

The Spirit Sanctifies Us

by Zac Poonen

The sermon emphasizes the importance of internal holiness and the role of the Holy Spirit in sanctifying us, making us completely holy and healthy in body, soul, and spirit.

Duration: 59:27

Scripture: Exodus 20:1-17, Isaiah 6:5, Jeremiah 31:33, Ezekiel 36:27, Romans 7:24, Romans 8:9

Topics: "Sanctification"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker describes a progression of spiritual growth using the analogy of a man entering into deeper waters. Initially, the man experiences a small trickle of the Holy Spirit's presence, blessing one person in six months. As he continues to go further, the water reaches his ankles, then his knees, and eventually his loins. The final step is when the man detaches from the world and experiences the Holy Spirit like a river, enough to swim in. The speaker emphasizes the importance of allowing the Holy Spirit to operate in all areas of our lives and encourages listeners to ask, seek, and knock in order to receive from God.

Transcript

God is a Trinity, and he made man in his image and his likeness, and so he made man also as a Trinity. We read in 1 Thessalonians 5, and verse 23, when it speaks about making us holy we must remember that the whole purpose with which Jesus came to earth was to make us holy, like God is holy. He didn't come to make us rich, he didn't come to make us healthy, he didn't come to give us a large family, he didn't come to give us comfort or pleasure, he came to make us holy.

1 Thessalonians 5, verse 23, it says here, May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you entirely. Whenever you read the word sanctify, or holy, or saint, in the New Testament, it always means being separated from something. Sanctification is being separated.

Separated from sin, separated from the spirit of the world, separated from the spirit of the devil, etc. So, who's going to do that? It says your God does that. In the Old Testament, God only did external things for people.

You see that throughout the Old Testament. You never read of God doing something inside somebody, right from Genesis to Malachi. It's one of the big differences in the Old Testament and the New Testament.

He did a lot of amazing things for them externally, like splitting the Red Sea, pulling down the walls of Jericho, healing the sick, raising the dead. These are all external things. And you look at all the miracles that God did for his people in the Old Testament, it was always on the outside.

And the promise that he gave to Abraham was also, I'll give you a land on this earth, and your children and your seed will always have that land, and they have that land today. God's kept his promise. But it's related to the world and to external things.

And then Jesus came, and a lot of those miracles were all external. He healed the sick, he filled their boats with fish. But every miracle was a parable.

And John, the apostle, recognized that, and that's why in John's gospel he calls those miracles signs. Turning the water into wine was a picture of how God would take away our human nature and replace it with the divine nature. If he allowed him, then we could serve other people and bless people around us with that.

And every miracle was like that. But in the New Covenant, that begins from the Day of Pentecost, and Jesus prepared the way for that by preaching the Sermon on the Mount, where he said, your righteousness must be more than the righteousness of the Pharisees. That doesn't mean in quantity.

That doesn't mean if they fasted twice a week, we've got to fast four times a week. Or they prayed three times a day, we pray five times a day. That's quantity.

Quantity doesn't make us spiritual. If you have something carnal, and you make it ten times, it's still carnal. I mean, a bag of bad apples, you get ten bags like that, it's still bad apples.

It's quality. Your righteousness must exceed the righteousness of the Pharisees in quality. In other words, theirs was only external, yours must be internal.

That's what he said in Matthew 5.20, and he went on to say, they stayed away from murder, you must stay away from anger. They stayed away from adultery, you must stay away from the lust of the eyes. They stayed away from telling lies when they swore their hand on a Bible or something.

But you must stay away from telling lies anytime. You don't have to swear or sign a statement on a court document to speak the truth. You speak the truth all the time, etc., etc.

And they said they would pray, but they'd want people to see, but you must pray without wanting the people to see. You see how everything in the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus put it inside. So for the Old Testament people, if the law, the Ten Commandments was the great thing, I mean, if you go to any Jewish person in the Old Testament and ask you, what is the great thing for you, he said, the law, the Ten Commandments.

Now, if someone were to ask you as a Christian, what is the great thing for you? What's the great passage of Scripture for you? The answer should be the Sermon on the Mount. But is that all? For the Jews, the Ten Commandments. For Christians, the Sermon on the Mount, Matthew 5, 6, and 7. And the great work that the devil has done is, there are very, very few Christians who value the Sermon on the Mount.

Whereas among the Jews, everybody valued the Ten Commandments. They were taught from childhood to value the Ten Commandments. Whereas Christians are taught from childhood perhaps to read the

Bible, go to meetings, is it all good? Pray, witness, they're all external.

I'm not saying they're wrong. But you remember what Jesus said to the Pharisees, the trouble with you people is you clean the outside of the cup. And anyone who spends his life cleaning the outside of the cup will definitely end up as a Pharisee.

So if you spend your life trying to look good on the outside and doing all the external things that Christians are supposed to do, the chances are at the end of your life you'll just be a very good Pharisee. We have to see this difference which is almost not preached anywhere. The main difference between the Old Covenant and the New Covenant is that was external, this was internal.

There the sacrifices were on the outside, everybody could see it. Today you make sacrifices on the inside which nobody can see. Do you know how guilty the Jews were if they didn't make those sacrifices? Every Christian who does not make internal sacrifices is guilty.

And the reason why we don't become spiritual is because we haven't understood this difference, that in the New Covenant it's internal. And you say, well doesn't the external matter? It certainly does, but it begins from the inside. Jesus said in the Old Covenant the Spirit is upon people, but in the New Covenant from the innermost being the rivers will flow.

Whereas in the Old Covenant the river flowed, but it's something we poured on somebody's head and the river flowed like that, but now it would be from the innermost being. David in Psalm 51 when he confessed his sin, he said, Lord you desired truth in the innermost being. He couldn't have that.

He acknowledged, the best I can do is okay, don't commit adultery again. I did it, I'm sorry, I'll not do it again. But Lord, I know, David was a man after God's own heart.

He knew that even if he never committed adultery again with another woman for the rest of his life, it still wouldn't satisfy God. A lot of Christians are very happy when they think God is satisfied because I don't commit adultery, I don't murder, I don't steal, I go to the meetings, I read the Bible. They make a list of ten external things they've done and they think they have pleased God, which means they don't even have the light which David had 3,000 years ago.

That God's not satisfied with all those external things. I want to ask you, my brothers and sisters, many of you have heard me for many years, does your inner hidden Christianity match the outward impression that you give to people as to how holy a person you are? We do give people an impression we are holy. If we come regularly to the meetings, we carry a Bible, pay attention, we come to a church which preaches holiness, boy, our reputation for holiness really goes up.

But it may not be true in our inner life. It may not be true in our thoughts. It may not be true in the words we speak at home to our family members.

It may not be true in the way you handle money. It may not be true in the way you work in your office or behave in a bus or a train. See, those are the areas of the life nobody sees.

And to me, I'll tell you honestly, those areas are much, much more important than coming to a meeting or even reading the Bible. It's more important to obey the Bible than to read it. It's no use reading it every day if you obey it only once in a while.

So, who can make me holy inside? It says your God will do it. But he'll never do anything if I don't allow him. He'll do it.

But he says, let me do it. You allow me. It's like you go to a surgeon and the surgeon says, I can remove that cancer completely from inside you.

But you got to let me cut you open and operate you. And you say, no, that's too painful. Or I don't trust you.

But then you die of your cancer, that's all. And he's willing to do it free. You can't do it yourself.

You can't cut yourself open and remove the cancer. It's something like that. God says, I'll do it.

But you got to let me. You got to say, Lord, come into this area of my life and cut out this cancer. This thing that I'm attached to.

Anything that you're attached to, I'll tell you, you cannot sanctify yourself. Learn that lesson. The Old Testament, they spent 1,500 years to try and sanctify themselves.

They couldn't. Do you want to spend another 20, 30 years trying to prove that you also can't? I don't want to. People have tried for 1,500 years and failed.

And I also tried for a few years and failed. I don't want to imagine that I can make myself holy because I can't. I can only open the door to let God come and make me holy.

God come and cut out things in my life which are actually ruining me. Some time ago I told you a little parable that C.S. Lewis says in one of his books of a man who wanted to be holy but he had this chameleon, this ugly lizard sitting on his shoulder. It's a picture of a lust.

Whatever lust is ruling your life, it could be anger, it could be bitterness, it could be illegal sex, it could be anything. It's this filthy lizard, chameleon, sitting there. And they are good friends, this man.

And here's an angel standing in front of him and saying, you know, you've got to get rid of that. Will you let me take it off you? And this chameleon whispers in his ear and says, No, no, no, I won't. I'll behave myself in future, please.

I like to be with you. You know, you and I are good friends. We've been friends from childhood.

You want to get rid of me now? And he's in a struggle. You know the struggle you face when you're tempted? You want to do what's right but there's something else in you which says, No, I'd like to enjoy this. Even though you know it's filthy, you enjoy it, you keep this dirty animal.

And yet at the same time you hear that other voice saying, Yeah, I want to get rid of it. But this is the struggle this man went through. Then he told the angel, Why don't you just pull it off without asking me? He says, No, I can't do it.

That's the point I want you to know. I cannot do it till you give me permission. Because that would be violating your free will.

You know why we are not more holy than we are right now? Because certain areas we have not given permission to God to come in and take over. We've not allowed him to operate certain areas of our body.

We've not allowed him to take away that ugly thing.

And here the struggle goes on between this chameleon and this man and this angel. And the angel is waiting patiently. And finally he decides, Yeah, I've decided.

I'm going to get rid of this lust. He can't do it himself. So he tells the angel, Okay.

He closes his eyes and braces himself for the pain there will be because this chap is clinging tightly to his shoulder. And the angel pulls it away and the chameleon tears his flesh. It's pretty painful, I'll tell you.

It is painful to give up a lust. Because you've enjoyed it for so many years. Deeply rooted, the claws are inside.

He tears it away in this pain. And the man screams in pain. Then the angel throws that chameleon down on the ground.

And suddenly it transforms itself into a strong white horse. And he says, Now you don't have to walk. You can ride.

You can go faster. It's a very true parable. That thing which appears to give you so much pleasure, which you are so reluctant to give up.

It could be a bitterness against somebody. It could be a dirty habit that your conscience tells you is wrong, it's bad. Jesus would not do that.

But you hear that voice and you don't listen to it. The chameleon says, No, no, no, I'll behave. It'll never behave.

It'll eat you, it'll just let its claws go deeper and deeper into you. That's all. I hope one day you will say what that man said.

Shut your eyes, brace yourself for the pain. Say, Lord, take it away. I allow you to come and take it away.

And it'll cause you pain. There's a suffering in the flesh, the Bible says, 1 Peter 4, verse 1 and 2 says, The one who suffers in the flesh stops sinning. If I don't want to suffer in the flesh, I don't stop sinning.

It's not possible. See, that's why we are reluctant. There's a suffering.

The opposite of suffering is pleasure. I want to get that pleasure, so I avoid the suffering, and so I remain in sin. But if I decide, Lord, I'm willing to suffer, after a while, this wound will heal, which the chameleon made.

It'll take some time, then you won't even remember it. Ask people who have given up some bad habits, which ruled them for many years. Ask them today, Do you feel the struggle now? They say, not at all.

I struggled in the beginning, but it's gone now, and I'm so happy it's gone, and I'm so free. And that thing, which I kept for so long in my life, hindered me from moving faster in the Christian life, because that is the thing that got converted into a horse. Do you know that every lust that you conquer, speeds you on in the Christian life? It really is true.

It's very true. And that thing which you allow to rule in your life, is what's hindering you from moving forward in full speed. So, God is the one who sanctifies, and it says here, that he wants to sanctify us completely.

1 Thessalonians 5.23 Completely means totally. Every part of our being. And then he tells us what totally means.

Spirit, soul, and body, without blame, the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Now in our past life, we have done many things wrong, that deserve blame, in our spirit, soul, and body. But God wants to do a work in us, that from now on, our spirit, soul, and body will be without blame.

You know, we don't have to be afraid of that. It's like saying, supposing a doctor says, listen, I'm going to examine you and treat you, so you'll be healthy in your eyes, and healthy in your ears, and healthy in your stomach, and healthy in your heart, and healthy in your nerves, and healthy in your liver, and healthy in your kidney, and your hands and legs will be strong. Are you going to be scared of that? No.

Hey. And he says, I'm not even going to charge you for it. I say, that's wonderful.

I wouldn't be afraid of that. I say, hey, tell me what to do. I really want to be healthy.

Is there a single person sitting here, who doesn't want to be entirely healthy? Or do you want to be healthy only 90%? I don't think there's any human being, unless he's mad or something, who wants to be healthy just 90%. Are you happy with 99% health? Are you afraid of 100% health? There was a question that Jesus asked the man who was lying for 38 years at the pool of Bethesda. It's a very funny question.

You know what he asked him? You read in John 5? Do you want to get well? Imagine a man 38 years paralyzed. Is there a need for such a question? There is. Because when he gets healthy, he can't beg anymore.

There are a lot of people who make a lot of money with their infirmity, with their leprosy, who go around and if they get healed, they won't get so much money. Certainly spiritually it's true. But the Lord asks you, you may have been enslaved to something just like that man at Bethesda for 38 years.

And the Lord asks you, do you really want to get healthy? If you're not interested. If he had said, No Lord, actually, I sort of got used to this way of life. He would have said, fine.

And he would have walked off. That's what often happens. The Lord says, that's fine.

You stay where you are. But you could have risen much higher many years ago. He wants to sanctify you entirely.

I love this verse. He wants to make, separate me from everything evil in my body, my soul and my spirit. And as a by-product, not the main product, as a by-product, you'll be healthy in your body too.

To me, health in the body is not the main product of Christianity. It's a by-product. You know, it's like these big factories that make cars and some of the other stuff, they make something called by-products.

They don't establish the factory to make that. But with all the leftover stuff after making cars, they make something else. So it's like that.

Even your body can be healthy. But it says here that, further in verse 24, the one who has called you is faithful and he will do it. Again, the emphasis is on he will do it.

so these are, let's see the two main differences between the Old Covenant and the New Covenant. One, the Old Covenant was all external. The New Covenant is primarily internal, cleaning the inside of the cup, that leads to the outside being clean.

That's why I say, even if you make a person dress in a holy way, but you haven't changed, say a woman was dressed immodestly. Even if you say, well you got to dress modestly when you come to church. Okay, you've done it.

You haven't changed her heart. I want to change her heart where she realizes that to dress immodestly is not becoming for a daughter of God. Then you've really accomplished something.

But if you just, I mean, if people have children in our home, we've got to force them because they're under law. They don't know what's good for them. But we hope that those girls will grow up to recognize that as a daughter of God, I must dress modestly.

Some will never realize what to do. We can't do anything. Even Jesus did not succeed in changing everybody.

Now we won't succeed in changing everybody. But we concentrate on the inside. I say the inside doesn't go.

The inside is not blameless. The outside being blameless is just not worth anything. So that's the first thing.

And the second thing is that in the difference between Old Covenant and New Covenant is in the Old Covenant you've got to do it yourself. In the New Covenant God says I'll do it. God will sanctify you.

God will bring it to pass. Let me show you again Hebrews chapter 8. Hebrews 8 is the New Testament equivalent of Exodus 20. And those of you who have heard me before, you know that.

Exodus 20 is the Ten Commandments. Ten of them. Hebrews 8 are the three distinctives of the New Covenant.

They are not commandments. The three features of the New Covenant. The Old Covenant, ten commandments.

And the ten commandments were basically every one of them was thou shalt or thou shalt not. Every one of them. You must do this or you must not do this.

All ten were like that. You must not commit adultery. You must honor your father and mother.

You must not murder. You must keep the Sabbath. You must not take the name the Lord your God in vain.

Etc. In the New Covenant notice this difference. I just told you.

It's not you must not, you must. Notice in first covenant he says in verse 7 was faulty. So that's why he needed a second.

And the New Covenant is described in verses 10 to 12. And it is I will notice that, I will not they should not verse 11, but they shall not. You know the difference between you should not and you will not.

I mean if you are a sensible person and I say you'll never go licking the floor with your tongue. Right? Right or wrong? I don't have to say to you, you should not. Maybe to a baby you got to say you should not lick the floor with your tongue.

For grown up people sitting here I don't say you should not lick the floor with your tongue. I say you will not lick the floor with your tongue. You know the difference? Because you don't want to do it.

The baby doesn't have that distinction. He won't lick anything. Then you have to tell the baby you should not.

So a baby is a picture of somebody who is under the law. But here it says, it doesn't say you should not. You will not.

And you will know me. All will know me. And you know the difference between saying you should know me and you will know me? A lot of difference.

And then it says again, I will, I will. So all those verses I hope you see this distinction in all three verses. That the Lord is saying, I will do this and you automatically will do what I want you to do.

I wish you could see this. I want to say to you that's why the word faith comes so often in the New Testament. Faith means, I depend on God to do it for me.

Okay? I depend on God to do it for me. Or to say, God is more eager to do it for me than I am to do it myself. Let me show you an Old Testament verse.

Ezekiel and chapter 36. This is speaking about the New Covenant. It didn't happen in Ezekiel's day.

Ezekiel was prophesying 500 years before the Day of Pentecost saying, a future day is coming when this will happen to God's people. We are living in that day. We should be excited.

It's like, you know, to use another illustration of Old Covenant and New Covenant, it's like a prisoner who has been so many years in prison and then the time of his imprisonment, he was put 15 years in prison, 15 years running out, another week he's going to be out. Can you imagine how excited he is? Hey, another week I'm going to be out. That's the difference between the Old Covenant and the New Covenant.

The Old Covenant is a prison because you stole, you killed people, you committed adultery, they put you in prison. In prison you don't steal. You don't commit adultery.

You don't murder anybody. That's law. You know, lock you up in Ten Commandments like a ten-walled house.

You can't escape. And you say, I don't do this, I don't do this, I don't do this. Why? Because you're in a prison.

Actually you can't do all those things. But, when you're released and you still don't do all those things, then you know you're coming to the New Covenant. So, this was like a prophecy.

The day is coming when all you fellows will be released from the law. Law is like a prison. You'll be released from that.

And if you don't come under grace, you'll do things worse than the unbeliever. But, if you do come under grace, your standard will be higher than even when you were in prison. So, he says here, the day is coming.

Verse 25. Ezekiel 36. Verse 25.

I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you'll be clean. And cleanse you from your filthiness. Notice this, this is so different from Old Testament.

You know this is not Old Testament, because he's speaking about an inward cleansing which was not promised in the Old Covenant. And he says, I will do this. It's something similar to the Lord saying to the Egyptians, Israelites in Egypt, I will deliver you from the land of Egypt.

They couldn't do it themselves. But that was external. And he said, I will bring you into the land of Canaan.

They couldn't do it themselves. But it didn't happen because they didn't even trust God for that. And so, just like when God said, I will bring you into Canaan and 600,000 people never got into Canaan because they didn't believe.

God said, I'll do it. And they said, no, I'm not sure whether you can do it. Two people believed and entered in.

The same thing happens today. God can say, I will do this for you. We read that in Hebrews 8. But it may not happen in your life.

Or it may happen only partially. For example, the Lord says to you, I will deliver you from Satan's power. Out of Egypt.

I'll deliver you. I'll forgive you all your sins. You say, Lord, I believe that.

And you're forgiven. Then he says, I will bring you into Canaan. I'll bring you into a life of victory.

And you say, how about that? You don't get that part. So that's what happened to those Israelites in the Old Testament. They believed one part, they didn't believe the other part.

The part they believed, they got the benefit of. The part they didn't believe, they didn't get it. So when the Lord says, I will, please remember, it doesn't happen automatically.

You have to take it by faith. It's like if somebody gives you a check. It could be a check for 100,000 rupees.

But you keep it inside your Bible and look at it every day. You're not going to be rich. You've got to take it to a bank and cash it.

Credit it to your account. Then it becomes yours. The promises in Scripture are like that.

The multitudes of checks inside here, they lie there, you admire it. You've got to go and say, Lord, that's for me. You said you'll do it.

Do it. You said you will not remember my sins anymore. I believe it.

You don't remember it. Now, Lord, you also said in the same passage in Hebrews 8 that you will write your laws in my mind and heart. You'll give me a desire to do God's will.

You'll give me the ability to do God's will in every area of my life. Do it. Okay, here it says, I will put a new heart.

That's his job. I will put a new spirit within you. That means he'll change my corrupt spirit and then I will take away the heart of stone.

It's all I will, I will, I will, I will. That means it's new covenant prophecy. I will give you a heart of soft heart.

And then on top of that, after giving me a new spirit, he says, I will put my Holy Spirit within you. It never happened till the day of Pentecost. Till the day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit was upon people.

Never came within. That's why Samson had power on the outside to tear lions to pieces. But the lion of lust inside, he didn't have power.

If the spirit came within him, he would have power to tear that lion too. So the answer is the Holy Spirit. Remember this.

The great word in the Old Testament was law. The great word in the New Testament is the Holy Spirit. If you honor the Holy Spirit, if you value the Holy Spirit, if you seek to be filled with the Holy Spirit, baptize the Holy Spirit, immerse in the Holy Spirit, walk in the Spirit, live in the Spirit, you've got the answer.

The whole secret of the apostles, their life and their ministry was the Holy Spirit. And I fear that many of us who have heard so much about the Holy Spirit still don't value the Holy Spirit sufficiently. And that is the reason why our life is so shallow.

God did not intend any one of us to live without the power of the Holy Spirit. But the thing is, you can. I mean, electricity is available, but you may not use electricity.

You may still light a lamp and live at home. That's your choice. It's like that.

The Holy Spirit is available, but you may not want. You say, I accept the Christ, my sins are forgiven. And you accept the substandard, defeated life when God wants you to be an overcomer.

I will put my Spirit within you. And now listen to this wonderful phrase. I wonder if there's a phrase like this in the entire Bible.

What happens when the Spirit is put within us? I will make you walk in my statutes. And automatically, you will be very careful to observe all my ordinances. And you will be my people.

And I will be your God. And I will save you from all your uncleanness. Verse 29.

And I will multiply your grain. And I multiply the fruit of the tree. Verse 30.

And what will you do? Verse 31. You will remember your old evil ways. And you will loathe yourself when you think of your old ways.

How you dishonored God. It's a mark of a man, a wholehearted man. He loathes himself.

Like Paul, he says, O wretched man that I am. Like Isaiah, he says, Lord, I'm a man of unclean lips. And now listen to this.

You listen to all these wonderful promises? One more thing. Verse 37. I will let the house of Israel, that's the church today, ask me to do this for them.

I'm waiting for my people to ask me to do this for them. They don't ask me, they don't get it. Did you know that? You know there are a thousand things that God has for you that you won't get if you don't ask for it.

See what Jesus himself said in Luke chapter 11. In Luke chapter 11, Jesus said in verse 13. Your heavenly father knows everything you need, but still he waits for you to ask for it.

Luke 11, 13. If you being evil know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly father give the Holy Spirit to all his children? No. How much more will the heavenly father give the Holy Spirit to all his children? No.

How much more will the heavenly father give the Holy Spirit to all who need the Holy Spirit? No. All those who ask him. That's a law.

So I say to you verse 9, ask and it will be given to you. What if you don't ask? It won't be given to you. Seek and you'll find.

What if you don't seek? You won't find. Knock and it will be open to you. What if you don't knock? It will not be open.

For everyone who asks, receives. This is a principle in the Christian life. God says, there it is.

But you have to ask and say, Lord, I want it. Why is that? I'll tell you why. Because I have observed even in human relationship, I mean human nature, you never value anything that you get free.

Have you noticed that in your life? Anything that you get free, supposing we give you a free book. It may cost 25 rupees. We sometimes give books out like that to visitors.

I don't know what they do with it. You give out tracts. You stand out here and give out free tracts to everybody who comes here along the road.

You go 100 yards down the road, you'll see most of them thrown on the wayside. That's why I don't give it out like that. They don't value something free.

But if a man goes to a shop and buys a diamond or something expensive, you won't find him throwing it on the wayside. We value what we have paid a price for. And that is why God wants to see how much value you place on the Holy Spirit.

Look at these people who when they try to get a plot of land from the BDA or something like that, what a lot of pains they go through. They go here, they go there, they consult a lawyer, they get the document, they get the document verified, they go running to the office back and forth and back and forth and back and forth and they get all the... what a lot of pains to get a plot of land. You wouldn't do that to buy a newspaper.

I'll tell you this. If you had sought the Holy Spirit like you sought for a plot of property, you would have been filled with the Holy Spirit long, long ago. But God sees you value some plot of land more than you value the Holy Spirit.

You say, okay, you'll get the land, you won't get the Spirit. Do you know that the Holy Spirit is more valuable than any plot of property you can ever get? Even prime property, MG Road or anywhere. And when you value the Holy Spirit as more than anything else in your life, I guarantee you, God will fill you with it.

When you say, Lord, I don't care how long it takes, I don't care, and I'm not going to get satisfied with somebody saying just take it by faith. I'm not going to satisfy it with somebody who says, no, no, you're okay. I say, God, you must fill me and give me victory in my life.

You must sanctify me, spirit, soul, and body. And I've got to ask you for it. And, you know, Jesus used examples of the Holy Spirit.

We saw that once in the Gospel of John. In John, Jesus is a master at using pictures to illustrate truths. John chapter 3, chapter 4, and chapter 7, these three chapters, he used the picture of water.

In John chapter 3, he said, you've got to be born of water and the Holy Spirit. John 3 verse 5. Water was just a symbol or a picture of the Holy Spirit. It's like the water that washes us.

That's the first thing that the water does. It cleanses us. And that's what he was speaking about here.

The first function of water is to cleanse us thoroughly. Now, we need it once to be born of water and then we need to constantly be cleansed all the time, every day. And that's why Jesus said in John 13, you know, when he was washing the disciples' feet, he said, you know, he came to Peter and Peter said in John 13 verse 8, you're never going to wash me.

And he said, Jesus replied, if I don't wash you, you have no part with me. You see the importance of water? It's the first function of water to be born of the Holy Spirit. Jesus called it being born of water and the Holy Spirit.

He illustrated it here when he was washing the disciples' feet. He said, if you don't let me clean you with water, you're not a part of me. You're not my child.

You've got to allow me to clean you first. You don't have to clean yourself. You can't.

I'll cleanse you. The blood of Jesus cleanses us from all sin. He will cleanse us, but he said, you got, and then when Peter heard that, he said, oh, in that case, don't just wash my feet, wash my hands and my head and everything.

No, no, no, Jesus said, no. You need to be bathed that is born again just once. That means the whole, here he's using bathing as a picture of being born again.

No, he says, he was bathed, he's already bathed, then he needs just to wash his feet. You know, a person who's had a bath in a day may have to wash his feet many times in a day. And if you think of our entire life as a day, in that day we need to be born again once.

But then, we get dirty frequently, even after we are born again. And that, Jesus said, then you need to wash your feet frequently. You don't need to be bathed again.

You don't need to be born again all over again. You don't need to be born again 25 times in your life, in that one day of your life you're born, bathed once, you're born again, but your feet get dirty frequently during the day. Because those days they didn't wear shoes, they wore sandals.

And it would get dirty frequently and they'd come every time, they'd come out, go for a walk in the dusty roads, come back, they'd wash their feet. They'd go out somewhere, come back, wash their feet. That can happen many times during our life.

So he says, he who is bathed needs only to wash his feet. And that I need, and the Lord has to do that for us. That means, you know, it's not total filth, a little bit of dust.

And what we learn from that is, that no matter how hard you try, listen to this, no matter how hard you try, if you walk on a dusty road with sandals, you will get some dust on your feet. You cannot avoid it. The meaning is, no matter how eager you are to keep yourself from the spirit of the world, if you live one day in the world, some of that dust has got onto you.

And we experience that. We sit in an office where everybody's talking filth and rubbish and you feel a little polluted when you come back home. Now you didn't say anything, but it's the dust that came off the feet, off the road, onto your feet.

You cannot avoid it. There's filth. You walk down the roads, there are billboards, there's a little bit of filth there.

Everywhere you go. And Jesus said, you just got to wash your feet. You don't need to be born again all over again, but you need to.

Cleanse your feet. You can see there's a little dust there and say, Lord, just cleanse it away. And he'll cleanse it away.

And in Ephesians 5, the same picture is used of washing with water, saying that's how Jesus makes us holy. It says here, Christ, in the middle of verse 25, Christ loved the church. That's you.

And he gave himself up for you. Why? Here's the answer, what I've been telling you from the beginning. He gave himself not to make you wealthy, not to make you healthy, not to give you this, that and the other in the world, but to sanctify you.

To make you holy. To make you separate from everything that's evil and sinful and wicked in this world. And having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word.

Now this is different from the cleansing of our past sins by his blood. See the difference. One is when we are born again and our sins are cleansed in the blood of Christ.

Here it speaks about the daily washing. That means you come through, you walk through the world and God's word speaks to you, saying you got a little polluted there. Let me cleanse you.

And he cleanses with water, a picture of the Holy Spirit in his life. So, John chapter 3 is the first step where we are born again. Bathed and cleansed.

It's called in Titus chapter 3. In Paul's letter to Titus you see that born again is called by another expression. Being born again is called in Titus chapter 3 verse 5, middle of verse 5 the washing of the new birth. Generation is birth, regeneration is another birth.

It's called the washing of the new birth. And that's what Jesus told Nicodemus. The first thing you need is to be washed in a new birth with water.

The Holy Spirit makes us the child of God. You know, just like the Holy Spirit came upon Mary and produced supernaturally a body inside her womb, exactly the same way the Holy Spirit comes and supernaturally produces a little bit of the life of Jesus. Just like Jesus, the body of Jesus started as a small little speck in Mary's womb.

The life of Jesus starts like a small little speck in my heart. The Holy Spirit you know, like Mary, I say, how can this be? It's the same question Nicodemus asked. How can this be? How can I be born again? Mary asked, how can this be? The angel said, the Holy Spirit will come upon you.

How can you be born again? You can't be born again by your own efforts. You can open your being, but you can't be born again. The Holy Spirit has to come in and give you a new birth.

You know what new birth is? It's Jesus coming in through the Holy Spirit right inside your being and producing something as supernatural as a virgin having a little baby born in her womb. You can't do it. There's no way by which a virgin can have a womb, a body in her womb since the Holy Spirit came.

That's what happened to Mary. Something similar happens to us. The Holy Spirit comes and produces this little speck of the life of Jesus.

It has to grow, just like that body had to grow in Mary's womb. It has to grow for the answers to the Holy Spirit. That's the new birth.

The Holy Spirit coming and it's called here a washing of the water. But then it doesn't stop there. In John chapter 4, Jesus spoke about this this growing, you know, that means just like the baby grows, to use another picture, this water which is just like a bucket of water enough to have a bath.

Now it says in John 4 verse 14 becomes a well of water. Whoever drinks of the water that I give him shall never thirst. But the water that I give him will now become a well.

A well is more than just to have a bath. I don't need a well to have a bath. With a well I can do so many things with water.

I can cook. I can do so many things. I can drink.

All my thirst need is satisfied. I can keep on having all my needs satisfied. That's the meaning.

So first step is being born again and the second step is where the Holy Spirit satisfies me completely. Have you experienced that? That's the meaning of a well of water. You know, complete satisfaction.

That's what he said. If you drink this water you'll thirst again. But if you drink the water that I give, he will never thirst again.

Whoever will never thirst, verse 14. And don't you find in your life a thirst for something? A thirst to see certain types of movies and you see that movie and you thirst again. Because you want to see another one.

It's true. Whoever drinks this water will thirst again. It's like the fellow who takes a drug.

You think one drug will satisfy him? No. He thirsts again. Anything in the world is like that.

That's how people become drunkards. They drink a little bit, they thirst again. You got to be very careful.

Addiction to drink, addiction to cigarettes, addiction to movies, addiction to the internet. Anything that, you know there are good things in all this. I mean there are good things on the internet too.

But you can have an addiction. Addiction to read romantic novels. Do you think one romantic novel will satisfy you? No.

You want to read again. Whoever drinks of any of these things in the world, the whole purpose of the devil let me explain this to you. The whole purpose of the devil is to make you an addict.

An addict, maybe not to drugs and alcohol, but to something which doesn't look so bad, but an addiction that prevents the life of Jesus from springing up in you. But Jesus said, if you drink of the water I give you, you will never thirst again. Think of the greatest thing, the thing that gives you the greatest pleasure on earth.

The pleasure the Holy Spirit can give you in fellowship of Jesus is a million times more than that. You think sexual pleasure is the greatest thing? If you're a worldly person, you'll think that. Multiply that by a million and you'll understand the real pleasure of the Holy Spirit gives through knowing Jesus.

Most Christians have not experienced it. You ask most Christians, even married people, have you experienced Jesus in a way far greater than you have experienced sexual pleasure? No, you haven't. There's something you're missing.

It's a million times greater. You will not thirst for other things. There are a lot of things we'll use on the earth, but we'll never thirst for them.

It's a well. You'll never thirst again. So, stage one, stage two, then stage three, John 7. In stage three, we read in John 7, verse 37 and 38 and 39.

If any man thirsts, let him come to me and drink. Again, thirst. Thirst is so important.

That means, I'm not thirsting for the things of the world, I'm thirsting for God. He who believes in me. If you trust him.

Lord, believe means I trust you to do it in me. That's why the word faith was not found in the Old Testament. You don't need faith in the Old Testament, because I got to do it.

Thou shalt, thou shalt not, thou shalt, thou shalt not, life becomes such a headache. But here, the Lord says, I will, I will, I will, but let me do it for you. Will you believe me? Will you believe that? It's like, as I said, submitting yourself to the surgeon.

Will you trust me when I put you under anesthesia? You don't know what I'm doing to you? Yes, I trust you completely. Shame on us, that we can trust an earthly doctor. We don't trust God to give ourselves completely to him and say, I trust you, Lord.

You'll do it all in me. That's belief. If you believe in me, out of your inmost being, it'll be more than a well now, it'll be a river.

And more than one river, many rivers. See, the difference between a well and a river is this, the well satisfies only your own needs. You will never thirst again.

That's great. But a well and but a river satisfy the needs of others. That river flows and hundreds of miles away, somebody is blessed by your life.

And another river flows in another direction, hundreds of miles away, somebody is blessed by your life. By your life. There are many godly men who are dead and gone to heaven.

But the rivers that started flowing from their life, think of people like Tozer and Watchman, you think the river is not blessing people today? They themselves were gone to heaven ages ago. My brother, sister, think that you can live a life in such a way, that your life will be a blessing to people even after you're dead and gone. What a wonderful thing.

Don't you want to live like that? Are you just satisfied with enjoying a few of these worldly pleasures? Don't you want your life to really count for God on the earth, that you're not satisfied with just being washed? You're not satisfied with a well that satisfies your own needs? You want to be not one river, but many rivers. But it won't start as a river, it will start as a little trickle. Let me show you this verse in closing.

Ezekiel 47. Here's another new covenant prophecy. This is the verse that Jesus was quoting.

As the scripture has said. As the scripture has said. Where did it say? Ezekiel 47.

He brought me back to the door of the house. And the house is the temple, which is your body, the temple of the Holy Spirit. This is picture language.

And from under the threshold of the house, water began to flow. A little trickle from under the door. You know, it's like here's a temple from under the door, a little trickle of water is coming out.

Here's a person who's got a well inside, it's satisfied his own need. Now the water is flowing out to bless somebody else. Here's a brother who's washed with water.

He's got a well of water. Now it's flowing out of him to somebody else. And he brought me and said the water was trickling.

Last part of verse 2. Just trickling. Very little. You're a blessing to one person.

In six months. Okay. Praise the Lord.

You're a blessing to one person in six months. Good. It's a trickle, but it's his beginning.

And then he went out from there and then the water became deeper. It reached up to his ankles. Oh, that's more than a trickle.

And he went a little further and the water reached up to his knees. Verse 4. And then he went a little further and it reached up to his loins. Last part of verse 4. And then he went a little further and it was a river.

I couldn't walk anymore. It was a river enough to swim. What's the difference between all the others in the last step? In the last step is when his feet go off the earth.

Till then his feet are on the earth. He's experiencing the Holy Spirit. But finally he gets detached from the world and he's swimming.

It's wonderful. There's a lot of difference between walking on the floor of the swimming pool and swimming in it. I hope you know that.

You can walk up and down, up and down, get thoroughly wet and come back. You won't enjoy it as much as if you know how to swim. That's what happens.

You'll be filled with the Holy Spirit. And it says these waters go out and they begin to flow into the sea. And the sea becomes fresh.

Can you imagine a river making the whole of the Arabian Sea fresh? What a river that is. It flows into the Bay of Bengal and the whole Bay of Bengal becomes fresh. The sea becomes fresh.

And everywhere the river goes things will live. Verse 9. And there'll be many fish. Jesus took that picture and said you know what that's a picture of? Come to me.

Thirst for a life where not only your own needs will be satisfied but everywhere you go you'll be a blessing. Let's bow our heads before God for a moment. God wants to make your whole spirit, soul and body holy so that from your innermost being the temple of God rivers, rivers will one day flow.

May start as a trickle. What does he ask you to do? Open the door and say Lord I want you to do it in me. I give you permission to pull out any wretched sin, lust from my life.

I can't do it. I'm enslaved. But you can deliver me from that.

Lord I give you full permission to deliver me from that wretched habit that I'm enslaved to. Habit that I'm ashamed of. Lord I give you permission to deliver me from it right now.

Completely. Let him pull it out. Convert it into a horse you can ride on.

Thank you Father. You'll do it. I believe there are hungry hearts here this morning.

And I believe you've heard their cry. Little young children crying out to you that you'll fill them with the Holy Spirit. Satisfy their need.

Lord help them never to forget what they heard today. Oh it's so easy to hear something be stirred by it and forget it in a few days. I pray Lord they'll never forget what they heard today.

And they'll never be satisfied until they come into a life filled with the Holy Spirit. I pray in Jesus name. Amen.

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