from those who cause division in the church.

Be fellowship with the wholehearted. Fellowship with the humble, godly people who are seeking to live an overcoming life. And stand true to them.

Stand true to your brothers and sisters. Don't betray them and stab them in the back. I'm telling you from 60 years of experience, I've followed that and I've never regretted it.

And God has stood by me. He'll stand by you. Let's pray.

Heavenly Father, as we bow before you, thank you for a wonderful weekend. I pray that everyone will go away from here exhorted, challenged, encouraged, never discouraged, but seeking to follow in your footsteps. We thank you for hearing us.

Thank you for these lovely people who took all the trouble to come all the way here, spend so much money, time, etc. And I pray that the sacrifices they have made, you'll reward them abundantly. We who live here in Loveland have sacrificed very little, but many others who have come all the way from long distances, please bless and reward them abundantly, we pray.

In Jesus' name we ask. Amen. Thank you, brothers and sisters, for listening to me patiently.

It's not always easy to listen to me. Thank you, Lord. Thank you.

Thank you, Lord Jesus. That clap was meant for Jesus. Thank you, Lord.

Okay, I want you to know that I'm really grateful. You know, even the last couple of days I was thinking, Lord, these people spent so much money, so much time to come and listen to me, and they hear the same old thing they've heard for the last 40 years. I hope they're encouraged.

God bless you all. I just want to give a parting word from us as a local church. I too say thank you.

He was absolutely right when he said that we have sacrificed nothing like what you have, those of you who have traveled a long distance. And us as a local church, it's an example for us, because it's very easy for us to take for granted what we hear and what we have. And I never want to be one of those, because we get to hear it, because we have a local church, and brothers and sisters who are really serious about going this way, the way of the cross, emphasizing the new covenant, becoming more like Jesus.

It's a blessing. We don't look at how many of us there are, but even to have a few is amazing. And we're reminded of that when we see so many of you that come from places where you don't have a fellowship.

We've had, on average, about 100, 150 people watching online, and consistently in almost every session, we hear them ask, is there a like-minded fellowship in our area, all over this country and all over the world? And I recognize that for many of you, that's the case as well. But however the Lord leads you, and whatever His will for you is, I hope you're encouraged today. There were many people who listened to Jesus in the three and a half years that He preached on this earth.

But there was only a few for whom it actually made a difference. I was thinking of that verse in Acts chapter 1, that Jesus promised us, and I want you to leave this place, I want all of us to leave this place with that promise. After the thousands, or I don't know, maybe a million people, certainly a few tens or hundreds of thousands of people heard Jesus speak in the three and a half years, there was 120 for whom it actually made a difference.

The other vast majority, maybe 90, 95, 99% of them, hearing the teaching had absolutely no effect. They may have ended up in hell after hearing Jesus Himself preach. And what was the difference? Jesus told His disciples, verse 4, Acts chapter 1 verse 4, gathering them together, He commanded them, you've

heard all these things, I hear Jesus saying.

You've heard lots of good teaching, but don't go do anything. Don't leave Jerusalem, but wait for what the Father has promised, which you heard from Me. For John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit, not many days from now.

Verse 8, you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and Loveland and all your states there. That's our desire, that's our prayer for you. But I thought of it, it's like buying a new car, but they sold it to you with an empty tank.

And now God says, before you do anything, stop at the gas station and fill it up. And so whatever that looks like for you, if it means that right after this you need to go find a place somewhere and seek the Lord before, while He is near, before the birds come and rob you of that teaching. Or if you're headed home tonight and you're driving and you've got to stay up all night, seek the Lord.

Stop at the spiritual gas station and fill up, because otherwise it will be a car that's just sitting in your garage, unused, unusable and useless. You've heard teachings, it's the vehicle that can take you and point you in the direction of Jesus. But you haven't received power from the teaching alone.

That's what I get from this verse. God wants to interact with you personally, to give each one of us His power. You will receive power.

We don't have to tarry, the tarrying is over because the Holy Spirit has come. You go and lay every single bit of your life and your ambitions and your plans and your friends and your attachments and your husband, wife, brother, sister, children, father, mother on the altar and see if the fire will not fall. And spur you forward to be the man and the woman and the child that God wants you to be.

Do you believe our children can be filled with the Holy Spirit? If it could be for Samuel when he was a little boy. How much more for us in the New Testament? Your sons and daughters shall prophesy. I pray for that.

That we'll see our children filled with the Holy Spirit. It's not just theory. I want to close with one more thing and that is what I think, what I've heard is the last writings chronologically in time of the New Testament.

I was reading this this morning and I was struck by it. I thought it would be a good way to close. I'm going to read it from the Living Bible.

It's from 2nd and 3rd John. The way I understand those are the last two books of the Bible written. It's very interesting to read what John has to say.

And he lived for about 65 years as a disciple of Jesus until his death. I've asked Derek to put the words on so you can follow along with me. This is from 2nd John.

This is a few verses I pulled out. Dear brothers and sisters, since the truth is in our hearts forever. God the Father and Jesus Christ his Son will bless us with great mercy and much peace and with truth and love.

How happy I am to see that you are living as you should. Following the truth. Obeying God's command.

Verse 5. And now I want to urgently remind you dear friends of the old rule God gave us right from the beginning. That brothers and sisters should love one another. Verse 6. If we love God we will do whatever he tells us to do.

And he has told us from the very first to love each other. Verse 7. Watch out for the false leaders and there are many of them around. If you think there were many in 90 A.D. How much more in 2019 A.D.? The devil's been busy.

There are many of them around who don't believe and teach that Jesus Christ came to earth as a human being with a body like ours. Tempted in all points as we are. And you will find that there will be people who will despise the teaching of the way of the cross.

That we can follow Jesus as our example. Despising the new covenant saying I'm kind of tired about hearing that. We've had people who have listened to these teachings and said those very things.

Such people are against the truth and against Christ. Verse 8. Beware of being like them and what a stern warning. Losing the prize that you and I have been working so hard to get.

That goes again in the face of all the teachings you hear in America today. That you can't lose your prize. It's eternally secure.

This is what the Bible says. See to it that you win your full reward from the Lord. Good word to remember.

See to it that you win your full reward from the Lord. Verse 9. For if you wander beyond the teaching of Christ, you will leave God behind. While if you are loyal to Christ's teachings, you will have God too.

God and the teaching. Then you will have both the father and the son. If anyone comes to teach you this way and he doesn't believe what Christ taught.

Don't even invite him into your home. Don't encourage him in any way. Because verse 11.

If you do, you will be a partner with him in his wickedness. He's not talking about the adulterers and the liars and the murderers in the world. He's talking about false leaders in churches.

Verse 3. Some of the brothers traveling by have made me very happy by telling me that your life stays clean and true. And that you are living by the standards of the gospel. We hope to hear about that.

When we come and visit you or hear from you. You're staying true and clean. Verse 4. I could have no greater joy than to hear such things about my children.

John writes. Dear friend. You are doing a good work for God in taking care of the traveling teachers and missionaries.

Who are passing through. They have told the church here of your friendship and your loving deeds. I am glad when you send them on their way with a generous gift.

For they are traveling for the Lord. And take neither food, clothing, shelter, nor money from those who are not Christians. Even though they have preached to them.

Verse 8. So we ourselves should take care of them in order that we may become partners with them in the Lord's work. Dear friend. Verse 11.

Don't let the bad examples influence you. Follow only what is good. Remember that those who do what is right prove that they are God's children.

And those who continue in evil prove that they are far from God. I have much to say. But I don't want to write it.

For I hope to see you soon. And then we will have much to talk about together. So goodbye for now.

Friends here send their love. And please give each of the folks there a special greeting from me. I love how John writes.

And the Living Bible brings it alive. And it is that format and style of teaching that we have been listening to all weekend. For those of us who preach God's word.

I have taken much comfort from the example of my dad on how to preach. Whether we stand or sit is not as important as how. Interceding.

Sitting. And like John says. I could keep speaking.

But I hope to just sit down and talk to you more. So do that. You don't need a preacher in your local church.

You don't need a preacher in your home. Encourage your wives, husbands. Encourage your husbands, wives.

Encourage your children. And let the church start there. And God will bear witness to the little faithfulness that he sees in your home.

And he will bring a family. He will do that. Because he sees that you are not looking to become a pastor or a preacher.

Or make a name for yourself. Or even to be another CFC church. But to live in faithfulness before God's face.

And he will see you being faithful in your little home. And he will bear witness to it. This is something that can't be duplicated.

I hope you are thankful. It's good for us to give thanks to the Lord. I think it would be good for us to stand up.

And together, praise the Lord. We received a miracle this weekend. Even in our listening to the word of God.

Our freedom to preach. But there was one who got what God wanted for him. And that was the 10th leper who came back.

And it says he returned rejoicing with a loud voice. They say in the world, raise the roof. Now they don't know what they are talking about.

This is every reason to raise the roof. Now if it's not your temperament, that's fine. But let your heart sing with gladness and rejoice.

And if you haven't seen the answer to your miracle yet. Don't let that stop you from praising. Praise is the key that opens the door to victory.

Remember that. Praise is the key that opens the door to victory. You've seen.

You've heard the word of Christ. The word that comes from Christ and is resulted in faith. Faith comes from hearing the word of Christ.

But now the proof of your faith must be in the sacrifice of your lips. Where you praise him. And the devil doesn't want you to do that.

I tell you for this for years. He got me to shut out because I was embarrassed or afraid. Or I doubted God.

But don't let him do that for you. God wants to do a miracle for you. A miracle that starts right now.

Not tomorrow. Right now. And he's waiting for you to open that door with your praise.

Let's praise the Lord together.

---

Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/M3jGXyCUxjM.mp4>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/zac-poonen/the-god-of-encouragement/>

# *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](http://www.sermonindex.net)**