

(The Power of the Holy Spirit - 4) the Anointing Oil

by Zac Poonen

Zac Poonen emphasizes the necessity of the Holy Spirit's anointing for Christians to live empowered lives and serve others effectively.

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Scripture: Luke 3:21, Luke 4:18

Topics: "Holy Spirit", "Anointing Power"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the importance of the continuous supply of oil for the 3,500-branch lamp stand, symbolizing the church's responsibility to spread the gospel. He uses the story of a widow in 2 Kings chapter 4 as an example of the church being weak, helpless, and in debt to share the gospel. The widow is instructed to pour oil into vessels, which represents the anointing oil that can empower believers to fulfill their calling. The preacher also highlights four reasons why believers may not receive all that God has for them, including lack of knowledge, failure to ask, lack of faith, and asking with wrong motives.

Transcript

freely, for all to receive. And it is impossible to live the Christian life without experiencing that power. A lot of frustration that Christians face in their life is because they've never had a satisfactory understanding or experience of being filled with the Holy Spirit.

I don't mean just once, but continuously. I live in a country which has many, many religions. 98% of the 1 billion people in our country worship other gods.

And I have thought much about where Christianity differs from all other religions. Well, I'll tell you two things. First of all, every religion teaches that if you're good, God's happy with you and he'll take you to heaven.

It's only Christianity that teaches that Jesus came for sinners and not for the righteous. That's one fundamental difference. That you got to be a sinner.

You got to acknowledge that you're a sinner in order to be saved. It's only Jesus who taught things like the prostitutes and thieves will get into God's kingdom before you religious people. No other religious leader ever taught that.

It's distinct. It's a message. The Christian message is for those who recognize they're sinners.

Everybody's a sinner, but some recognize that and are willing to acknowledge it. The second thing is that all religions teach that you must be good. The word of God and Jesus Christ and Christianity teach you cannot be good, even if you try.

You need God's power to help you if you're ever going to make it. That's why we need the Holy Spirit. You see, we have two problems with our lives.

One relates to our past, the problem of guilt. And the other relates to our future, the problem of our nature, which doesn't change. I mean, which our flesh remains with us even after we converted.

We get a new nature inside, but we still have that old flesh. And that's our second problem. And if Jesus dealt with only the first problem, that's the guilt of our past, that wouldn't really be good news, because I'd feel more miserable once my conscience has become sensitive.

Before that, my conscience was not so sensitive, and I didn't probably feel the burden of sin so much. And if Jesus only dealt with the past and gave me a more sensitive conscience, I'd feel more miserable. It wouldn't be good news at all.

But the good news is that he shed his blood to deal with the problem of my guilt totally. And that's one thing we must recognize. I know the number of years after I was converted when I struggled with that.

Has God really dealt with my past till one day that word came home to my heart from Hebrews 8.12, your sins and iniquities, I will not remember anymore. God chooses never to remember my past. It's not that God's forgotten.

His memory is much better than mine. And if I can remember my past, I'm sure God can. But when he says, I will not remember, it means I choose not to remember it.

And that's the way we've got to deal with one another too. We cannot pretend that we have forgotten the harm that somebody did to us, but we choose not to remember. That's all that God asks of us.

God is not unrealistic. So the blood of Jesus Christ takes care of our past. He shed his blood for that, and he went to heaven, and he sent the Holy Spirit to deal with our second problem.

And that is to give us the power to live the way he wants us to. But he offers that power only just like, you know, he offers forgiveness only to those who are honest. The great problem with a lot of people in the world is they are not willing to be honest about their sin.

Like Adam, they'd blame somebody else. Adam blamed his wife, and she blamed the serpent. And that problem is continued in human nature of always trying to put the blame on somebody else.

And that's the reason why a lot of people are not forgiven. But if a man's willing to be honest, God can forgive him, totally. In the same way, if a man's willing to be honest after he's converted, and says, Lord, I don't seem to be able to overcome these sins.

I need a power. I see the standard of your word, and I'm not going to lower that standard. But I need a power outside of myself to be able to live up to that.

Let me give you an example. There's a word in scripture in Philippians 4.4, which says, Rejoice in the Lord always. That's a very high standard.

If it had said, Rejoice in the Lord on Sundays, that would have been easy. Or if it had said, well, try and rejoice most of the time, that would have been easy. But when it says, Rejoice in the Lord always, it's that one word, which is so, makes it so difficult.

Now, when I see God's standard up there, Rejoice in the Lord always, and I see my life is down here. I have one of two options. I can say, well, that doesn't really mean always.

We got to be realistic. It means, well, generally speaking, most of the time. And I've brought it to an attainable standard where I don't need the Holy Spirit anymore.

I can manage it. And that's why many people never experience the power of the Holy Spirit. Or I can be honest and say, Lord, that is your standard.

But no matter how hard I try, I never seem to be able to make it. There must be another way. And that's the person who's going to seek God for a power outside of himself to live that life.

And that's the person who experiences it. And most Christians never come to that life for one single reason. They're not honest.

They're dishonest and pull the scripture down to their level. The Bible says that in the same way, God wants to know. I could go to many scriptures like where we've got to be honest with scripture.

Be anxious for nothing. Nothing means nothing. That's God's standard.

Now, there's nothing wrong in acknowledging, Lord, I'm anxious most of the time or very often. That's fine. If you're honest, that's what it means to walk in the light.

The Bible says, if you walk in the light, we have fellowship with him. To walk in the light means, first of all, to be downright honest and truthful. After 44 years of being a Christian, I've discovered one truth.

That the first thing God requires from man is to be honest. And honesty is something a prostitute or a murderer sitting here can do, can be right now. You don't need to wait to be honest.

You need to wait to be perfect or holy or mature. But you don't need to wait to be honest. That's why God's made it so easy for everybody.

He's made it easy for the unbeliever. He's made it easy for the believer. He says, just be truthful.

The thing that Jesus condemned the most when he was on earth was dishonesty, hypocrisy, pretending to be something which you're not. So let's fear that. And I believe that's the reason why many people never seem to cry out to God for the power of God's Holy Spirit.

We have to come to an end of ourselves. You know, that's the story. That's the meaning behind that incident where the disciples struggled all night to catch fish.

And then Jesus came when they had come to an end of themselves. Lord, we can't make it. We toiled all night and we caught nothing.

And the Lord said, okay, now I'll fill your boat. We've got to come to that place. And that's the place where we are ready to receive the power of God's Holy Spirit.

So Jesus offers us the power of his Holy Spirit. And we thought in the first session of the Holy Spirit like the breath of God. In the second session, we thought of him as rivers of living water.

All expressions found in the Gospels. And in the third session, we thought of him as the fire of God. And now we want to look at the Holy Spirit as the anointing of God.

In the Old Testament, very frequently we read of prophets and kings and priests being anointed. Now the Bible says that all of us are kings and priests today. Jesus Christ has made us kings and priests unto God.

And if so, we're to be anointed. Everyone. The kings were all supposed to be anointed in the Old Testament.

The priests were all anointed. And Jesus himself, we read in Luke chapter 4 and verse 18. This is the first sermon that he ever preached.

For 30 years, he'd gone to that synagogue in Nazareth and never opened his mouth. I've always been amazed at that. How Jesus, who knew so much, could sit there and listen to all those boring sermons that the Pharisees preached and keep quiet for 30 years.

Because the father never gave him permission to speak. You see, Jesus didn't speak just because he knew so much. A lot of people speak because they know so much.

But Jesus lived so strictly under the authority of his father that for 30 years, I see his tremendous humility there and the tremendous obedience to the authority of his father that he could go to that synagogue for 30 years and never open his mouth and listen to all those boring sermons that he heard for all those years. And then one day the father anointed him. You know that after the baptism when he came up out of the waters.

It says the spirit of God came upon him. Perhaps we could look at that in Luke chapter 3. Sorry, Luke chapter 3, same gospel. Verse 21, it says the people were being baptized.

Jesus also was baptized. And I want you to notice something here which is not mentioned in the other gospels. Something that Jesus did when he was being baptized in water, which most people do not do when they are being baptized in water.

He was praying. You know what Jesus did when he was going under the water? He was praying. And I know what he was praying for.

How do I know? It's not written there. I know because whatever Jesus prayed for, he got an answer immediately. So if you look at the next verse, you'll know what he was praying for.

Whatever you read, Jesus was praying. And you look at the next verse, you know what he was praying for. So he was praying and the heavens were opened.

And the Holy Spirit descended on him in bodily form like a dove. Now this is one of those mysteries of scripture. Some things in scripture are a mystery.

The cleverest person in the world cannot understand it. No use trying to understand it. There are many things I don't try to explain or understand.

And one of these is this. You know people can use logic and say, wasn't the Father, Son and Holy Spirit one? Wasn't the Holy Spirit always with Jesus from the time he was born? It says about John the Baptist that he was filled with the Holy Spirit from his mother's womb. How much more Jesus? So what is this Holy Spirit coming upon him? Where was the Holy Spirit all this time? I don't try to explain it.

I just know. Of course the Holy Spirit was one with Jesus all along. He was born of the Holy Spirit.

And I'm sure he was filled with the Holy Spirit. Otherwise if John the Baptist was, much more Jesus. Otherwise he couldn't have lived that overcoming life as a man for 30 years.

Yet there was another, how shall I put it, anointing of the Holy Spirit. Another experience that even Jesus needed before he could go out and serve the Father. That challenges me.

He who had lived such a holy life for 30 years that he had never sinned, was not qualified to serve the Father with a holy life. Do you know that? That a holy life is very important but that's not enough to serve the Father? Okay. He knew the Scriptures better than anyone in Israel at the age of 12.

Can you imagine how much better he knew it by the time he was 30? Knowing the Scriptures better than anyone in the world still doesn't qualify you to serve the Father. You've got to be anointed. That's what I learned from this incident.

And the other thing I learned is, to be anointed, you have to pray. You have to ask. You don't have because you don't ask.

I've discovered four reasons when I study the Scriptures, why believers don't get all that God has for them. Number one, they don't know that there is such a thing for them. Number two, maybe they know but they don't ask.

They don't bother to ask. That's another reason many people don't get. Third, they ask but they don't ask with faith.

They're not sure. Maybe God will give. Well, I'll tell you he won't give because it's unbelief.

And the fourth reason is, they ask with wrong motives. They ask for some selfish reason. These are four reasons why people never receive what God wants them to have.

I want to say this to you, my brothers and sisters, that there are many things that God wants us to have, which it is possible that we may never receive on this earth because of one of these four reasons. I heard a story the other day. It's a parable of a man who went to heaven and Peter took him around heaven and he saw a huge building there that looked like a warehouse.

And he asked Peter, what's in here? And Peter said, don't go there. He said, I'd like to see. He said, okay.

I warned you, don't go there. Anyway, he opened the warehouse and he saw a number of shelves with different people's names there. And he said, is my name somewhere here? He said, yes, it's there, but don't go there.

But he went and he found the shelf with his name and he found number of boxes there, like in all the other shelves. And he opened these boxes and he saw these were the blessings God wanted him to have on earth, but which he never got because he never asked. He never believed.

He never trusted that God would do these things for him. And so they were stacked up there in heaven and he never got them. And he felt so bad.

He said, oh, I wish I knew. And regret came over his life. Peter said, I told you, don't have a look at that.

You'll regret it. That really spoke to me. And I said, Lord, when I get up there, I want that shelf to be empty.

Don't you? That there shouldn't be a single thing that God meant you and me to have here on this earth, which remained unfulfilled, uncollected from heaven, not received, because I didn't ask, I didn't know, I didn't believe or I asked with wrong motives. The anointing of the Holy Spirit, is it for me or not? It was for Jesus, that of course we know, it's clear here. The Holy Spirit came upon him and after that he did a lot of things, which he never did in the first 30 years.

It wasn't more holiness. You can't say that Jesus was holier at 32 than he was at 28. No, he was holy when he was 10.

He was holy when he was 33. He never sinned when he was 10. He never sinned when he was 33.

It wasn't greater holiness primarily. What was it that Jesus could do after he was 30, that he never did before? What was it that the anointing of the Holy Spirit did for him? He could preach powerfully. He could cast out demons.

He could heal the sick. He could exercise gifts to serve the Father, which he never did in all the previous 30 years. Now, the anointing of the Holy Spirit does not necessarily give all of us the same gifts that Jesus had, because of one reason.

Jesus was the total body of Christ himself. Whereas you and I are just one member of the body of Christ. Don't forget that.

So, we shouldn't imagine that all the gifts that Jesus had, we can have. All the gifts that Jesus had, the total body of Christ worldwide will have, but not just any individual. Because today, the body of Christ is millions of people.

Some of them are already in heaven and scattered across the world. But when Jesus was on earth, there was only one person who was the body of Christ. That was Christ himself.

So, that's why the church is called the body of Christ, because it's supposed to fulfill the same ministry that the first body of Christ did on earth. And that's a very challenging calling. You and I need to recognize what's your calling on earth.

Here's the answer. To fulfill the same ministry that Jesus did when he was on earth. He did it in totality himself.

I have to do my part and I have to work along with others who are members of his body in order to fulfill it. I may not heal the sick. In my case, God hasn't given me the gift of healing.

So, I don't even attempt to fulfill that ministry. God has given that to other people. I'm not even an evangelist.

God's given that gift to other people. God's given me the gift of teaching. So, I fulfill that.

And that particular gift that God gives you to fulfill it effectively. It's just one small part of the body of Christ. And even in teaching, I find there are different emphases that different teachers have.

And God's given me a particular emphasis. So, I've got to fulfill that. But in order to fulfill it, I need to be anointed with the Holy Spirit.

Now, you also have a particular function in the body of Christ. A specific function as unique as some part of your body. You could be a little finger.

You could be an invisible part like the kidney. You could be the tongue or the eye or the ear. There are certain members of the body, of our physical body that are more prominent and visible.

And there are certain members of Christ's body also that are more prominent that stand in the pulpit often and are visible. But don't think those are the only important members. Do you think your heart is important? What about your liver and kidneys? You've never seen them.

And there are certain members of the body of Christ hidden away in congregations who are never seen. They never stand in the pulpit in all their life. They are some of the most important members.

So, no one should ever feel that they have no function. There are some people who call to a ministry of prayer who get absolutely no glory here on this earth. Can you imagine what a reward they're going to get when the Lord comes again? But whatever their ministry, there's one thing every member of the body of Christ needs, that they need to be anointed.

And so that's the first message after he came out of the baptism and was anointed and went out and was tempted for 40 days in the wilderness. And then came to this synagogue in Nazareth and Luke 4.16. He went to that synagogue in Nazareth, Luke 4.16 and he got up and read. And the book of the prophet Isaiah was handed to him.

And he opened the book and turned to a particular passage. And he read. Remember, this is the first message he ever gave.

The spirit of the Lord, verse 18, is upon me. He has anointed me. And now he tells us what he was anointed for.

And notice, not one word is mentioned about he's anointed me to live a holy life or he's anointed me to be humble. No. If you notice the things that are mentioned here, which explain the reason why the Holy Spirit anointed Jesus Christ.

Notice one thing. Everything was for other people. He anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor.

He sent me to proclaim release to the captives. He sent me to proclaim recovery of sight to the blind. To set free those who are downtrodden.

To proclaim the favorable year of the Lord to everybody. What was in it for himself? Nothing. The Bible speaks about the fruit of the spirit and the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

Now, this may be a very simplistic way of defining it. And I wouldn't be too rigid on it. But in a very simple way, we could say the fruit is for myself and the gifts are for others.

If I have joy, which is one of the fruits of the spirit. If I have peace, another fruit of the spirit, you don't get the benefit of it. I get the benefit of it.

I get all the benefit of having joy and peace filling my heart. But when God gives me the gift of teaching, it's you who get the benefit of it. When God gives a man the gift of healing, it's somebody else who gets the benefit of it.

When God makes a man an evangelist, it's somebody else who gets the benefit of it. So, if you can remember this. Therefore, all the fruit of the spirit mentioned in Galatians 5, 22 and 23 is for every individual.

All of us need, every one of us need love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, self-control. All of us. But when it comes to the gifts of the spirit, we don't need all of them and God won't.

I mean some rare individuals like the Apostle Paul may have had almost all of them because, partly because they were in the early days of the church and the body of Christ was very limited in membership those days. And the very, very few people and some of those apostles needed everything. But now we are so much larger in number that God doesn't have to give all those gifts concentrated in one person.

He makes one person an evangelist, another person a prophet, another person a teacher, another person a help. And you know one of the gifts mentioned in Romans 12 is the gift of giving money for God's work. Not many people seek that gift, but that's one of the gifts.

It's mentioned there as one of the gifts is the ability to give cheerfully for God's work. It is a gift. I've seen that some people really have that gift.

And hospitality. Some people have a unique gift of hospitality. It's something that really blesses the body of Christ.

You know if you're hospitable, it's other people are being blessed. There are many, many gifts. It's not just speaking in tongues is one, interpretation of tongues is another, exhorting.

There are many gifts like this. They're not all spoken gifts. There are gifts of administration, organizing things in a church so important, and gifts of helps, hidden ministries of helping in many, many things.

They are listed in 1 Corinthians 12, Romans 12, 1 Peter 4, Ephesians 4. Those are the four main chapters in which these gifts are mentioned. And there are many more, and I don't believe those lists mentioned in these chapters are comprehensive. But every gift, if you are to exercise them, we need to be anointed.

And I want to show you something very interesting in the Old Testament. I don't have time to go into it in detail, but Leviticus, the third book in the Old Testament, we looked at it twice this morning. Leviticus chapter 14 is a very interesting chapter.

And we're not going to read through it now, but sometime when you get time, you go home and read it. Here it speaks about the law for the cleansing of the leper. And the leper in the Old Testament was always a picture of a sinner.

It's a picture of you and me. And this leper, in the day he was cleansed, he had to take two male lambs, Leviticus 14, verse 10, and had to be killed. And what I want you to notice is in verse 14, the priest was to take some of the blood of the guilt offering and put one drop on the lobe of his right ear, one drop on the thumb of his right hand, I'm reading 14:14, and one drop on the big toe of his right foot.

That was to show cleansing from head to foot of all sin. And then the priest had to dip his right hand finger, verse 16, into the oil. That's the picture of the Holy Spirit.

Remember, we have two problems, our past and our future, our nature and the blood for our past and the Holy Spirit to overcome our nature. So the oil here is a picture of this anointing, anointing oil. The priest dips his right hand finger and notice what he does, he puts that oil on top of this blood, on top of the right ear lobe, on top of the blood on the thumb of his right hand, verse 17, on top of the blood on the big toe.

So that is that a person, that's the initial ministry of the Holy Spirit where a man is cleansed and he's born of the Holy Spirit. Now the interesting thing is that you read about earlier on in chapter 8 or chapter 9 about the way the priest was anointed. When Aaron, the high priest was anointed, exactly the same thing was done to him.

Moses took the blood and put it on his ear and his thumb and his right toe and then put the oil on his ear and thumb and his right toe. And Aaron there is a picture of Jesus Christ. And the leper is a picture of us.

Now the point I want to make is the same anointing that the high priest got, the leper got. I praise the Lord for that. The same anointing that was on Jesus, the high priest, a leper like me can get.

What a message. This is the gospel. And okay, now here's a person who's cleansed in the blood and the one drop of oil symbolizes being born of the Holy Spirit.

But that's not all. It says in verse 18, the rest of the oil, this is being baptized in the Holy Spirit or filled with the Holy Spirit. He must pour upon the head of the one who is to be cleansed.

This is the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. It's also beautifully pictured there, this filthy leper who had to walk outside the streets, outside the wall of the city, saying unclean, unclean, unclean, could now come in and be as good as a high priest. I don't think any of us realize what a tremendous privilege is ours.

When we come in the name of Jesus Christ to the father, we are accepted before him exactly as he has accepted Jesus Christ. Unbelievable, but true. And don't let the devil ever, ever rob you of this, your birthright.

This is what the blood of Jesus Christ has done for us, however filthy sinners we may be. And this is what the Holy Spirit has come to do in us, to complete that work. So that not only are we cleansed, not only are we accepted, Jesus was not only cleansed and accepted, he didn't have to be cleansed, of course, he was accepted, but he served his father and did such a tremendous work for him on earth.

And I can receive that oil upon my head and do a tremendous work for God, even though I was a filthy leper. I believe that. I believe I'm important in the body of Christ.

And you must believe that my brothers and sisters. You're not just a non-entity floating around on the earth. You're not just a social security number.

You're a person, a part of the body of Christ with a very important function to be fulfilled. Like that hymn says, there's a work for Jesus that none but you can do. That's why we shouldn't try to imitate somebody else's ministry.

If you try to imitate somebody else's ministry, you'll destroy your own. There's a work for Jesus that no one but you can do. And if you don't do it, something will be left out.

This is the anointing. Now I want to show you another passage in Exodus. Some of these Old Testament passages have a tremendous truth in them.

Exodus is the second book of the Old Testament. In chapter 30, the Lord told Moses how to make this anointing oil. And I want you to notice here it says, Exodus chapter 30, verse 25.

You shall make of these, He gives them a proportion of various things, myrrh, cinnamon, in the previous verses, cassia, etc., olive oil. And verse 25, you shall make of these a holy anointing oil. Now this is what we are thinking of, the Holy Spirit as a holy anointing oil.

A perfume mixture, it shall be a holy anointing oil and with it, He says, you must anoint, verse 30, Aaron, that's a picture of Christ, and his sons, that's you and me, sons and daughters, and consecrate them that they, that's referring to Christ, and all of us, may minister as priests unto me. So we've got to be anointed to be able to serve effectively. You can serve without being anointed, but to serve effectively, you've got to be anointed.

A lot of people serving, but they haven't felt the need to pray like Jesus prayed at the time of His baptism. Father, anoint me so that I can serve you. I wouldn't dare to serve you without being anointed.

Remember, this is the Son of God, and I believe we've all got to learn a lesson from that. Father, anoint me. And again, let me say, as I said more than once this morning, this is not something that I can have once for all.

I've seen enough people in my life who were once anointed, who are not anointed today. The greatest example is Satan himself. The Bible says about Satan, do you know that he's the first person in the Bible mentioned as being anointed? You can read that in Ezekiel 28.

He was called the anointed cherub, the anointed angel. You know how he lost the anointing? Through pride. He became proud of the ministry God had given him.

And do you know how many a servant of God has lost his anointing? Exactly the same way a wise man learns from the mistakes of other people. We can learn from how the devil lost his anointing. He was anointed, and he lost his anointing.

King Saul, we read in 1 Samuel chapter 10, was anointed so powerfully that he became another man. And then he lost that anointing through pride and disobedience. And David knew that.

And that's why when David sinned with Bathsheba in adultery, he wrote in Psalm 51, Oh God, I've sinned against you. Please, please don't take your Holy Spirit from me. He was scared.

He didn't say don't take away the kingdom or the kingship. Take the kingship, take the kingdom, take my reputation, but don't take your Holy Spirit from me. When a man learns to value the anointing of the Holy Spirit like that, I tell you, he'll have a constant anointing upon his life.

So it's not a once for all experience. There are enough examples in history of people who've been anointed and who've lost that anointing. So here it says, you must anoint Aaron and his sons.

And verse 32, it shall not be poured on anyone's body. He says, this is not meant for everybody. This is meant for Aaron's sons.

This is meant for those who are born again. And those who want to be disciples of Jesus Christ. Why couldn't this anointing oil be poured upon the sons of Judah or the sons of Reuben? No, it had to be the sons of Aaron.

And there was a reason for it. Aaron and his sons were chosen by God to be priests. It's a tremendous privilege to be chosen by God to serve him.

That's a great honor and the greatest honor this world can give you. To be chosen by God to serve him and you. And when I say serve him, I'm not talking about people who quit their jobs and become pastors.

Every member in the body of Christ is meant to serve him. You may be doing a secular job, but that's secondary. That's just to earn your living.

Your main purpose in life, I hope you realize, is not just to build up some company you're working in. I hope you realize your main function in life is to build up the body of Christ. Like Noah.

He was farming to support his family, but his main job was not farming, he was building the ark. He had a vision, a sense of purpose. And so every one of us is called to serve the Lord.

Everyone of us therefore needs to be anointed. But there was a price that Aaron and his sons had to pay. I don't know whether you've read the Old Testament and noticed that.

We read in the book of Numbers chapter 18 that the Lord told the sons of Aaron, I think it's in verse 20, you must not own any land in Canaan. Do you know that when God distributed the land of Canaan, there were 13 tribes because one tribe was split into two and the Levites were extra. There were 13 tribes.

The tribe of Joseph was split into Manasseh and Ephraim. And the tribe of Levi was separate. And God distributed the land to all those other tribes and gave Levi nothing.

Does that sound partial or unfair? The Bible says in Numbers 18.20, the Lord said to Levi, they will get land, you folks will get me. Who was richer? Levi. You shall have no inheritance in the land, the Lord said to Levi, because I am your inheritance.

And Levi said, fine Lord. And Lord said, pour the anointing oil only on these people. Maybe you should see that verse.

Let's turn for a moment. Numbers chapter 18, verse 20. The Lord said to Aaron, you shall have no inheritance in their land, nor any portion among them, because I am your portion.

I am your inheritance. And if you really get your eyes open, Levi, Aaron, you'll realize that you're richer than all the others. See, that's our calling.

For us, the application of that is not that we shouldn't own land on earth, but that we shouldn't be attached to this earth. That's the point. That I may have something, I may have a car, I may have a house, but I'm not attached to any of them.

I have a job, not attached to them. Jesus Christ is my inheritance and that's enough. In other words, my primary purpose on earth is to live for the fulfillment of God's will in my life.

And every person who is gripped, everyone sitting here, who is gripped by this sense of purpose, God says, pour the holy anointing oil on that person. Every one of us, if you're willing, if that's your desire and that's God's desire for you, and if your desire agrees with God's desire, the anointing oil is for you, brother, sister, man or woman. The promise is, in the last days, I will pour out my spirit on all flesh.

And your sons and your daughters will prophesy. You read that in Acts chapter 2. Now, that wasn't true in the Old Testament. In the Old Testament, it was only Aaron's sons.

His daughters missed out completely. But not today. Praise God.

Your sons and your daughters can prophesy. You can speak forth God's word and bless other people. And on your male servants and female servants, God says, I'll pour out my spirit and they shall prophesy.

They shall serve me. Everyone can now serve the Lord, but they need to be anointed. They need to have this outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon them.

And that's how the church is to be built. Another thing the Lord said in Leviticus, was, sorry, in Exodus, in the chapter we read in chapter 30, He said, it shall not be poured on anybody else's body. Verse 32, another thing He said was, nobody should make anything like it.

Don't try to imitate the anointing oil. What a word for our day. Don't try to produce it elsewhere.

In other words, the application is, don't try to imitate the ministry of the Holy Spirit. There's a lot of imitation today. There's a lot of psychological gimmicks going on today, which people claim to be the working of the Holy Spirit.

They're not. I'm sorry to say, they're not. And one proof of it is, they don't glorify Christ.

They glorify some man. Another proof of it is, they make preachers rich. Jesus didn't become rich through exercising the gifts of the Spirit, like many preachers have become today.

We mustn't forget that. These are the marks of a counterfeit anointing. A holy anointing oil, which somebody is trying to duplicate, imitate.

They see something somewhere, and they try to do the same thing themselves. And it was a very serious warning. If anyone, Exodus 30, verse 33, makes anything like it, he will be cut off from his people.

It's a very serious thing. Jesus said that in the last days, many will come before him and say, Lord, we prophesied in your name. We cast out demons in your name.

We healed the sick in your name. And Jesus said, cut off. I never knew you.

That's a fulfillment of this verse. They tried to imitate what was reserved for a few. It's a very serious thing to be anointed with the Holy Spirit.

I cannot take God's gifts and use them for myself. That's a fundamental violation of God's nature. God's nature is to give.

God so loved the world that he gave. Not took. God gave.

When Jesus was anointed, and here's an example of it. When Jesus was anointed with the Holy Spirit, do you know the very next thing that the devil told him? You've got power now. Get some benefit out of it.

Turn the stones into bread and have a good meal. Or use your gift to make money. Meaning is the same.

Use the gift God's given you to get some benefit for yourself. And Jesus said, no. He would never use the anointing his father gave him for any benefit for himself.

He did use that power to produce bread for 5000 people once. That's for others. But he wouldn't use it for himself.

A fundamental principle, if you want to live under the anointing of the Holy Spirit, I must not get benefit for myself out of a gift God's given me to give to other people. And this is the principle that's been violated all over Christendom. And that's why you see wonderful men of God losing the anointing.

And you see them some years later falling into sin and many other things much worse than that. So let me now turn to the book of Zachariah. Zachariah chapter 4, we read about this anointing oil building the church.

In Zachariah chapter 4 and verse 11, God gave Zachariah a vision of two olive trees. Zachariah 4 verse 11, one on the left side and one on the right side of a lamb stand. Now we know from Revelation chapter 1 that a lamb stand is a picture of the church of Jesus Christ.

Jesus himself said that to John, the lamb stand that you've seen is my church. So here is a picture of a church. But this church needs anointed people to serve it if it is to be built.

Now in the Old Testament, they used to have a lamb stand in the tabernacle and the priest had to go every morning and make sure the oil was poured in so that the light was burning on the lamb stand. It was a seven branch lamb stand, the symbol of the nation of Israel today. And the priest had to make sure that the oil was there in all the seven lamps for it to burn.

He had to renew the supply of oil every morning. But here is a more wonderful method. There's no need of a priest here.

There are two olive trees and from the olive trees, verse 12, there are two branches that go beside the golden pipes and empty the olive oil directly into the lamb stand. This is continuous flow. No need of any priest coming in making sure it's done every morning.

And this is the New Testament where there's a continuous flow of the Holy Spirit's anointing that builds the church of Jesus Christ. That's how we're supposed to be in the church every day of our lives. Whether we come for a or whether we are at home, we're to be like this continuously.

An olive tree is continuously full of oil. And that olive oil is to be supplied to this lamp stand to make the lamp burn. The reason why God gives us an anointing, the reason why God put that olive oil inside these olive trees is so that it supplies the lamp stand.

And the reason why God's given you an anointing or me an It's also beautiful. And it's explained here in verse 14 as these two trees are pictures of two anointed ones who are standing by the Lord of all the earth. I think they symbolize being kings and priests.

In that sense, it refers to all of us. These two olive trees continuously anointed to continuously build the church of Jesus Christ on earth. I want to say this, my brothers and sisters, this is the most satisfying life that you can ever live.

You cannot live a happier life than this. I have been serving the Lord now full time for about 37 years from the time I left my job in the Indian Navy. And I can say that this has been the most satisfying life than anybody could ever live.

I'm an extremely happy man. God's given me such a tremendous privilege of being able to serve people. Of course, it's involved a lot of trials and difficulties and persecutions and false accusations and 101 other things like that, that that all servants of the Lord face.

You can't escape them. Jesus faced them, Paul faced them, Peter faced them. But the rewards are so much greater.

The opportunity to serve and bless other people that I want to say to you, I'm not saying that everybody's called to full time Christian work, maybe one in 100 that God calls for that. But everyone must be anointed. And everyone must have this attitude of mind that everything God gives me is to supply to the church.

That's what I've got to build up. This lampstand must burn all the time. Everyone here must burn.

We're today not a seven branch lampstand. Maybe we are. How much is it? 3500 branch lampstand here.

Every one of those branches must burn. There must be a continuous supply of oil. One more example.

In second Kings and chapter four. In second Kings chapter four, we read of a woman who was a widow. Her husband had been a servant of the Lord and he had died.

And unfortunately, he died, leaving his family in debt. A very poor example of a servant of the Lord. No person should ever die, leaving their family in debt.

That's not God's will. Here it says, he died and the creditor has come now, second Kings four one, to take my two children to be slaves. We can look at this widow as a picture of the church.

Weak, helpless, in debt to give the gospel to the rest of the world. Paul said that. I'm a debtor to the Greek and the barbarian.

I have to give what God's given me. And many of the children, slaves. Many people in the church, slaves who should be kings.

So she came to Elisha with a problem. I've always thought when I read the story, how wonderful that there was one man to whom she could go. A man who knew God.

Do you know, it's such a tremendous blessing in a church, if there's one man who knows God. One man can make a difference in a church. She went to Elisha and said, here I am, this is my condition.

Elisha asked her one question, what do you have? And listen to her reply. I have nothing except a jar of oil. It's like saying, I have nothing except the Holy Spirit.

You see the ridiculousness of that? That's the answer to all your problems. And that's what Elisha said. What do you mean you've got nothing? You've got a jar of oil? There's the solution to all your problems.

Elisha said, go borrow vessels, verse 3, from all your neighbors. Empty vessels. Don't get just a few, get many.

Go inside, shut the door. You've got to do this before God. You and your sons and take that jar of oil and keep pouring into the vessels and one after the other they'll be full.

And then she got vessels from all her neighbors and filled them all up. And then she said to her son, see if you can find any a vessel anywhere in the neighborhood. They said, no more, it's all finished.

And then she came and told the man of God, verse 7. And he said, go sell the oil and you can pay your debt. A beautiful picture of what the anointing oil can do in our life. So often, what do we say? The Lord says, you are to be my witnesses unto the uttermost parts of the earth.

You say, Lord, I'm not qualified. I don't have anything. I haven't gone to a Bible school.

I haven't studied. I'm not gifted. Exactly like this woman.

I have nothing. I remember as a young Christian, I've never been to Bible school myself. I came to the Lord as a young Christian and I said, Lord, I'm so weak.

I'm so timid. I'm so shy. I'm afraid to stand before people.

What do I need? A jar of oil. That's all. If you have the Holy Spirit's anointing, the Lord says, bring the vessels, any number, 10,000, 50,000, keep pouring.

Not one person will go away empty. Everyone will receive something. You know God can do that.

My God will supply all your needs according to His riches and glory by Christ Jesus. There is the answer to our need and our problem. And I'm sure she not only sold the oil and paid her debt completely, she became a free woman, liberated her children.

And that's what the Holy Spirit can do. Set us free, set our children free from slavery. I'm sure every neighbor got a full vessel of oil back.

And that's the way God makes us a blessing to our neighbors. That we become a blessing to them. They give us an empty vessel of oil and we send a empty vessel and we send a full vessel of oil back.

That's what the Christians call to do, to be a blessing. How shall we do it? We need to be filled with the Holy Spirit. You don't need any other qualification.

She said, I've got nothing. You don't need anything. Have you got a jar of oil? And that's what the Lord asks us today.

If not, ask. One last verse. Luke chapter 11.

The disciples came to Jesus and said, Lord, teach us to pray. Luke 11, verse 1. And he taught them to pray. He said, there was a man who had a visitor at midnight, verse 5. He's teaching them to pray, OK? There was a man who had a visitor at midnight and he didn't have any food to give him.

A picture of our helplessness in being able to meet the need of others whom we come across. What did this man do? He went to his neighbor's house, a picture of our going to God and knocked and knocked and knocked and knocked till he got what was needed for this visitor. Teaching us how to pray.

This is the answer to the question, Lord, teach us to pray. Go before God and keep on asking not for yourself. That's the point.

He wasn't asking bread for himself. His stomach was full. He was so concerned about his visitor.

And I believe that's the main thing we need to understand when seeking God for the power of the Holy Spirit. Whom are you asking this power for? Is it because you want to get a ticklish feeling down your spine or give a testimony of the next testimony meeting as to how the Spirit of God did something to you? Or you saw a vision or an angel or something like that? Or is it because you want to bless somebody who's in need? Something not so spectacular, but that will bless somebody else. If your desire is to bless somebody else, God says, come to me and ask.

And Jesus said further, this fellow kept on knocking till he got what he wanted. And Jesus said, I say to you, verse nine, ask like this, knock like this, and it will be open. Seek like this and you'll find.

For everyone who asks like this gets. Those who don't ask like this don't get. And then he said, what are we supposed to ask for? That also he explained.

Verse 13, if you being good, ye will know how to give good gifts to your children. How much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him? This is the answer to the question, Lord, teach us to pray. Verse one, what are we supposed to pray for? For the power of God's Holy Spirit, so that we can meet the need of people around us whose needs we cannot meet right now.

We can see people around us with need and say, well, it's none of my business. Well, if that's your attitude, you don't need the Holy Spirit. You certainly don't.

You can go spend your life making money or some stupid thing like that. But if you want to fulfill God's will for your life, say, God, that's not what you called me for. You called me to seek your kingdom first and these other things would be added to me.

I don't go seeking after the other things. Those are just added. But my main calling in life, your main calling in life is to be a blessing to other people.

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