

The Spirit Produces Fervent Devotion to Christ

by Zac Poonen

Zac Poonen emphasizes the profound impact of God's love on a believer's life, urging a fervent devotion to Christ through the Holy Spirit.

Duration: 1:13:15

Scripture: Isaiah 42:8, Romans 8:11, Colossians 2:15, Hebrews 2:14, Hebrews 5:7, James 4:7, 1 John 4:17, Jude 1:21, Revelation 3:21

Topics: "Holy Spirit", "Gods Love"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of surrendering to God and experiencing His love. It highlights the need to grow in the knowledge of God's love, encouraging a deep revelation of His love for each individual. The speaker reflects on the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross, the power of His love to transform lives, and the significance of maintaining fellowship with the Father. The sermon also addresses the defeat of Satan through Christ's victory on the cross and the necessity of living a life filled with the Holy Spirit to overcome spiritual battles and walk in authority over the enemy.

Transcript

Think of that as the love of God. That means if my assurance of my father in heaven loving me is just this much when I'm born again, my knowledge of my father's love for me must become like a bucket as I grow, must become like a pond, like a river, like many rivers. So I want to encourage all of you, my dear brothers and sisters, as we conclude this conference, pray that God will give you a tremendous revelation of his love for you.

This is the whole secret of the Christian life. They never could understand it in the old covenant. When you say that the spirit of God could not dwell within people in the old covenant, they couldn't understand how much God loved them.

It is only the power of that love, recognition of that love that God loves us, that's going to make us serve him till the end of our lives, willing to make any sacrifice. You think of the early Christians, what is it that made them willing to go to death, to death, to sing when they were being burnt at the stake or thrown to the lions? We face nothing. What we've got is mosquito bites.

They were thrown to the lions. We should be ashamed of ourselves that we complain about silly little things, some little petty request of ours God didn't answer and some believers get all upset about that.

Where do we stand in relation to the early Christians who were thrown to the lions and would sing songs? In my sitting room, I have a big painting of that Roman Colosseum and the early Christians all in torn clothes, a few of them kneeling down there and an older person leading them in prayer and lions coming out of the cages to devour them.

I look at it often. My life is very comfortable compared to theirs, but I never want to forget that these are my brothers and sisters. These are my forerunners.

These are the first spirit-filled people. They weren't sitting in comfortable chairs singing songs and speaking in tongues and making a lot of noise and jumping and dancing. They were laying down their lives just because they would not say Caesar is Lord.

That's all. You only had to say three words to escape. Caesar is Lord.

They say we won't say it. Say Jesus Christ is Lord. I've heard stories how when the lions would come upon them and they would be praising God and every one of them, even young girls without any fear and somebody up in the auditorium would be so convicted seeing that and seeing this is the real faith.

All the idols of worship are nonsense. And he would shout out, I'm also a Christian. And they would catch him and throw him to the lions too.

Imagine that. I think of that and I say, Lord, make me worthy. One day when I stand in heaven and I see these people and they ask me for my story, my testimony, and they tell me theirs, what will I tell them? About the silly little things I complained about on earth, the worthless mosquito bites that I called problems.

I'd be ashamed to open my mouth. These are our brothers and sisters who have gone ahead of us. I would any day make them my forerunners than all these shallow television evangelists with their million dollar airplanes fooling simple people.

I have no respect for them. Zero. These are my forerunners.

I also have another painting, the one you just saw just now, the father embracing the son. These are the things I look at frequently because I need to remind myself not only of how these people loved the Lord, but also I want to remind myself of the time I came back to my heavenly father and he ran to welcome me when I had dishonored his name and he could have sent me to hell. I dishonored his name and as a believer, you know the sins we commit when we are born again, after we are born again, are much more serious than what we commit before we are born again.

If you tell a lie after you're born again, to me that's like telling a thousand lies when you're unconverted. So every little sin becomes magnified. I don't know whether that's happened to you, but I've found as I've come closer to the Lord, sin becomes exceedingly sinful, like the Bible says.

That means it's like seeing something under a magnifying glass, that thing which looked like a small speck is a huge rock. Do you find sin like that? A little bit of a complaining spirit, a little bit of something in your heart, an anger that you didn't even express. Yeah, the only thing that's made me see these things is seeing it all in the light of God's love.

The Holy Spirit fills my heart with the love of God and this has been my testimony. Even though I was converted when I was 19 and a half, I really had a deep and I had an anointing even when I was 23 to be able to preach and it was quite powerful and I had great liberty. God had gifted me, but in spite of that I backslid as a preacher.

I'm ashamed to say it, but I want to say it for the glory of God, the grace of God that reached out to me and didn't let me go and drew me back and filled me with the Holy Spirit. It was exactly like that picture. There was a time when I was a sinner, then I came to the Lord, then I was a son but wandered away like that prodigal son.

When I came back, He ran to welcome me and that's what I can never forget, that I owe my whole life to Him. I thought of, you know, when I was first converted, it was a little picture the Lord gave me in my little immature Christian way. I felt, I think in pictures.

I read the Bible and I see pictures and it helps me to understand scripture better. That's how I preach also because I see that Jesus always spoke in pictures and one of the pictures I saw was myself. I don't mean a vision, it was just in my mind.

I saw myself as someone about to cross a road and a massive truck came and I didn't see it. It was about to run me over and someone came and pushed me out of the way just in time and he got run over. He didn't die but his legs were completely crushed and broken.

This is the picture. It's like a parable and I go to see this man in the hospital with his amputated legs and I used to think, I was only about 20, 21 then, what would I tell him? Will my thank you for doing that for me, will that be sufficient? I owe my life to him. I would be dead if it were not for him but he's lost his legs.

I would say, listen, I don't know what I can do for you in return but if ever in your life you need anything, anytime, just call on me. I'll drop the most important thing I'm doing and I'll come. I don't care where I am, I'll fly around the world or anything, I'll come to help you.

You just got to give me a call. I will not wait one moment. That's how I decided to commit myself to the Lord.

I owed my life to him and I said, Lord, I will never again live for my own ambitions. I have none. I'll never again live to make money on earth.

I owe my entire life to you. I wouldn't be alive if it were not for you. I don't know whether you have seen the love of God like that and responded to him.

See, so much of the way a lot of people are asked to give to God now is so commercial. God is like a banker offering a higher rate of interest than some of these other banks. That's how some preachers preach.

Come and give your money to this ministry. God will bless you with a better job, better house. This is all business.

I don't know how in the world Christianity has descended to this level. The merchantmen have come into the temple. What surprises me more is the thousands of Christians who sit and watch all this with their mouths open wondering, he's not a man of God.

He's a trickster. There's hardly anybody available to expose him. If Jesus was here, he would just take the whip and chase them all out.

And I'm not afraid of saying it. Some of these people claim to be filled with the Holy Spirit and speak in tongues and all. I don't believe it at all.

Because of one reason. When the Holy Spirit filled me, he freed me from the love of money. These people love money.

What type of baptism in the Holy Spirit is that? That makes you love money more. It should make you like Jesus. But these people are not like Jesus.

I don't respect them at all. I say this, there's a need to expose these things because nobody else exposes them. There was nobody to expose the Pharisees till Jesus came along.

And because he exposed them, people like Peter and James and John were freed. Some people say, you shouldn't criticize any of these people. You may be blaspheming, yes, the Holy Spirit.

I said, rubbish, I'm not afraid of all that. The Bible says, beloved, believe not every spirit. 1 John 4 verse 1. But test the spirits.

Do you do that? When you listen to a preacher, do you test his spirit? Do you see whether he's interested in your money or he's interested in your soul? Do you see whether he's attaching you to himself or drawing you to Christ? So important in these days. These are days of deception. I want to test the spirits.

Does listening to him make you want to give your money to him or make you want to give your life totally to Jesus? That's the test. And I found when the Spirit of God, you know, I was in this backslidden state as a preacher and I came to the place where I said, Lord, I won't continue preaching anymore because I'm just a hypocrite. That's when the Lord met me.

And instead of sending me to hell, he filled me with the Spirit. And I learned one thing that day, that God does not give the Holy Spirit to those who deserve him. He gives to those who don't deserve him.

Because I certainly did not deserve the Holy Spirit when God filled me. I fear that some of you are waiting to deserve the Holy Spirit. You're going in the wrong direction.

Turn around. You will never deserve the Holy Spirit. You will never deserve to be filled with the Holy Spirit.

The day you recognize that, you'll be ready to be filled. Because we've heard so many testimonies of people who fasted and prayed and cried out. I didn't cry out and fast and pray for the Holy Spirit.

I said, Lord, I'm such a rotten sinner. What can you do for me? I'm so defeated by sin. That's what I want deliverance from.

Please help me. And that's why God filled me with the Spirit. I was needy.

Are you needy? You know, in the Old Testament, there's a promise that I'll pour water upon him who is thirsty, who is needy. When the poor and needy cry out for water, I, the Lord, will hear them and drench them. I believe that's what the Lord is looking for.

And when we respond to the Lord like that, it's not a business transaction. It's a love relationship. I say, Lord, I love you, and I want to give myself to you completely.

And since that time, that was 41 years ago, nearly. And since that time, more and more, the Lord's been revealing to me His love tremendously. And an intimacy with Him, you know, where the Lord sometimes tells me things and says, I don't want you to tell anybody else this.

This is only between me and you. You can tell your wife, but don't tell anybody else. You know, it's become a very intimate relationship.

Do you have experiences like that? Where you feel broken and you just feel like John the Apostle fell down into the Lord's feet as a dead man. I've had experiences like that many times. Lord, you're so wonderful.

It's that daily devotion to Christ that's the mark of being constantly filled with the Holy Spirit. If that's not there, my brother, sister, all your Christianity is just a ritual, it can get boring after a while. My Christianity is not boring.

It's never boring. Even the accidents that have along the way. I was once riding my scooter in Bangalore, in India.

And I'll never forget this incident. It happened in 1993, August 1993. It was 22 years ago.

And I was about to cross a railroad crossing. And they have those bars across either side of the railway line. And they're operated manually in India.

You know, somebody sits in a booth there and raises these one by one. So this man had raised one. I think he was a new guy over there.

He was not very familiar with the technique. He raised one bar and I went through. I was the first person in line and I went through.

And he had raised the other one, but then suddenly lowered it. I don't know what he suddenly realized the train was coming or something. And I went bang into it and fell off the scooter and hit my head on the railway track.

And I was unconscious. Till today, I don't know how long I lay there because I don't know anybody else who saw me. And I don't know how much later I came to.

But when I came to my senses, I saw my moped, my two-wheel moped was standing up there. Somebody had put it on the stand and I was wondering what happened. I was all shaken.

And my shoulder was dislocated and had a crack in my skull. Anyway, I was pulled up before any train came by and I was, I mean, I was alive. And I went to the hospital and Santosh was there at that time.

He drove me to the hospital. That's how I discovered there was a crack in my skull. And I said, Lord, Lord, I have not finished saying thank you to you for dying for me.

You've got to give me a few more years to say thank you to you for dying for me. He's given me 22 more years. I want all my life and my service to be like that.

I don't want any reward. I don't take any pay for my services anywhere, in any church. I say, Lord, I live very simply.

I don't need any money. What I get is more than enough for me. If people give something, it goes to the church and the ministry to the poor people in India.

God takes care of me. But I will not serve you for money, never. It's out of love.

What would you think of a wife? I am the Lord's wife. I am. That's my relationship.

And like I said the other day, I'll never forget that he waited 19 and a half years at the wedding altar for me to come. Any other bridegroom would have walked away earlier. And I'll never want to forget that till my dying day, that he waited for me.

And so what would you think of a wife who serves her husband if he'll buy bring flowers for her or buy clothes for her? That's a pathetic marriage relationship. A real marriage is one where bride wants nothing. My wife and I have had a very happy relationship.

She's never asked me to buy clothes for her. These expensive clothes, so many wants. It's not what I need.

My relationship is like that. It's not with her. We live with what we have and buy with whatever little we have, whatever we need.

It's like that, my relationship with the Lord. I want to ask all of you, is your relationship with Jesus Christ like that? That's how the fullness of the spirit, that's the difference it made in my life. And I want to share a revelation that God gave me, which many of you have heard me on before.

I've mentioned it and I never get tired of saying it. Because I think of that song, He took my sins and my sorrows, He made them His very own. He took my sins and my sorrows, and He made them His very own.

And He bore the burden to Calvary, and suffered and died alone. How shall I respond? How marvelous, how wonderful is His love for a sinner like me. And when with the ransomed in glory, that day is coming soon, His face I at last shall see.

It will be my joy through the ages to sing of His love for me, that's all. I don't want any mansions in heaven. There are other people looking for that.

What will I do with a 14 bedroom mansion in heaven? You can have it. What will I do with crowns on my head? I'll throw them all at the feet of Jesus. I don't want any of these things, I'm not looking for these things.

To tell you honestly, I'm not waiting to go to heaven, I'm waiting to be with Jesus. A lot of people are waiting to go to heaven. I'm not.

I told the Lord, I'd be happy to go to hell if you're there, because it'll become heaven for me. Is it like that for you? That's what the fullness of the Spirit did to me. I never get tired of serving the Lord, because it's a love relationship.

I read a verse in Genesis chapter 29, and verse 20, you know when Jacob fell in love with Rachel, Laban's daughter, and said, I want to marry her, and Laban said, you got to work for seven years to get her. Imagine that, working seven years to get a girl. Would you do that? Jacob loved her so much.

But the thing that came home to me in Genesis 29, 20 was, I read this as a very young man, when I was about 20 years old. Jacob served seven years for Rachel, and it seemed unto him but a few days, because of the love he had for her. And I said, Lord Jesus, if a man can serve seven years for a girl, and it seems like a few days, how should I serve you? I said, Lord, I'll serve you.

I said this when I was 20, more than 55 years ago. I said, Lord, I'll serve you all my life, and it'll only be like a few days. Now I say, after 55 years or 56 years, it has been like a few days for me.

I'm ready to serve the Lord another 56 years. It's not money. I never wanted money from God.

It's love. There are things people will do for love they'll never do for anything else. And if your Christian life is not satisfying, exciting, my life is extremely satisfying and exciting.

I'm not pretending. I'm not pretending at all. I say before God, the joy of the Lord fills my heart when I serve Him.

It's because it's a love relationship. The Spirit of God flooded my heart with love. Sometimes I lie in my bed, and I say, Lord, you can take away everything from my life.

You can paralyze me. You can take away my ability to speak that I'll never preach again. Paralyze my hands that I'll never write another book again.

I'll never be able to travel. I lie in this bed, and I'll be a worshiper, because that's what I'm going to do for eternity in any case. I'll worship you and love you with all my heart.

That can't be stopped by paralysis or anything. I'm not a servant primarily. I'm a worshiper.

My favorite songs are not, go out into the vineyard. No. My favorite songs are, my God, how wonderful thou art.

Thy majesty, how bright. How beautiful thy mercy seat in depths of burning light. I sing that often.

Father of Jesus, love's reward. What rapture it'll be, prostrate before your throne to lie and gaze and gaze on thee. Are you a worshiper? When you're filled with the Holy Spirit, you become a worshiper.

Jesus said, you shall worship, and then you shall serve. I'm always serving. I'm traveling almost all the year, here and there, everywhere.

There's never a Sunday throughout the year that I'm not preaching somewhere. And I'll keep going till my dying day, if God gives me help, or till the Lord comes again. I hope that's earlier.

But I want to say to you, what a wonderful thing it is to be filled with the Spirit, with the Holy Spirit flooding our heart with the love of God. Your life will be exciting every day. Like it says in Proverbs 14, 14.

Beautiful verse. The Living Bible paraphrases it as, the godly man's life is exciting. If your Christian life is not exciting, I want to say to you, you're not a godly man.

You're just a religious Christian. True Christianity, when you're filled with the Spirit, is exciting. My family life is exciting.

Honestly, I'm excited. I'm not the perfect husband. There are many shortcomings in me, but I try my best.

I make mistakes and I repent. I apologize. I set things right and try to do it better.

I'm not the perfect father. I apologize to my children as well, when I do it wrong. I have apologized to my co-workers.

I'm not a perfect man. I don't deliberately sin. That's gone out of my life.

I cannot. How can I hurt my Savior? How can I put another nail into His hands? I've already put enough nails into His body. I'm not going to hammer any more nails into His hand.

Accidentally, I slip up now and then. That's different. I immediately repent and come, but it's love that drives me.

I wish it would be like that for all of you. It'll change your life completely. I was telling you about this revelation I got, which I've shared before, about the love of Jesus for me.

I mean, as a child and all through my life, I saw His love on Calvary dying for me. But I saw a deeper understanding of that when I tried to understand His love for me in Gethsemane, when He was praying to the Father, Father, please don't let me drink this cup. Paraphrasing His words.

Is there any way I can get out of this? There was never a time in Jesus' life when He prayed like that. He always wanted to do His Father's will, but when it came to the cross, He said, He wasn't afraid of physical death. Far from it.

He would have gladly died 10,000 physical deaths on Calvary for me. That was something He was shrinking from. And for more than 35 years of my Christian, 16 years of my Christian life, I never understood what it was.

But I've always had a passion to find out something in the scripture that I couldn't figure out what it was. And I wanted the real answer. I didn't want it to, I never wanted a superficial answer that some theologian who studied in a seminary went to the Greek and Hebrew and gave me an answer.

I couldn't care less for those people. I said, I wanted someone who went to the Holy Spirit. And I never, never read a book or heard a message in my life that told me what was the cup that Jesus shrank from.

I'm not saying I'm the only one. Maybe somebody's written about it somewhere or spoken about it somewhere. I never heard it in my life.

Maybe you have. If you heard someone speak about it, tell me. I'd like to know who it was.

When I was seeking God and I was trying to think, what is the cup? It was not physical death. He was not afraid of that. I mean, think of the martyrs who would go singing to the grave.

I can't imagine Jesus getting scared to go to Calvary. But there was something more serious than physical death He was afraid of. And I tried to think about it and meditate, and the Lord gave me a revelation.

The thing that Jesus valued most of all, from all eternity and throughout His earthly life was fellowship with the Father. You and I have not valued it enough, but from that day, I began to value it more. Jesus never wanted a sin because it would break fellowship with the Father.

Even a slight sin, one wrong thought would break fellowship with the Father. He didn't want it. I don't know how many of us feel that way about sin.

It was impossible for Him to get angry concerning Himself. You know, He had righteous anger. Like if somebody wouldn't let other people get healed, He was angry with them.

Or somebody was making money in the name of religion, He'd get angry with them. But if they spat on Him and killed Him or called Him the devil, He's always forgiven. And He was never angry.

Anger because somebody hurt me or spoke evil of always evil. But I must be angry when it concerns the glory of God, which has got nothing to do with me. So Jesus had never sinned.

He never wanted to sin because His fellowship with the Father. And He knew as He approached the cross, now something's going to happen that's going to break my fellowship with the Father. Because you know, we've always heard of Jesus dying on the cross.

He died for my sins. Christ died for my sins. He died for my sins.

And that is to me the elementary understanding of Christ's death. And there are these movies called The Passion of Christ where you see Jesus whipped and beaten and bleeding and all that. And you feel like crying.

Oh Lord, you suffered so much for me. But it's all physical. Let me ask you.

Well, all of you know the scriptures well. What is the punishment for your sin? How should God punish you and me for our sin? Is it by whipping? Is it by putting a crown of thorns on your head? Think of all the things that Jesus suffered. If that was what is the punishment for sin, okay.

Supposing God says, okay, I won't punish Jesus. I'll punish you. What should He do to me to punish me for my sin? Whip me, beat me, put a crown of thorns on my head, nail me to a cross, kill me.

I'm ready to do that. If physical death is the punishment for my sin, when I die, whichever way I die, I pay the punishment. I should go to heaven.

Jesus doesn't have to die for me. I can die myself. Everybody should go to heaven because they die, they pay the punishment.

And for years, I used to think Jesus died physically. That was the punishment for my sin till I began to meditate on it. I said, that's not the punishment for sin.

The punishment for sin is eternal hell. And if Jesus did not suffer that, then He has not paid the price for my sin. However much He may have been beaten, however long He hung on the cross, or how many nails were driven into Him, He has not paid the price for my sin if He did not suffer eternal hell.

And my definition of hell, as I understood scripture, was the worst thing about hell is not the worms that never die. It's not the fire. It's not the gnashing of teeth.

It's the fact that it's the only place in the universe which is completely forsaken by God. We talk of a God-forsaken place. There is only one God-forsaken place in the universe.

That's hell. No place on earth is forsaken by God. No man on earth is forsaken by God.

If men and women were forsaken by God, every human being would be demon-possessed. Everybody on the streets would be demon-possessed. Demon-possessed, they'll kill each other and kill you and me.

Why are they not demon-possessed? Because God has not forsaken the world. The little beautiful babies that are born into the world prove that God is not forsaken this world. Yeah, even terrorists have beautiful babies born to them.

It's not only saintly people who have beautiful babies. People are healthy who are godless atheists. All these things prove that God has not forsaken this world.

There's so much of beauty and goodness in the world. He gives everybody air to breathe and water to drink. And billions and billions of people, God has not forsaken this world.

Even the atheists. But there is one place, only one. That's hell.

And because we don't understand a simple statement like God forsaken. God forsaken doesn't mean anything to us. Because human beings are so carnal and earthly that Jesus had to use picture language.

Just like he used picture language for heaven. Mansions, crowns. Because mansions and crowns are big things on earth.

Gold on the streets. You say, wow. That's the way he's trying to show the valuable things on earth to make us understand heaven is such a wonderful place.

You get to heaven, you may find it's not like that. It's going to be the glory of Jesus. But if you say the word glory of Jesus, that doesn't appeal to carnal men.

People don't understand that. So God used to use the mansions there. There's crowns there.

And so when he has to describe pieces, hell is a God forsaken place. God forsaken, what does it mean? So he has to use picture like fire, worms that never die, etc. But that's not the main thing about hell.

There may be no worms in hell. There may be no fire. It's all picture language.

It's much worse than that. Fire will be a million times better. Worms biting you all the time will be a million times better than real hell, which is God forsaken.

The demons forsaken by God, that's what made them evil. And those who go to hell will become saturated evil. That's why we want to save people from going there.

And the only thing that will take people to hell is sin. Not sickness. Nobody goes to hell for getting cancer.

That's why I keep on preaching. You've got to hate sin more than you hate sickness. You have understood the seriousness of sin if you hate sin more than sickness.

If you're disturbed because you got a little tummy upset or a little fever or a little cough or a cold, and that disturbed you so much, or somebody's got an infectious disease and you want to stay away from them, and you don't stay away from sin a hundred times more than that, you haven't understood the seriousness of sin. You've understood the seriousness of disease. You've been educated.

Oh, I don't want to go near people about infection. But we don't look at sin that way because we haven't seen the seriousness of it. It breaks fellowship with God.

No sickness can break your fellowship with God. Not cancer, not AIDS, not Ebola, nothing. But one little angry word, one angry word, you spoke to somebody, your fellowship with God is broken.

We take that so lightly. That's why we don't apologize. That's why we don't ask forgiveness.

Because we don't value fellowship with God. It's very difficult for God to explain to us how much Jesus valued fellowship with God. That was the cup.

He said, Oh, Father, don't take it away. Because he knew that for three hours, fellowship with God will be broken on the cross. He had to say, My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? The only time in the entire history of Christ that he ever called his father God.

He never called him by that name in heaven. He never called him by that name during his entire life on earth. It was always father, father, father.

But for three hours on the cross, the first three hours was okay. He would still call him father. Father, forgive them.

But they don't know what they're doing. We know it was still father, son relationship. But in the last three hours, it was not father, son.

It was God, the judge of the universe, and a criminal hanging on the cross, bearing the sins of humanity. A criminal, one who had never committed a crime. My sin.

He didn't die. He was forsaken. That hell, which we picture as fire, worms, and everything, not for one or two days, but for eternity, is what Jesus experienced in a concentrated way.

You know how sometimes you can concentrate poison. And the concentration of eternal hell is concentrated into three hours. And Jesus faced it.

It could be done because, you know, we are finite beings. And what finite beings experience in eternity, an infinite being like Jesus can experience even in 10 seconds. Because infinity makes it possible to experience eternal suffering in a short time.

So because he was an infinite being, in three hours, he could experience the agony of hell that I could, I would experience if I went there. That's what he experienced on the cross. And what was the worst part of it? Break of fellowship with the father.

Which we don't understand that, you know. We don't think of break of fellowship with the father as a serious thing at all. I told you, that's why we don't immediately confess sin.

I mean, if the lights went off in our house suddenly, we'd immediately do something. I mean, did the fuse blow or did something trip and let me fix it? But why don't we respond like that when we've committed a small sin? Because we don't live in that intense fellowship with the father that we feel is broken. The lights have gone out.

When you commit a small sin in your life, think of the smallest little one bad thought against somebody else. One bitter thought against somebody else. Do you suddenly feel, hey, the lights have gone out in my life.

Do you feel like that? If you grow in the fullness of the spirit and allow your heart to be enlarged, as you walk the way of the cross, that is the place God will bring you to, where you'll feel the lights have gone out in your heart. Because you thought of something that was bad towards someone. Not as a temptation, but you relished it.

If it only came into your mind, it was a temptation. But if you relished it, it was a sin. If you were tempted with a dirty thought, that's temptation.

But if you relished it, then it's a sin. The lights went out. You spoke one unloving word to your marriage partner.

The lights have gone out. Do you feel like that? We don't value fellowship with the father. Jesus valued it so much that we read in Hebrews 5, that he prayed with loud crying and tears.

Hebrews 5, 7. I don't know whether you know them. Have you ever thought of this verse? In the days of his flesh, in the 33 and a half years that he lived on earth, that's the meaning of the days of his flesh. He prayed with prayers and supplications.

This is not referring to Gethsemane. This is referring to the 33 and a half years on earth, the days of his flesh, not the last day of his flesh. Scripture is exact.

In the days of his flesh, that's the first clarification that proves that it was referring to his own life. He prayed with prayers and supplications, with loud crying and tears. I don't know whether he prayed loud in Gethsemane.

I don't think so, because if he prayed loud, Peter, James, and John would have woken up. Can you sleep in the presence of somebody who's praying loud and crying? I don't think so. Peter and James were fast asleep.

He wasn't praying with loud crying and tears in Gethsemane. It was at other times. You know why it says he used to go off into the wilderness to pray? And what did he pray for? He wasn't praying for the silly things Christians pray for.

He wasn't praying for houses and lands and vehicles and chariots to travel from Jerusalem to Nazareth or any such thing. He was praying to be saved from spiritual death, not from physical death. He would never pray to be saved from physical death.

And we know it is spiritual death because it says next, he was heard. His prayer was answered. His prayer, he was not saved from physical death.

So what prayer was heard? He was saved from spiritual death, which is a result of sin. Temptation, when lust conceives, it brings forth sin. Sin, when it is finished, it brings forth death.

James chapter 1 verse 14. So he prayed, I don't want that smell of death in me. What he meant by death is sin.

Sin is the thing that Jesus considered spiritual death. He prayed. It wasn't automatic.

There was a battle in Jesus' life to overcome sin. That's why he says in Revelation 3.21, if you overcome as I overcame, you will sit with me on my throne as I am set with my father on my throne because I overcame. He overcame something.

He overcame temptation. He asks us in Revelation 3.21 to overcome exactly as he overcame. He's our forerunner.

He did not have victory offered to him on a plate. He had to fight and get it like we have to fight and get it. But he's our example.

And how did he get it? He prayed fervently. Father, don't let there be even a smell of sin in my life. Not one sinful thought, not one sinful attitude towards anyone, not one sinful motive, never one sinful word, not for one day, for 33 and a half years.

You and I know how difficult it is to live without sin for one day. Jesus lived like that for 33 and a half years. It was a constant battle.

And that is the greatest miracle that he ever accomplished on earth. And he lived without sin in our flesh for 33 and a half years. And at the end of it, he knew that now I'm going to be, this fellowship which I enjoyed with the Father from eternity, all these 33 years is going to be broken.

And there he hung on the cross and said, my God, my God. He was calling him the judge of the universe. That is what he shrank from.

And I imagine the conversation between Jesus and the Father in Gethsemane. And the Father telling Jesus, you don't have to go to the cross. You don't have to break this fellowship with me.

You and I have enjoyed it for eternity. You can come. You have never sinned.

From Gethsemane, you can come straight up to heaven. But Zach will go to hell. That was a revelation I got.

The day I got it, I wept and I wept and I wept. I said, Lord, what a revelation. This is how much you love me.

And Jesus said, oh, Zach will go to hell. Okay, Father, then I'll go to the cross. Put your name there.

I can explain it to you and you'll forget it next week. Or you use it as an illustration somewhere else in a message. But when you get it as revelation from heaven, it'll radically change your life.

Ask God to give you a revelation of the cup that Jesus drank for you. He gave me that revelation. It's one of the results when I was filled with the Holy Spirit.

These are some of the revelations that God gave me. This is one of them. Very precious.

I never tire of repeating it. I'll repeat it in heaven. When with the ransomed in glory, his face I at last shall see.

It will be my joy through the ages to sing of his love for me. I won't be looking for mansions and crowns. I wish you could see it, my brothers and sisters.

It'll change your life. It'll change your attitude to sin. It'll make you value the cross so much more.

And you will gladly follow in Jesus' footsteps and cry out with loud crying and tears. And I used to ask the Lord, Lord, how can I cry? I mean, there's no wilderness near my city to go and cry out loud crying and tears. And the Lord showed me, you can cry with loud crying and tears even with your wife sleeping next to you without making any sound.

I said, wow, that's wonderful that there can be a cry in my heart without any sound from my mouth in the middle of the night, sometimes when I wake up. And oh Lord, keep me from sin. Keep me, keep me.

I don't care if I lose everything else. I don't want to put another nail into the body of Jesus. I don't want to do it.

I don't want to make him get separated like that and agony. I've done it enough, Lord. I've done enough in my life.

I don't want to do anymore. Not even, I want to live without sin in my life. I don't care if I don't have any gifts.

I don't care. The honor of men is trash for me. God is my witness.

All the opinions of men, people can praise me to the skies. It's trash because I know what I am. Only a sinner saved by grace.

I've seen myself in the eyes of my Savior that the praises of men don't affect me anymore because I've seen Jesus. I wish my brothers and sisters that you would all know Jesus this way. That is why you need to be filled with the Holy Spirit.

Not just some experience or some excitement or speaking in tongues. If God gives it, you take it. But don't make that the big thing.

Many, many millions of Christians have lived spirit-filled lives who never, never spoke in tongues. True. So don't go crazy after that because there's such a great emphasis in Pentecostal circles on that today.

The love of God is poured out in our hearts through the Holy Spirit that will make you respond in love and say, Lord, have all of my life. I want to love you. I want to love Jesus till my dying day.

And when you love Jesus like that, it'll be very easy to love other people. Just like that father embraced that prodigal son, you will be able to embrace prodigal children who've gone away from you, who rebelled against God, and then the slightest turn towards God, and you feel like embracing him. Even though he's only beginning to change in your life, you're still going to embrace him.

Because you have experienced that love from the father, and you never forget it. That's why in the last letter in the New Testament, you know, which is the last letter in the New Testament? Revelation is a prophecy. The last letter is Jude.

And in the last letter of the book of Jude, he says in verse 21, keep yourselves in the love of God. I like that. In the last letter, God says, keep yourself in the love of God.

Never, never doubt his fatherly love for you. Never insult him by getting anxious. When you're anxious, you're insulting the father as if he doesn't care for you.

Never be afraid of the devil. He was defeated on the cross. You know, whenever I lead a person to Christ, I ask him to pray the sinner's prayer.

Lord, I repent and I turn to you, and I believe Jesus died for me and rose again. I want to turn from all my sins. I want to give up, confess my sins, and I want to ask you to forgive me.

And I ask you, Lord Jesus, to come into my heart. Be my savior. And I believe you receive me.

When I see that that person has understood that and has prayed that prayer, I say, now that he has spoken to Jesus right now, speak to the devil. He can hear you too. Tell Satan, Satan, I don't belong to you anymore, Satan.

I belong to Jesus. He's my Lord and my savior. Satan, you were defeated on the cross by my savior.

He came in the flesh and he defeated you. And you cannot touch me anymore. I don't belong to you.

And every contact I had with you, Satan, knowingly or unknowingly in my past life, I renounce right now in Jesus' name. I ask them to say that. Because sometimes people have had, consciously or unconsciously, contact with Satan and witchcraft and Ouija boards and reading what the stars foretell in the newspapers and palm reading and seeking for the future from all types of people.

Renounced. Tell the devil he was defeated. He doesn't like to hear it.

I remember once a demon and a woman turning around to me and saying, I was not defeated on the cross. I said, you were. You're a liar.

Get out of her. And then she could confess to Satan that Satan was defeated. The devil, you must know the devil was defeated.

He's got no power over you. When you're completely surrendered to God and you're flooded with the love of God in your heart, that's the other thing the fullness of the Holy Spirit brought to me. And because I'm called to a ministry, I mean, you may not experience all that, but because I'm called to the ministry, I had to know how to cast out demons.

And I never knew that till I was filled with the Holy Spirit. I was scared of demons. But it all went when I was filled with the Spirit.

I was aware of another world, spirit world, which I was completely unaware of before. Of a realm where you fight with evil spirits, not fighting the sense of struggle. There's no struggle.

He's defeated. I just resist him and he flees. It's not a battle where you're struggling, struggling to beat him.

No. Don't you believe all these people who pray and pray and pray and struggle and sweat to cast out the devil? Why? He's already been defeated. I've never done that even once.

The devil's been defeated. And what the Lord showed me was, if you walk in the light, the devil is the prince of darkness. Darkness has been allotted to Satan.

That's his territory. When you sin, you go into his territory. He's got every right to do something to you.

You bring darkness into your home when you sin. That's why I say stop yelling and screaming at each other at home. Because you're opening the door for darkness.

And then the devil can do anything to you and to your children. I don't want any darkness to come into my home. Darkness has been allotted to Satan.

If you walk in the light, I tell you Satan will be scared of you. He's not scared of people who shout at him and shout praises and all that. He'll say to such people, Jesus I know and Paul I know, but who are you? But let Satan find a humble man, a man who's eliminated pride completely from his life to the best of his knowledge.

Who's not proud of anything in his life, of his physical, not proud of his beauty, not proud of his intelligence, not proud of his wealth, not proud of his earthly capabilities, not proud of how smart he is, not proud of his Bible knowledge, not proud of his ministry, not proud of anything. That devil will be scared of him. That's why he always likes to inject a little pride into you when you've done something or you feel that you're better than somebody else or you're more capable or you're smart or you did something great.

Ask God to protect you from all that. I remember once in the little business I do to support myself, I lost a huge amount of money and it's because I went away somewhere to serve the Lord and I came back and I lost, I said fine and I said Lord why did this happen? This is because one, I wanted to deliver you from the love of money which you've been praying for for so long. I said oh thank you and secondly, you were beginning to think you were pretty smart in your business and I wanted to humble you.

I said great, do it again Lord, do it again. I'm willing to lose any amount of money to humble myself so that I can have authority over Satan. You, if you're serious with the Lord, I'll tell you he'll do that and you'll find that money counts nothing for you anymore.

You'll really be free. Satan gets a hold on people. You remember how he offered money even to Jesus? All this will I give you, if you will just bow down, worship me.

All the glory of the world and one of the major parts of the glory of the world is money. Dear brothers and sisters, don't let it have a hold on you. You can't free yourself from it.

The love of money is deeply rooted in us, just like sexual desire, illegitimate sexual desire is deeply rooted in the flesh, even if you're a married man. If you're not cautious, the devil will get you. He's got better people than you.

That's why you need to pray with loud crying and tears. Don't think you're so smart. Oh, it won't happen to me.

Let him who thinks he stands, take heed lest he fall. Paul said, I disciplined my body. When he was 60 years old, I disciplined my body, lest having preached to others, I'd be disqualified.

I believe temptation is like fire. Even if you're a hundred years old, it can burn you. Let him who thinks he stands, take heed lest he fall.

We must live with authority over Satan. Drive him out of your home, drive him out of your church. He won't listen to you if you're fooling around with sin.

He won't listen to you if you take sin lightly. He won't listen to you if he sees a little bit of pride in your heart, conscious pride about something. You know how every one of us is tempted to pride when we accomplish something in our business or in the world or in our home or when somebody appreciates us or in a spiritual ministry something happened.

Maybe something wonderful happened in your ministry and you and the devil says, hey that was great man. And you don't recognize immediately the temptation. I remember once somebody who was demon possessed, I didn't know he was being possessed, came to my house and said to me, Brother Zach, I knew him before.

He said, I had a dream yesterday, some demons came to me and said, don't ever go to Brother Zach's house. I know why he said that, just to puff me up and to make me think that demons are afraid of me. I recognized it immediately, that's just to puff me up.

I remember another time when I was casting out a demon from someone, I said, look at me and she said, I can't look at you, your face is terrible. I knew what it was, to puff me up so that I'd have no power over that demon inside. You know the subtle ways in which the devil tries to puff you up.

Be careful my brother, sister, be careful. Don't let anything go to your head. What are we apart from the grace of God? Everything we are is because God has done something in us.

Give him the credit and the glory and don't touch it. There are many things God will give us, his power, his love, his blessing, but there's one thing God will never give us. Isaiah 42 verse 8, never forget it.

Isaiah 42 verse 8, my glory I will never give to another. I remember that frequently. His glory he will never give to us and I never want to touch that.

Never touch it. Give the glory to God for whatever you are or whatever you've accomplished or whatever gifts God has given you or smart or capable you think you are and you're prospered in your work and your business. Humble yourself before God and say, Lord it's all of you, it's all of you.

And if your church is better than other churches, go down, fall before God and say, Lord it's all of you. It's got nothing to do with my ministry or that I understood the new covenant and the new and living way and I understood the new wine and new skin. No Lord, it's 100% of you.

People ask me sometimes, Brother Zach, why don't you write all your four sons are following the Lord so wholeheartedly, why don't you write a book on raising children? I said, I'll never write it. Never, because it was not my ability that made them follow the Lord, it was 100% God's mercy. If I write a book, it'll be about all the failures I made as a father, that's all.

All the blunders I made in my life. I'll ask my children for a little help on that to tell me all the blunders I made. No, that's all I can write.

I'm not gonna write anything, but I see all these experts writing books on how to bring up children and all that. There are so many subtle little things that can get into your heart if you are not watchful. Walk in the light.

It's not an easy thing in the evil world we live in, but it's possible. That's why you need to be filled with the Holy Spirit. And that's why every time the Spirit of God tells you, die, die.

You hear that voice many times. Something happens and the Holy Spirit says, die. And be like a dead man there.

When it says in Romans 8.11, reckon yourself dead. I picture it like this. I'm a dead man here.

Somebody's irritating me. Not even a change of expression on my face because I'm dead. Somebody praises me to the skies.

This dead man's not even affected. After a while, sow an act and keep on sowing an act. It'll become a habit.

Isn't brushing your teeth an easy thing for you now? It's not a great struggle to get up in the morning, brush your teeth. So easy. Dying to yourself will become easy just like that.

If you make it a practice and the devil will have no power over you. The Bible says, through death, he took away the power from him who had the power of death, that is Satan. On the cross, that's Hebrews 2.14, Colossians 2.15, he stripped principalities and powers of their armor on the cross.

Do you know that Jesus never defeated Satan when he was casting out demons? He cast out so many demons where the devil was still triumphant. But on the cross, Satan was finally defeated. Satan's not defeated when you cast out demons.

Colossians 2.15, Hebrews 2.14 are two wonderful verses that teach us that it was on the cross alone that Satan was defeated. And it's when you take up the cross and identify yourself with Christ's death, I'm crucified with Christ, then Satan will be defeated in your life. That victory will become real in your life and Satan will lose power over you.

What does it mean when it says he'll flee from you? Submit to God. Submit to that death. Satan will flee from you.

I picture it like this. 1 John 4, it says, as Jesus is, so are we in this world. 1 John 4.17. I thought of that.

As Jesus is, so am I in this world. And I used to think when Jesus came from Capernaum where he lived to Jerusalem, all the demons in Jerusalem would get worried and say, hey, he's coming here. He's coming here.

Be careful. And he'd come and preach in the synagogue. And that demon possessed man who sat comfortably as long as the Pharisees were preaching, suddenly he erupted when Jesus came.

The demons are troubled because, hey, he's coming. He's coming. Who? Jesus is coming.

They should say that about you and me. The demons in a place. Hey, he's coming here.

He's coming here. We gotta get all our forces ready. He's coming here.

He's coming to preach here. Are the demons bothered when you go to some place? But you who share in the triumph of Jesus at Calvary, you who submit to live under the headship of Christ, filled with his spirit, demons tremble before you. They'll say, Jesus I know, Paul I know, and so and so I know.

But to other people say, who are you? I know how you live at home. I know how you play the fool with your finances. I know all the pride in your heart about how smart you think you are, how you look down on others.

I know all the jealousy there is in you about other people who are better than you. You think you have any power over me. You can get up and preach as much as you like and impress people with your preaching and they watch you on YouTube and all that, but it doesn't impress me.

I know you. I don't want the devil to tell me that. It's an insult to my savior.

Dear brothers and sisters, there's a lot involved because if you want to build a church, it's not by clever preaching. The gates of hell are what stand against the church. And they conquer Christian preachers with pride and impurity.

We got to stand against those powers of spiritual darkness. That's how we overcome. It doesn't matter if you can't preach for nuts.

Be a godly man, godly woman, and Satan will be scared of you. That's how you can protect your children. That's how you can protect your home.

You young people, I wish you would grow up like that and become another generation in the world who will keep the devil out of homes and churches. Let's pray. Heavenly Father, you are here.

Lord Jesus. Oh, how wonderful. You're here right now.

With your hands stretched out to bless, forgive, anoint, fill to the fullness of God. Do it, Lord. There are hungry, thirsty hearts here crying out to you.

You know that they are sincere. We are weak without strong. Lay your nail pierced hands upon your heads.

I long for that again, Lord. I want you to lay your nail pierced hand on my head once more and anoint me afresh. And the brothers and sisters here, who've gone through many struggles and trials, and I believe many of them are sincerely wanting to live a spirit-filled life so that you will be glorified in their lives and in their homes.

I pray you will lay your nail pierced hand upon their head and lead them to walk in the light all the days of their life. Bless their families as their little children grow up. That the devil will find no foothold in their homes.

And the churches that are represented here, people have come from different places. I don't know what they're like. But I pray that these brothers and sisters will be like a light when they go back.

That will be radiant for you. Help us to honor you in the few more days that are left. We have not finished saying thank you to you for your dying for us on the cross.

Give us the power, Lord, to serve you wholeheartedly. To say thank you to you with all of our hearts, with a lifetime of service and worship poured out at your feet. Thank you for hearing us.

In Jesus' name, Amen.

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