

The Gospel of the Kingdom of Heaven

by Zac Poonen

The sermon emphasizes the importance of obedience to God's word, seeking God's kingdom first, and being filled with the Holy Spirit in order to fulfill God's plan for our lives and endure until the end.

Duration: 49:07

Scripture: Psalm 139:13-16, Matthew 24:4, John 16:33, Revelation 3:21, Revelation 21:7

Topics: "Kingdom Living", "Holy Spirit"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of valuing and reading the Word of God, highlighting the significance of being born again and having a hunger for God's Word. It discusses the signs of the last days, focusing on the deception by false prophets and the need to endure in love for Jesus Christ. The message stresses the proclamation of the gospel of the kingdom, which includes righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit, and the call to overcome sin and live a life filled with the power of the Holy Spirit.

Transcript

So, brothers and sisters and dear friends, I wonder if we realize or appreciate what a tremendous privilege it is to have with us the Word of God in our own language. Because most of us here are probably very familiar with the Bible, we all have a copy in our home and more than one copy. We can become familiar with it that we don't value it enough.

There are so many, many Christians, believers who have a Bible at home and have had it for many years and have never read through it even once. What does that prove? I'll tell you what it proves. It proves that they do not believe that the Bible is the Word of God.

Because if they did believe it was the Word of God, they would have read it again and again. And sometimes when I find people say they are born again and they have no interest in studying God's Word and in hearing God speak to them through it every day, I have to tell you honestly, I question whether they are really born again. New birth is like the birth of a baby.

And you know when a baby is born, it begins to cry for milk from the very first day. Nobody has to teach it. If it does not cry for milk, we have to say it's an unhealthy baby, it's born prematurely, it's sick, it's not normal.

All normal babies will cry for milk from the very time it's born. 1 Peter 2 says, like newborn babes long for the pure milk of the Word. What does a newborn baby desire? Milk.

And here it says that in the new birth, the milk for the newborn baby is God's Word. I found in my own life when I was born again, I was 19 and a half, 55 years ago, immediately I had a desire to read God's Word. I'd never read the Bible fully in all my life, even though I was born in a Christian family.

But now I found a great desire to read through it. And in about six months, I read through the whole Bible. And then I began to study it deeply.

I had a hunger for God's Word. And that has guided me throughout my life, answered my questions, solved many of my problems, given me comfort in difficult situations, and given me the answer to know what I should do when I face a problem or a situation where I don't know which way to turn. So I have come through the years, through 55 years of studying the Word, to respect this book greatly.

I don't have the slightest doubt in my mind that this is God's Word. And so when we read in the Word of God about the last days, just before Christ comes again, about the situation that's going to be in the world, the disciples asked Jesus once we read in Matthew 24, Matthew 24 and verse 3, What will be the sign of your coming and of the end of the age? That's the last word that they were asking, the last question almost before they went into the Lord's table a few days later. And Jesus replies, this is the last part of verse 3, What will be the sign of your coming? And Jesus replies saying, many people think it's famines, earthquakes, wars, no, those things come later.

What's the first thing Jesus said is going to be the sign of the last days? See to it, verse 4, that no one deceives you. And again, he repeats it, verse 11, many false prophets will arise and will deceive many. And again, it says in verse 24, false Christ and false prophets will arise and will show great signs and deceive, if possible, even the elect.

I have told you in advance. So this is the major sign that Jesus said would be characteristic of the last days. And yet many people who speak about the second coming of Christ don't mention this primarily.

They talk about other things about Israel and the wars and famines, etc. So what is the area where this deception is going to take place? There could be many, many areas. It speaks about false signs and wonders in verse 24, and there are a lot of false signs and wonders going on nowadays.

But what is the important thing that we should bear in mind when we think of the last days and the end of the age? Listen to what Jesus said. Matthew 24, 11, many false prophets will arise and will deceive many. OK.

And in that context, he says lawlessness, verse 12, is going to increase and most people's love will grow cold. How does the love of Christians become cold? When sin increases in the world, why should the love of Christians become cold? See, you light a candle and it will burn just as brightly in the light and in the darkness. Supposing you take a candle, a lit candle, to a room where there is light.

It's burning with a certain amount of brightness. Now you turn off the light in that room and it's all dark. The candle is still burning the same.

So our love for Jesus does not have to decrease just because there's darkness around and sin around and lawlessness and sin is going to increase. That shows that what we thought was love for Jesus was

not really love for Jesus. It was just an emotional, external, superficial thing.

And the deception of false teachers is what leads many believers to have a false understanding of their love for Jesus. For example, today there's such a lot of so-called praise and worship and singing and all that and a lot of people think they love Jesus because of that. That is not the mark of love for Jesus Christ.

That's a deception to think that that is the mark of love for Jesus Christ. Jesus said very clearly in John chapter 14 and verse 15, If you love me, you will keep my commandments. It's obedience to God's word and to his commandments that is the mark of love for Jesus.

When love goes cold, obedience to God's commandments grows cold. So the false prophets are people who are telling you once you've accepted Jesus, you don't have to obey, it's not so important. And once you listen to those false prophets, you're going to be led astray.

This is the primary danger of the last days. I believe with all my heart that we are close to the coming of Jesus Christ. And I believe that we should all be expecting to see Jesus in our lifetime.

I'm expecting to see Jesus in my lifetime. Do you know the Apostle Paul was expecting to see Jesus in his lifetime? He says in 1 Thessalonians 4 about the coming of the Lord, the Lord will descend from heaven, he says. And he says in 1 Thessalonians 4 15, we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord.

He doesn't say you people who are alive or those people who are alive. He says we who are alive. So what was Paul expecting? That he himself would be alive at the coming of Christ.

But later on, a few years later, maybe 10 years later, the Lord showed him that he was not going to be alive and he's going to go home. And so he says, the Lord has shown me when 2 Timothy 4 6 that the time of my departure is at hand. So until the Lord shows us, no, your time on earth is over, we should all be expecting to see the Lord in our lifetime.

That's the right way to live. And since we are very close to the coming of the Lord, we have to be careful about this area of deception, false teachers with signs and wonders, leading us to a false understanding of what it means to love Jesus Christ. That's why we need to come back to the truth of God's word.

If you love Jesus, you'll keep his commandments. There's no other proof of love. Let's go back to Matthew 24.

Because many people, lawlessness has increased, most people's love will grow cold. He's referring to believers. Because unbelievers don't love at all.

Where's the question of growing cold? It never became hot in the first place. Believers love will grow cold. But, verse 13, the one who endures until the end will be saved.

So in the context, what does it mean? The one who endures to the end in love for me, says Jesus, will be saved. So I see that the most important thing for all of us to bear in mind if we are going to be ready for the coming of the Lord is to preserve ourselves in a fervent love for Jesus Christ, not an emotional love that's expressed on Sunday morning in songs, etc., but a love that's manifested in obedience to the word of God, obedience to the commandments of Jesus Christ, especially the commandments given in the Sermon on the Mount. That is the proof that we love Jesus Christ with all our hearts.

So if we preserve ourselves in that, we will endure until the end. But if you become careless in keeping the commandments, in other words, your love for Jesus is getting colder and colder, then you will find that you will be deceived and you will fall astray. And then it says here in verse 14, another sign towards the end of the age, this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world for a witness to all the nations and then the end shall come.

Matthew 24, verse 14. We know the gospel is the gospel of the grace of God. We know the gospel is the gospel of salvation.

But here it is called the gospel of the kingdom. What does that mean? So let me show you two verses. John the Baptist came preaching in Matthew chapter 3 saying repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

He was preaching to the nation of Israel and the nation of Israel had been occupied with the kingdom of earth for 1,500 years. Moses had given them the law and taught them that if they kept the law and they obeyed God, God would bless them with prosperity, with healing, and with an earthly land, Canaan, and every earthly blessing. They would never be in debt.

They'd be the highest among all the nations. Every earthly blessing. There's not one mention of a heavenly blessing under the law.

There's only rain and prosperity on earth and their earthly enemies would be defeated. You never read in the Old Testament of Israel fighting with Satan. Satan doesn't appear in any battle in the Old Testament.

Their whole preoccupation was with earth. Their vision was earthly. The things of earth, the material wealth of the earth, overcoming earthly enemies, etc.

So after 1,500 years of this, John the Baptist comes and says repent, which means turn around. Turn around from facing earthly blessing and now look for the kingdom of heaven. That is the message of repentance with which the gospel begins.

That is how he prepared Israel to receive the Messiah and unfortunately, that message of repentance is not being preached today. What is that? Turn from preoccupation with the things of earth. We have to live on this earth, but we are not to be preoccupied with the things of earth like Israel was.

We're not to be occupied with prosperity and healing and earthly blessings. No. We are to live in the world, but not to belong to the world, whereas Israel lived in the world and they belong to this world.

That's the difference. And when a Christian lives in the world and acts as though this world is his inheritance and this is the main thing for him, he is living under the old covenant. This gospel of the kingdom, of the kingdom of heaven.

And that's why the Bible says that Jesus Christ did something wonderful for us through his death, resurrection, and ascension. This is how the gospel of the kingdom of heaven becomes ours. In Ephesians, in chapter 2, it says that when we were dead in our trespasses, Ephesians chapter 2, when we were dead in our trespasses and sins, verse 1, Jesus, God in his rich mercy, sent his son and saved us.

When we were dead, verse 5, he made us, Ephesians 2, 5, made us alive together with Christ. That means when Christ was raised up from the dead, we were raised up with him. It's an amazing truth that

when Christ died on the cross, we died with him and we were raised up with him.

And, verse 6, we were raised up, also lifted up to the heavenly places in our spirit to sit with Christ in the heavenly places. This is an amazing truth that a Christian in his spirit, even though physically he's on the earth, he's seated in the heavenly places. He views things on earth, spiritually, from a heavenly standpoint.

And that's why it goes on to say also in Colossians 3. These are verses that very few Christians seem to live by. Colossians 3, 1, if you're raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. Set your mind on the things above and not on the things of earth, for you have died to this world and your life is now hid with Christ in God.

This is true Christianity. See, Jesus was a heavenly man who walked on this earth. And every true Christian, if he's born again and filled with the Holy Spirit, he is to be a heavenly man who walks on this earth.

You know, it says that we sing in that song, heaven came down and glory filled my soul. That's what the Holy Spirit has come to do, to bring heaven down into our heart and to make us heavenly people. We live on the earth.

We work, earn our living, raise children, build houses, work, seek employment, work and take care of our children and bring them up and get them married, etc. But we are called to be a heavenly people. Our mind is set on the things above and not on the things of earth because the kingdom of heaven is more important to us than the kingdom of earth.

So this is the gospel of the kingdom that is going to be preached, Jesus said in Matthew 24, 14, in the last days and then the end will come. The kingdom of earth, the kingdom of heaven is a kingdom of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. Turn with me to the other verse I want to show you.

Romans chapter 14 and verse 17. The kingdom of God is not eating and drinking but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. So it is righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit has come to bring the kingdom of heaven into our hearts and what is that? Righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. That's what the Holy Spirit has come to give. So the gospel of the kingdom is, as I said first of all, the gospel about the things of heaven, not the things of earth primarily and it is a gospel that proclaims righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.

So we need to ask ourselves whether the gospel we have heard is a gospel of righteousness that leads us to righteousness in our life, that leads us to overcome sin and makes our life righteous, whether it's a gospel that brings peace into our lives and into our homes and into our relationships, whether it's a gospel that's brought joy into our hearts. So here is a test by which we know whether we are hearing the gospel of the kingdom because this is how we are going to endure till the end. I can tell you honestly that if you do not take these words seriously, you're not going to endure till the end.

The one who endures to the end, Matthew 24, 13, will be saved and this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world for a witness. So I see these verses in Matthew 24, 12 to 14 all connected with enduring till the end. To endure till the end in fervent love for Jesus Christ, to listen to the gospel of the kingdom when many other gospels are being preached in the world today.

The gospel of the forgiveness of our sins is incomplete. It's an incomplete gospel if it is not coupled with the message of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. That is the kingdom of God.

Jesus came proclaiming the kingdom of God and this is the big mistake that there is in a lot of preaching today. When God brought you to this earth, he had a plan for your life, my brothers and sisters. David says that in Psalm 139, even in the old covenant he understood that.

Let me read that to you, Psalm 139. He says about his birth in his mother's womb, he says, My frame was not hidden from you. You wove me, Psalm 139, verse 13.

You wove me in my mother's womb and fearfully, wonderfully you made me. And then it goes on to say in verse 16, in the middle of verse 16 of Psalm 139. In your book, all the days meant for my life were written for me.

As yet there was not even one of them. That means before my first earthly day had started, you had written down in your book in heaven my entire earthly life plan. What I should do each day, where I should be each day, what I should fulfill in my life.

For me, it's been a wonderful thing to discover this truth that before I was born, God made a plan for me in his mind. When it says his book, he doesn't have books like we have. It's in his mind.

In the mind of God, he knew me as one who was going to be one of his children. And he made a plan for my life, for every day of my life before I was born. And his desire was for me and is for me that I should walk in that plan and fulfill it.

Very few human beings fulfill that plan. Very few believers fulfill that plan. You cannot fulfill that plan if you do not seek God's kingdom first.

See, I can either seek God's kingdom or my kingdom. You cannot fulfill that plan if in your life you want to do your will and not God's will. The only one who can fulfill that plan is one who, like Jesus, says, Lord, I don't want to do my will.

I want to do your will in everything. Show me your plan for my life. What should I do? And don't misunderstand me here.

Don't think God's plan for everybody is to be a full-time Christian worker. No. God calls maybe one out of 1,000 believers to be full-time Christian workers.

God called me 50 years ago to serve Him full-time, to give up my job. I was working in the naval base here in Cochin when God called me on the 6th of May, 1964, to leave my job. And I left.

It took two years to release me, but I put in my resignation immediately. But that's only one in 1,000 God calls. The other 999 believers, God wants to work in their secular jobs and to seek God's kingdom first.

What is God's kingdom? Righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit. To live by the principles of God's word every day in their earthly life. You know, not to tell lies, not to hate anybody, to forgive people who hurt you, to live in love and goodness, to be upright in your job, to be hardworking.

These are the qualities that Jesus had in His earthly life. And that is the principle by which we live and seek God's kingdom first in every area of our life the whole day, to be free from anger and bitterness and

lusting after women and things like this. That's how we put God first in our life.

And if we live like this, we can fulfill God's plan for our life. Paul said at the end of his life in 2nd Timothy, in chapter 4, verse 7, I have fought a good fight. I have finished the course.

I have kept the faith. He endured until the end because he set his mind on the things that are above. But he had to fight a fight in order to finish the course.

He had to fight a fight in order to keep the faith. Look at that verse carefully, 2nd Timothy 4, verse 7, and read it all together. I have fought a good fight and I can say thus I finished my course.

So in other words, to fulfill God's plan for your life, you have to fight a fight every day of your life. What do you have to fight against? You've got to fight against the devil who will try to lead you astray. You've got to fight against your own lusts that tempt you to go this way and that way, to displease God.

But it's worth it in the end. If you're not determined to fight against the devil and your lusts every day, you will not finish the course. You will not endure until the end.

And this is the main reason why we need to be filled with the Holy Spirit. I thank God for every gift of the Holy Spirit. I thank God for the gift of prophecy, for the gift of tongues, both of which God has given me.

But more than everything, I thank God for the power of the Holy Spirit to overcome the lusts in my flesh, to overcome Satan, to be free from the fear of Satan, to be free from anxiety and anger and bitterness and every evil thing that I inherited from Adam. That's what the Holy Spirit has given to me for. And in the power of that Spirit, I can fight these things and be an overcomer.

Thus, I can endure to the end and finish my course. I believe that God had a plan for Paul's life from the time he was born. But, for 30 years, Paul missed that plan.

See what he says in Galatians in chapter 1. Galatians chapter 1. Galatians 1.15 He who had set me apart from my mother's womb. That means when Paul was in his mother's womb, God had set him apart. This is to be my apostle, my servant.

But was he an apostle? For so many years of his life? No! He was a man who hated Christians, who persecuted Christians. But from the mother's womb, there was a plan for him. God had set him apart, called him through his grace, and at one particular time, probably when he was around 30 years old, he revealed his son in Paul's heart on the road to Damascus.

But here's a man who was set apart from his womb to be an apostle and wasted 30 years of his life and still he could finish his course. Isn't that an amazing thing? Now that's an encouragement to all of us. I wasted 19 years of my life without being, without committing my life to Christ.

I believe that from my mother's womb, God had set me apart to be his servant. I have no doubt about it. And to fulfill the particular ministry that God has given me, which I've seen particularly in the last 39 years.

But I did not know that! For the first 19 years, I didn't even give my life to Christ. So what about those years? Were they wasted? I think of Paul who lived much longer in the wrong direction. 30 years.

The wonderful thing is God made allowance for it. Like I was saying yesterday, God overlooks the times of ignorance. But he makes allowance for the fact that we do go astray and wander astray.

Don't know the Lord for many years. But then a time comes in our life where we begin to take our Christian life seriously. And we surrender our life to Christ completely.

We make him Lord of our life. And from that time on, if we really repent, we can still fulfill God's plan for our life. None of us start fulfilling it from day one.

Even our years of failure and disobedience, God uses in a wonderful way to teach us many lessons. I think of many years in my life where I've failed and backslidden and slipped up and fallen into sin and all that in those younger days and early days. And I see that God uses all that to teach me lessons.

So God uses even the years of our failure. So you don't have to feel sorry. Oh, I've messed up so much in my life.

I can't fulfill God's plan. I want to say to you in Jesus' name, you can fulfill God's plan for your life if you repent. And particularly if you're young, you're really blessed.

You've got your whole life in front of you. Make sure you fulfill God's plan for your life. Paul could say, let me paraphrase his words, even though I wasted 30 years of my life, I thank God that finally my eyes were opened to see the truth.

And Christ was revealed in my heart and I was born again. And I'm still able to finish my course even though I wasted those first years, the remaining 37 years of my life. He writes this when he's about 67.

The remaining 37 years of my life, I finished my course. That's wonderful. Paul lived to the age of 67 and the first 30 years of his life were wasted.

And yet he finished his course. That's a great encouragement for us. And he says, I kept the faith.

I did not compromise the faith God gave to me. I stood true to it. I did not go after other Gospels of prosperity and healing and all that.

I stood true to the Gospel that leads people to righteousness, freedom from all sin, all conscious sin. The Gospel that leads us to perfect peace in our mind, freedom from anxiety and fear. The Gospel that leads us to a life of rejoicing always.

The Kingdom of God, righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. This is God's will for you, my dear brothers and sisters, for every one of you that you might know the power of the Holy Spirit. That's God's will.

I wish we would realize, we read in the Word that God so loved the world that He gave His Son and that we can understand. We see that God loved us so much that He sent His Son to earth to die for our sins. We could also say God so loved believers so much that He sent the Holy Spirit to come and fill our hearts.

And we need to be open. Do you know today Jesus Christ is not on the earth? He's in heaven. It's the Holy Spirit who is on earth today.

A lot of believers ignore the Holy Spirit. They don't take Him seriously. Think if Jesus Christ were physically living in your house.

Think of that. Would you just ignore Him some days? Would you say, oh, He's there? No. You would treat Him as honored Lord of your life every day.

You know, as soon as the day begins, if Jesus is staying in the guest room of your house, you would go to Him with a cup of tea or a cup of coffee in the morning and say, Lord, I'm so happy that you're here. You'd be so happy and you'd recognize His presence in your home every day. But Jesus Christ is not on earth.

But He was on earth for 33 and a half years and think whenever He visited a home, how honored they felt to have Him there in their home, like Mary and Martha had Him in their home. But today it's the Holy Spirit who is in our home, who is to be with us wherever we go. How much do you honor the presence of the Holy Spirit? Do you really open your being to honor the Holy Spirit in every area of your life throughout the day? Dear brothers and sisters, this is the person who brings the kingdom of God into our life.

Why am I saying these things? We're thinking of enduring till the end. The gospel of the kingdom will be preached throughout the world and then the end will come. And this gospel of the kingdom, let me repeat, is not just righteousness, peace and joy.

Romans 14, 17. It is righteousness through the Holy Spirit. It is peace through the Holy Spirit.

It is joy through the Holy Spirit. There is no kingdom of God today without the Holy Spirit. Romans 14, 17.

The most important thing that any Christian needs in this day and age to be prepared for the coming of the Lord, to endure until the end, is to be filled with God's Holy Spirit. To be baptized in the Holy Spirit and fire and to keep that fire burning in his heart. That's the thing that will bring righteousness and peace and joy.

It's not by any self-effort that we come to righteousness, peace and joy. The kingdom of God is righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. So, let me remind you again, let me link it up with what we saw earlier.

The one who endures to the end will be saved. And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world. The love of many will grow cold.

They will not endure until the end. Their love will drift away from obedience to God's word to superficial singing and praising and things like that. The real love for Christ would have grown cold.

They take sin lightly. Look at the number of so-called believers who watch pornography on their computers and who are defiled by dirty thoughts even though they speak in tongues. They're living in a counterfeit Christianity in the midst of such a corrupt Christendom.

We proclaim the gospel of the kingdom. The Holy Spirit bringing righteousness, peace and joy in our lives. So, I want to say to all of you, my dear brothers and sisters, make sure you're not deceived in these last days by a false gospel of signs and wonders and many things like that.

I thank God for all of them. I've seen healing in my life. I've seen miracles in my life.

I've spoken in tongues. I continue to do that. I believe in the gift of prophecy.

I believe in all the gifts of the Holy Spirit, but I believe the kingdom of God is not speaking in tongues. The kingdom of God is not healing in miracles. The kingdom of God, Romans 14, 17 is righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.

And the gifts of the Holy Spirit are given in order that we might proclaim this kingdom. And in order that this kingdom might be established in the church. The church must be a place where righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit are found among all the believers.

That's the only type of church I want to be a part of. And the gifts of the Holy Spirit are meant to build that church. Why does God, I believe God has given me the gift of prophecy to speak God's word prophetically, to encourage, to challenge and to build up.

Why has He given me that gift? Not to show off to other people that I've got a gift. No! But to build this kingdom of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit, in the church, among wherever I go. This is what I seek to do.

In fact, these are my main messages. If you've heard me for the last nearly 40 years, you've heard me preach on righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. Because that is the kingdom of God.

That is what we're supposed to go and proclaim everywhere. This gospel of the kingdom shall be proclaimed everywhere. And you go around and ask yourself how many places is righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit being proclaimed? What I mean by that is how many people are leading you step by step into the life of righteousness described in the Sermon on the Mount? To be free from anger, 100%, to be free from lusting with the eyes, to be free from telling lies, to be free from all hatred and bitterness and unforgiving spirit, to be free from seeking honor from people or advertising how much we pray or fast or things like that, to be free from the love of money, to be free from anxiety and fear, to come into a life of peace, peace in our heart, peace with one another and no bitterness or quarreling with one another, and into a life of perpetual joy, 100% free from murmuring and complaining and grumbling.

100%. Where is this gospel being preached? I hardly hear it anywhere. It's not preached on television.

It's not preached on radio. It's not preached in the books. Everybody is talking about healing and prosperity.

That's another gospel. That's what they preached under the Old Covenant. This gospel of the Kingdom will be preached everywhere and then the end will come, Jesus said.

And he who endures to the end in this kingdom will be saved. I can't convince everybody, but your blood will be on my hands if I don't proclaim the whole truth of God to you. And I want to say to you, this is not something God expects us to achieve, because we cannot achieve it on our own.

The Kingdom of God, let me say, is not righteousness, peace and joy, but righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. So there is a human righteousness that's taught in many religions. Buddhism talks about a certain type of peace and joy and nirvana and things like that.

Yoga talks about it, but peace in the Holy Spirit, joy in the Holy Spirit, a pure peace and a pure joy that's perpetual, produced by the Holy Spirit, that's the Kingdom of Jesus Christ. That's the Kingdom of God. That's what we proclaim.

And I want to encourage you to believe that the weakest person among you, the one who has failed the most, can come into this life. If you would turn around today and say, Lord, I want to live this life. I want to live a life filled with the Holy Spirit all the time, strengthened in the inner man.

I want to complete my course. Think of this. Focus your mind on the fact that God's got a plan for your life.

It's the most wonderful plan you can ever think of that takes care of all the... First of all, understands your potential fully, knows what gifts God wants you to have and fulfill in the church. If you yield yourself to the Lord and say, Lord, I want to fulfill that plan. Whatever it costs, whatever the price, I want to fulfill that plan.

You will also be able to say, like the Apostle Paul at the end of your life, I have fought a good fight. I've finished the course. We have to fight not only against our own lusts.

You'll also have to fight with a lot of Christians who try to lead you astray from this into a life of ease and carelessness and superficial Christianity and who will tell you, no, no, no, you cannot overcome sin and all that. Don't talk about being an overcomer and all that. If you turn to the book of Revelation, one of the words that comes frequently in the last book of the Bible is overcome, overcomer.

What is the message of the Lord to the seven churches? To every church, to the good churches and the bad churches, to the good elders and the bad elders, there is one message, overcome, overcome, overcome. He who overcomes, in Revelation 2 and 3, in both those chapters, he who overcomes, Revelation 2, 7, he who overcomes, he who overcomes, he who overcomes, verse 11, verse 17 and so on, all the verses to every one of the churches is overcome, overcome. And to the last church, he says, he who overcomes, Revelation 3, 21, will sit down with me on my throne, even as I also overcame.

Do you know that Jesus also had to overcome when he was on the earth? That verse is so clear. There was something he had to overcome. He himself said that in John 16, 33.

Be of good cheer. I have overcome the world, John 16, 33. What is the world that Jesus overcame? We don't have to use our own mind.

There are two things I can say. One is 1 John 2, 16. All that is in the world, that is, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, Jesus overcame all of that.

The desire to do my own will. The desire to possess everything that my eyes show me. And the temptation to be proud.

Jesus overcame all of that. That's the world. And the world is also one, something that's controlled by the prince of the world.

And Jesus overcame the prince of the world as well. He said in John chapter 14 and verse 30, the prince of the world comes and he's got nothing in me. So Jesus overcame something.

He fought and he overcame and he says if you overcome, as I overcame. How did Jesus overcome? By the power of the Holy Spirit. He says if you overcome by the power of the Holy Spirit, you will sit with me on my throne.

I want to ask you what do you think of Revelation 3, 21? You think it can read like this? Even if you don't overcome, you will still sit down with me on my throne. You think it means that? Think about it seriously. Do you think Jesus is telling a lie when he says he overcomes or sit with me on my throne? What about those who don't overcome? If they're also going to sit with him on the throne, then Jesus would say, well it doesn't really matter whether you overcome or not.

So long as you accepted me as your savior, whether you overcome or not, you will sit with me on my throne. No, my brother, sister, you will not. If you don't overcome, I don't know where you'll be.

It says in Revelation 3, verse 5, if you overcome, I will not erase your name from the book of life. Is it important to overcome or not? Does Revelation 3, verse 5 read like this? Well, whether you overcome or not, I will never erase your name from the book of life. Because you accepted me as your savior, right? And Jesus says, oh well, it doesn't matter if you overcome or not.

Those are the false teachers. Beware of deception in the last days. They will do signs and wonders and tell you that whether you overcome or not, your name will not be erased.

You will sit with Jesus on the throne. Well, I want to tell you I don't believe that. I believe Jesus.

I believe God's word. And I believe also what it says in Revelation 21, verse 7. Revelation 21, verse 7. He who overcomes will inherit all these things that I have shown you, he says to John in heaven. I will be his God and he will be my son.

Does that mean? Well, even if you don't overcome, you'll inherit all these things. So, my brothers and sisters, let's seek for the power of the Holy Spirit. Seek it earnestly.

Be quick to confess sin. Be quick to acknowledge failure and ask God to forgive you. Keep your conscience clear.

And so that you can be an overcomer and inherit the promises and reign with Jesus for all eternity. May God bless you. Let's pray.

Think of what you've heard today and see if something God is speaking to you. Something that particular. The Lord promises to forgive you all your past failures and will help you, will fill you with His Spirit.

If you open every part of your being to Him, say, Lord, I'm sorry for the way I've lived. I really want to take it seriously. And I want to say especially to you young people, don't look at the bad examples among older people that you've seen.

Take your life seriously before the Lord when you're young. Say, Lord, I want to live for you completely. I want to yield my whole being to you.

I want to be filled with the Holy Spirit. And I want to live a life of righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. Give me this life at any cost.

I know you'll do it, I believe. In Jesus' name, Amen.

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