

True Spirituality - Living by the Power of God

by Zac Poonen

To live a life of true spirituality, we must seek God's power by denying ourselves and seeking His will, and then we will experience the joy and power of the Holy Spirit.

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Scripture: John 14:13

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Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of seeking God with a selfless heart and a burden for others. He uses the example of a man who went to his neighbor at midnight to ask for food for his friend, showing the willingness to give all he received to someone in need. The speaker highlights the need for both a burden for others and an awareness of our own insufficiency to truly bless others with God's power. He references Luke 11 and Proverbs 11:25 to emphasize the principle that those who bless others will themselves be blessed by God. The sermon encourages listeners to reflect on their own lives and make a commitment to seek God's will and bless others in the future.

Transcript

Today, we were considering what it means to build with gold, silver, and precious stones. Let's turn to that verse we saw in 1 Corinthians, in chapter 3. We saw that after we have laid a foundation on the Lord Jesus Christ we can build with either wood, hay, and straw, or with gold, silver, and precious stones. And we considered from Romans 11.36 that this means to live a life where I seek to do the will of God and not my own will.

I seek to live my life in dependence on the power of God and not in human strength and power. And I seek to live for the glory of God and not for my own honor of doing the will of God in our daily life. Jesus said, if anyone wants to be my disciple, he's got to take up his cross every day and follow me.

Without denying ourselves every day. I believe if we don't understand this right at the outset, we're not going to progress into the other things we want to consider. Today we want to consider what it means to live by the power of God.

Now around the world, Christians are very eager to seek the power of God, but for the wrong reasons. And that's why they either get some counterfeit experience or abuse whatever power they receive for selfish ends. We need to begin with saying, Lord, I want to deny myself my will to do your will.

I want your will to be done on earth as it is done in heaven. And that's why I want your power. If we seek God's power with that motive, God will never deny it.

Many people wait and wait and wait for the power of God and they never receive it because God's not going to give them his power for their own selfish ends. And the devil is so subtle, so cunning as to make us feel that our life will be miserable. You see, the devil right through history, right from the beginning of the creation of man has always sought to portray God as someone who is out to take away the joy from your life, never let you have his best.

You know, that's how the devil succeeded with making Eve sin. He somehow convinced her that God is withholding something from you. Look at this lovely tree, this lovely fruit.

A little doubt entered into Eve's heart concerning the perfect love of God for her. And she felt that that which God had forbidden must be something good for her. And I think if we were to examine our lives, many of us are afraid to surrender totally.

Say, Lord, I want your will in every area of my life. I want to live all of my life doing your will. I want to spend my money the way you want me to spend it.

Every day of my life, I want to do your will. Now, when we think of it, if you believe that God's got a plan for your life, the Bible says in Ephesians 2.10 that the Lord has prepared certain works beforehand for us to walk in them. We were created to walk in a certain plan that God made for us before the worlds were created.

Now think of this. Supposing you could have planned your earthly life for a thousand years before you came to this earth. Supposing God gave you the privilege before you came to this earth that you could plan your earthly life.

Where you were going to be born, to which set of parents, which country you would be a citizen of, what you would do, whom you would marry, the job you would take, how long you would live, where you would live. Every detail of your life, if God said, before you were born as a baby, God gave you a chance to plan your whole life and showing you the entire future, all the pitfalls and all the dangers and everything, and you planned your life. Tell me, do you think you could make a better plan than the one God has made for you? Even if you had that opportunity? How many of you really believe that? That you could make a better plan for your life than the one God can make, who knows every single factor affecting you.

Everything that the devil seeks to do, to trip you up and to deceive you. Everything concerning the future. You got to be crazy to think that you can make a better plan than God.

You just have to believe that one fact to surrender totally to the will of God. And when you don't surrender totally to do God's will, when you don't deny your own will to do God's will, you're actually saying, Lord, if you'd allowed me, I could make a better plan for my life than you are making. It's the same mistake that Eve made in Eden.

And that's why our lives are deprived of the joy and the power of the Holy Spirit. I say this from experience. Once I was convinced of just one fact, let me repeat it.

That God could make a better plan for my life and has made a better plan for my life than I could ever make. Even if I had a thousand years to make it. Once I was convinced of that, it was no problem

surrendering and saying, Lord, in no area do I want my will.

I don't want to choose the profession I like. I want to choose the profession you want. I don't want to be a citizen of a country you never chose for me.

I don't want to live in any place outside of your perfect will. People talk about certain safe places and unsafe places. The safest place in all the world is the center of God's perfect will for your life.

There's absolutely nothing safer than that. That's the best place for you to live. That's the best way for you to live your earthly life.

I think, I find in spite of emphasizing this, one should think this should be so crystal clear to anyone who believes that there is a God. You've got to be an atheist to think that you can make a better plan than God can. You've got to believe that God is either ignorant or foolish, or does not have as much wisdom as you have, or hates you.

You've got to believe something like that to think that you can make a better plan for your life than God can. You see how crazy so many believers are. When they get an opportunity which they think, Oh, this is a wonderful opportunity for me to advance myself.

They think if they pray, God will say no. They feel God is out to spoil their life, make their life miserable. Who told them that? Why was the life of Jesus the happiest, the most triumphant, the most perfect life the world ever saw? Only for one reason.

He sought his Father's will. He said he came down from heaven not to do his own will. Because he knew all the misery on earth has been caused by man doing his own will.

If you could only understand that. But 6,000 years of man's history has gone by and we still haven't learned it. We still do our own will.

We still think that the restrictions in God's word are not good for us. We can violate those restrictions and still make something good of our life. We've got to be crazy.

Let me turn you to a verse in John's Gospel chapter 5. Jesus said here in John 5 and verse 30. He said, I can do nothing on my own initiative. In verse 19 he said, I can do nothing of myself unless it is something I see the Father doing.

What does that mean? He never initiated something. He always waited on the Father. He said, Father, I've got a plan to do something, but what's your will? And he waited on the Father.

Have you ever wondered why Jesus needed to pray? He never had to confess his sin. Why did he sometimes get up early in the morning, go off into the wilderness and wait on the Father? What was he seeking? He was seeking to know the will of his Father. As a man on earth, that was the secret of his life.

There's a verse in the book of Proverbs which says, Blessed is the man who waits daily outside my gates, waiting to hear my voice, who recognizes that my plan for his life is far better than anything he can make. That's the man who will make the best use of his earthly life. At the end of Jesus' life, he could say in John chapter 17, verse 4, John 17, verse 4, he said, I have glorified you on earth, Father, having accomplished the work which you gave me to do.

There was a particular plan the Father had for Jesus. And he fulfilled it. And when he finished it, he never wanted to stay on this earth any longer.

He said, I've finished the work you gave me to do, I'm ready to go. You know, there are very, very few believers who will be able to say that when they come to the end of their life. You can't say that if you've spent most of your life seeking your own will and your own advancement and your own profit and your own gain.

You won't be able to say that. You may be able to say, I made a lot of money and I got a lot of education and I did this for my children and the other for my children, but you won't be able to say what Jesus said, Father, you had a plan for my life, I fulfilled it. You can't do anything about the past.

But I want to say to all of you sitting here this evening, you can do something about the future. You can't do something about yesterday, but you can do something about tomorrow. You can say, Lord, of the years that are left to me, I give them to your hands.

Help me to do your will, at least from now. If I've missed your will somewhere, bring me back in line, so that at least for the rest of my life, I can live in wisdom. Doing your will.

And it is when we seek to do the will of God, that we have a right to ask God for His power. And then we receive it easily. If you are seeking for the power of the Holy Spirit, because you want a thrill, you want an excitement, you want an electric shock down your body like you've heard somebody testify, or you want some type of experience, you're seeking something for yourself.

Jesus taught us to seek for the power of God, so that we can do the will of God. Sometimes when I've been asked to pray for someone who's sick, sometimes an unbeliever, they take me to their home and say, would you pray for this man who's sick? And then I go and talk to them. I say, why do you want to be healthy? Do you want to be healthy so that you can go and stand in the cinema queue once more? Because you're too weak now? Do you want to be healthy so that you can go out and live out there in the world for yourself? Shall we pray, Lord, raise him up so that he can be healthy enough to go and stand in the cinema queue and live for himself and commit sin? Is that what we're going to pray for? Or shall we pray, Lord, heal him, manifest your power, so that he can get up and do the will of God? Small likelihood of such a prayer being answered.

When you pray for healing, why do you want healing, brother? So that you can be more fit to serve God? I hope so. Or is it, Lord, I can't make as much money with the sickness? We have to first dedicate ourselves to say, Lord, I never want to do my own will anymore on earth, in anything. I don't want this body to do my will.

It's done my will enough, number of years. It's lived for itself, calling itself a believer, for so many years. And it's made a mess of my life.

But at least the rest of my life, I want this body to do your will. Now, Lord, give me power. And God will meet with you, brother, sister.

He'll never deny his power. God is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him. There is no partiality with Him.

What He does for others, He'll do for you. But you've got to have the same longing, like those others who served God. Why was it that the Holy Spirit says about Jesus, God gave His Spirit without measure unto His Son? Because Jesus had no other ambition on earth but to do the will of His Father.

The more we align ourselves with that sort of passion and desire, the quicker God's power will come upon us. The more effective we will be on this earth. When we find, for example, that there are areas in our life where we are dishonoring God by sin.

I spoke yesterday about anger, about losing our temper. I tell you, I'm amazed. I'm really amazed as I've traveled different places to see that there are very, very few believers who mourn and weep before God when they lose their temper.

They take it as normal. They take it so lightly. Yeah, about bad temper.

It's something like someone saying, you know, I murdered somebody yesterday. What to do? I might murder somebody tomorrow too. It's my weakness.

Jesus, He created anger with murder, you know. He said, the old covenant said, you shall not murder. I say to you, you shall not be angry.

He said, that's the source from which murder comes. That's the root. Why should we take it so lightly? Take it so lightly.

Every sin in your life that you take lightly, you'll never overcome. It's no use asking God for power before you want to do His will. I've had so many young people, young men come to me and say, how can I overcome the lust of the eyes and dirty thoughts that come into my mind? It's not just young people.

A lot of old people have that problem too. And I say, okay, I'll tell you. A fool-proof way, if you'll take me seriously.

Every time you fall in this area, even if nobody knows about it, you'll just slip up in your thoughts. Mourn before God. Go before God and mourn and say, Lord, I've dishonored you.

I've done my own will again. I've not done your will. I've not kept this body pure for your glory.

Give me power next time. Give me grace to be an overcomer. Every time, if you fall 25 times a day, weep and mourn 25 times before God.

And I guarantee you'll get victory pretty soon. It's because you take it so lightly that victory never comes, and it won't come in the next 25 years either. You'll be an old 80-year-old man lusting after women.

I guarantee that. Calling yourself a believer. Brothers, sisters, the world is full of believers who live in sin and never mourn about it.

They can ask for experiences that tickle their body, they can speak in tongues, but they don't have power to overcome sin. Because they're not desperate. They don't seek God in desperation.

If you could pray for victory over sin like you pray when your child is sick and the doctors have given up hope, how would you pray to God then? Think if you could pray for overcoming sin like that. Boy, you'd have got victory long ago. It's that earnestness that's lacking.

The Lord says, you'll seek me and you'll find me when you search for me with all your heart. There's no partiality with that. Jesus once told a story in Luke chapter 18.

He spoke a parable there about a widow who wanted help from her enemy who was oppressing her. And in this parable, the enemy is Satan. The widow is you and me.

Jesus pictured his church and his disciples like a helpless widow. Someone with no male member in the house to fight for her. Weak.

Has to take care of herself and helpless. That's the way God has made us so that we depend on Him. And here was this enemy oppressing her day and night.

And she'd go to the judge and the judge would say, don't disturb me. She'd again go and knock at the judge's door and say, get away from there. She'd come next morning, five o'clock in the morning, bang at the judge's door and he'd drive her away.

She'd keep coming, keep coming, keep coming till finally Jesus said this unrighteous judge said, okay, she's bothering me, she's wearing me out. What do you want? He said, give me legal protection from my enemy. And he granted it.

And Jesus said, listen to these words in Luke chapter 18, verse 7. If an unrighteous judge could do that, do you think a righteous God won't help His elect who cry to Him day and night? How many are there like that? Who cry to Him day and night? Will He delay long? Do you think the Lord will delay long for people who cry day and night? No. Do you think He won't give them that power to overcome that enemy who's oppressing them? Way back in the Garden of Eden, God said to Adam and Eve, the seed of the woman will crush the serpent. And he was crushed on Calvary.

Satan was defeated 2,000 years ago. There's no need for him to sit on our heads. There's no need for him to overcome us.

His place is under our feet. Romans 16.20 says, the God of peace will crush Satan under your feet. Satan's got to be scared to come to me, because if he comes, he's going to be under my feet.

He can come, but he'll be under my feet. That's the place God has ordained for the devil. He's never going to sit on my head.

He's never going to pull me down, because he's been defeated on Calvary. Do you think God will not bring that victory into the life of whom? The one who cries day and night. For what? Lord, deliver me from my enemy.

Not Lord, help me to win that lottery, or buy this extra thing, or get that better house. These other things will be added. Not lotteries, but other things that are necessary.

But our primary request, Lord, deliver me from my enemy, who is bringing me down, defeating me with this habit, making me dishonor your name with this habit, the other habit. Give me power. Jesus said, when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, you shall receive power.

That's what we need. Power. We need to live by the power of God.

There is not a single command in the New Testament that cannot be obeyed. I hope you believe that. Many people read portions of Scripture, and they think, well, that's impossible.

Nobody can live like that. And there are some people who say, well, that's not for us, that's for the Jews in the millennium. That's a very convenient way of escaping out of our obligation.

They have a, when they read the New Testament, they've got a little waste paper basket called the Jewish waste paper basket. And any command which is a little difficult, particularly the ones in Matthew 5, 6, and 7, say, that's not for us, that's for the millennium. That's a waste paper basket.

And then all these other promises, you know, I'll never leave you, and I'll forsake you, and all these wonderful things, those are all for us. Yeah. I tell you, there are people like this.

There are believers like this. Now, if you read God's word, and you say, these are the commands of a father. I want to ask those of you who are fathers and mothers here, will you ever ask your children to do something that they cannot do? No, impossible.

Will you ask your child to carry a five ton weight on his head, and then punish it when it doesn't do it? You think their heavenly father will ask us to do anything that is impossible? Never. We've got to begin there. That's what it means to have faith.

First of all, faith is not just believing Jesus died for me, even the devils believe that. But faith is to believe that everything, faith is much more than that, it is that, but something more, that is that everything God has commanded is possible for me to obey. Otherwise, he wouldn't have written it here.

This book is not for angels, this book is not for the millennium, this book is for me now. He's given me commands to obey now. And if I don't start from there, I will find some excuse or the other not to do something here, and never feel that I've dishonored the Lord, when I haven't kept the command.

Because I find so many other people around me are in that condition. If the married life of most believers is miserable and unhappy, I think that's okay, my married life is also like that. But that's not God's will.

I mean, if you were looking at God's will how your married life would be, it'd be quite a different thing. And we'd even mourn if our married life is not like that. But when we compare ourselves with believers around us, and we say, well, they're also like that, so it doesn't matter.

That's why we find a contentment in a defeated, substandard level. But if we can say, this is God's will, and I'm not coming up to it, we will seek Him for power, and we will get it. You wouldn't ask your child to go and buy something from a shop without giving him the money.

Will you? You may ask him to go and get something, but you expect him to produce the money? You expect him to go and work and earn some money and go and get it? No. You say, son, here's the money, go and get it. In the same way, when God gives us a command, He gives us the power to keep it.

And just like a child says, dad, give me the cash, I'll go and get it. We can ask God for power to keep every single commandment He has commanded in the New Testament. Every single one.

Full of the joy of the Lord. The kingdom of God is righteousness with joy and peace in the Holy Spirit. And then, be able to complete our course and finish the plan which God has for our life.

So we see here, this widow kept on going and she got what she wanted. Even Jesus needed that power. The Bible says, let us come boldly to the throne of grace so that we can receive grace to help us in our time of need.

Grace is another word for God's power. I believe that before God can give us His power, He has to let us see our own inability and our weakness. And there are many examples of this in the Old Testament.

Jacob, for example. There was a time in Jacob's life when God met with Jacob and said, you are no longer going to be Jacob. Your name is Israel because you got power with God now.

But when did he get it? He got it after God spent 20 years of his self-sufficiency and his self-confidence. And when he came to the place where he felt he was helpless, God even crippled him so that he couldn't, he became lame. God said, now you can have my power.

We take the example of Moses. When he was 40 years old, capable, powerful, educated, God said, you are not fit to lead my people. God took him out of the wilderness, broke him for 40 years, took out all that self-sufficiency, all that self-confidence, till he came to the place where he said, Lord, I am not the man.

Please send somebody else. I am totally unfit to serve you. God said, now you are ready.

That's God's way. Before God can use any of us, He has to reduce us to zero. That's the principle.

That's the meaning of the cross. You see, the cross reduces a man to zero. It puts him to death.

That's why Jesus said, take up the cross. That's why He tells us to take up the cross. Humble yourself, He says.

Recognize your insufficiency, your inability to do my will, to serve me. Then you will seek me for power. It's when we feel capable of serving God, that we don't seek the power of the Holy Spirit.

You know, when those early apostles were waiting on the day of Pentecost, waiting for the day of Pentecost, they really felt incapable of doing what the Lord told them to do. They were so scared, they locked the doors, and they stayed inside. They said, Lord, we can never do this job.

So Jesus said, don't go. You are not ready. Wait.

When the Holy Spirit comes upon you, you will receive power. And then you won't be the same. And I believe that the Lord allows us to wait to help us realize that insufficiency.

I want to turn to another parable, Luke chapter 11. I don't know whether you've noticed that Jesus taught only two parables on prayer. One was this one on the widow, and the other one is this one here in Luke 11.

And both these parables teach exactly the same lesson. And that is, you have to come to a place of helplessness. That's the first thing.

And from that place of helplessness, insufficiency, emptiness, a zero point, seek God. And then you'll get all the power you need. That's how the widow came to the judge.

She was helpless. She had nobody to help her. Absolutely weak, helpless, and she kept on seeking, and she got.

Jesus said, pray like that, and you'll once again. Now in Luke chapter 11, now there's a difference between these two parables. In Luke chapter 18, the widow was seeking for something for herself.

Give me power over my enemy. So we can say that's a parable of when we seek for victory over Satan in our life. That he is not able to knock us down in the moment of temptation.

In Luke chapter 11, we are thinking here of power to serve the Lord. You see, we need power for two things. One, to power to overcome sin in our life.

And second, power to be able to serve God and bring the blessing of God to other people. Luke chapter 18 deals with the first one. And Luke chapter 11 deals with the second one.

And that is when the disciples came to Jesus one day and said, Lord, teach us to pray. He said, okay, this is how you must pray. And he said this parable of a man who had a visitor at midnight, verse 5. And he didn't have any food to give him.

Now, see this picture clearly. The man himself had already eaten. He was full.

He had no lack himself. Now he was thinking of the need of another. This visitor who had come.

Who had a need. And a need which he could not meet. And so he goes to his neighbor's house and bangs away there at the door until he gets the food that he wants for whom? Not for himself.

For his visitor. For his friend. And Jesus said, pray like that.

Ask like that. See what he said after this? And he said that this man will get up and give him as much as he needs. And then he said in verse 9, I say to you, ask.

Ask like that. For your neighbor. For the one who comes to you with a spiritual need which you cannot meet.

Do you have a desire to help the people around you? This parable and this type of praying is only for those people who have a desire to help the people around them. I mean, if you are perfectly satisfied because your stomach is full and the Lord has met your need, your sins are forgiven, and you are filled with the Holy Spirit, you got victory over sin, then you are like a man who has a visitor coming to his house and say, well, sorry brother, I don't have any food, let's go to bed. We'll see something about it in the morning.

If you are like that, this parable is not for you. No. This parable is for those who when they are full and satisfied and see another person not having the victory and the power and the blessing which they have, have a burden and go to God and say, Lord, you have blessed me Lord, I am not asking for myself now, I am asking you to give me something to bless this brother, to bless this person, to help this person.

There are very few people praying to God like that. He said, ask like that and it will be given you. Seek like that for power.

And then at the conclusion of the parable he explained what he was referring to. He said, in verse 13, If you, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit? He is talking about the gift of the Holy Spirit. To those who ask, the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

You know, there is one thing I have discovered about the fruit of the Spirit and the gifts of the Spirit. The fruit of the Spirit is for myself. The gifts of the Spirit are all for others.

If I have love, it blesses me. If I have joy, peace, who is blessed? Me. But if I have the gift of prophecy, who is blessed? Somebody else.

If I have the gift of healing, or the word of wisdom, or the word of knowledge, even the gift of tongues, is to bless others. It's always to bless others. He who speaks in the tongue edifies himself so that he can be fresh to bless others.

That's how it is. Think of this passage in Luke chapter 4. It's very important for us to understand it because I believe that many of our problems concerning the anointing of the Holy Spirit, concerning which there is so much confusion in the world today, will be solved when we understand when this principle and ask God with the right motive. You do not have because you do not ask.

You ask and don't receive because you ask with wrong motive that you may spend it on yourselves. Luke chapter 4. Jesus said in verse 18, The Spirit of the Lord is upon me. He's speaking here about the anointing of the Holy Spirit for service.

And he says, The Spirit of the Lord has anointed me to do what? Now I want you to notice the results of the anointing of the Holy Spirit. First of all, to preach the good news to the poor. It's the poor who are blessed.

Secondly, to proclaim release to the captives. It's the captives who are blessed. Recovery of sight to the blind.

It's the blind people who are blessed. To set free those who are downtrodden. The downtrodden are blessed.

To open the prison doors for those who are in prison. It's the prisoners who are blessed. Everything is for others.

That's the purpose of the anointing of the Lord. Now, unfortunately, today, many people who wait in tarrying meetings and go for, to various places hoping that somehow one day the Spirit of the Lord will hit them. They are not seeking to bless others.

They are not banging at God's door because they are burdened about some needy person who needs to be helped. No! They are seeking a thrill for themselves. And the devil is ready to give you whatever type of thrill you want.

To satisfy you with the thrill you look for. And you go away thinking you got some blessing of the Spirit. You are deceived, brother.

Jesus was anointed to bless others. The man went seeking in his neighbor's house at midnight because he wanted food for someone else. And when you come to God like that, say, Lord, I don't want to live this selfish life where I only think of my blessing.

You know that verse which Jesus said, it is more blessed to, to what? To give than to receive. Let me turn you to Proverbs chapter 11 in that connection. Proverbs 11 is a wonderful verse.

In the last part of verse 25, Proverbs 11, 25 it says, He who waters others will be watered himself. In other words, God will pour water on you if your desire is to pour water on others and bless them. It's a very simple principle.

This man who was so burdened to give food to his friend, went to his neighbor, asked for it and got it and gave it all to his friend. If he got three loaves from his neighbor, he didn't need even one himself. He gave it all to his neighbor.

He said, This is for you. It's for you. And I want to say to every single one here, you seek God like that and say, Lord, I want my life to count for you.

I think of people around me who are in need and I'm not able to help them. There are two things we require there. One is a burden for the people around us and the second is an awareness that in myself, I just don't have what it takes to give them a heavenly blessing.

I need God's power. That's all. First of all, a burden for those around us who are in some type of need and secondly, an awareness that in myself, I just don't have what it takes to bless that person.

That will drive me to God. If I don't have either of these, if I don't have a burden, of course, I won't seek God. Like I said, I'll be like that man who said, Well, sorry, I don't have any food.

Or like James says, Be warmed and blessed. Pray to the Lord, brother. Go and seek God.

I can't help you. Most believers are like that. And that's why even if they get some type of so called experience, it's a counterfeit.

The real anointing of the Holy Spirit, Jesus described as rivers of living water flowing out from our innermost being. Now, you know, in the gospel of John, Jesus spoke about water three times. And it's a progression.

First of all, in John chapter 3, He spoke about being born of water. That's being born of the Holy Spirit. It's like getting a little cup of water.

I will lift up the cup of salvation. That's the first ministry of the Holy Spirit to bring us salvation. It's like getting a little cup of water after being in the desert for so many years.

And then in John chapter 4, when Jesus was speaking to the Samaritan woman, He said, the water that I give will become like a a spring or a well of water. That's the next stage. And that's a little better than a cup.

You see, one advantage of having a well in your own house, in India anyway, is that the corporation water supply is turned off like it often is in many cities. You are not dry. You got your own well.

Nobody outside can turn off your water supply. And that's the second stage of life in the Holy Spirit. Nobody outside can switch off your joy, your peace, your victory, your freshness.

You got a well within you. It's not dependent on other people being nice to you or saying nice things. It's got nothing to do with other people.

Nobody can turn off that supply. You got the well within you. You can always be full of joy and peace and victory.

But that's only stage 2. Then in John chapter 7, verse 37 and 38, Jesus spoke about rivers. Now when a river starts flowing out of a person, that's not to bless him. A well may be just for myself.

Most people have a well in their compound only for themselves. But no river flows for itself. A river flows for others.

And not one river. John 7, it says, rivers of living water flowing out. This he spoke about the Holy Spirit.

So that is the power of God. If you really want the genuine power of God, the result will be that rivers will start flowing out from your life, blessing people in this direction, that direction, the other direction. If that's not happening, brother, I don't care what tongues you speak in and what electric shots you get, you're wasting your time.

The real evidence of the power of God is that rivers flow out. Like it says about Jesus, the poor hear the gospel, the downtrodden are delivered, the prisoners are set free, the blind eyes are opened wherever I go. This blessing, you know that well known psalm, Psalm 23, what does it say? Thou anointest my head with oil.

That's a picture of the anointing of the Holy Spirit. What's the next sentence? My cup, it began as a cup, but it started running over, not just a trickle, it became many rivers and what does it go on to say? Goodness and mercy will follow me all the days of my life, wherever I go, there'll be goodness, the goodness of the Lord flowing out of me that I leave behind wherever I go. What a life! And mercy, and goodness.

It says about Jesus in Acts 10, 38, God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power and He went about doing good and delivering people who were oppressed by the devil. Wherever He went, there was a trail of goodness and mercy. How's it in your life? I know lots of believers, wherever they go, there's confusion and strife.

Confusion and strife follows them wherever they go. Controversy, fighting, quarreling, that's not the power of the Holy Spirit, that's an evil spirit. Wherever there's jealousy and selfish ambition, there's disorder and every evil thing.

What a need there is for the genuine power of the Holy Spirit in all of our lives. Just think, my brothers and sisters, if from all of our lives, at least from today, if we began to seek God, rivers of living water started flowing out. If we thought of people around us who are in need and say, Lord, I want to seek you.

You can begin with one person. See, that man who started praying, who went to his neighbor, he went for one person. All great ministries in the world begin with something very small.

You've heard of George Muller who looked after thousands of orphans. He didn't begin with thousands of orphans. He began with one or two.

I remember 35 years ago when I used to travel around when I was still in the Navy and I used to go every week take a long train journey in Bombay way out in the outskirts to go to a house every week to take a little Bible study where there were two or three people. I remember when I was in the Cochin Naval Base

about 33 years ago. Every week I'd go to a house and there were probably two or three people there.

I said, that's fine. If there are needy people maybe one person to share God's Word with them. I remember some years ago I traveled all the way from India to Australia to have some meetings for a few days with three people.

If you are willing to say, Lord take me and use me it may be to one or a thousand it makes no difference but make use of my life. And if it's only one begin with one brother. But say, Lord let rivers of living water flow out from my life.

I want your power in my life. I want you to set me free from this selfish self-centered life where I only think of myself. Give me power.

He who waters others will be watered also himself. I remember when I read that verse I understood the secret of being perpetually fresh. One of the great desires I had in my life for many, many years was I said, Lord I've seen so much of boring dead preaching in my life if that ever happens to me I'm going to quit the ministry.

I want to be always fresh every day of the year. Every time I speak the God's Word must be fresh. Nothing must be stale in my life.

And the Lord said you can have it always fresh. Follow this verse. If you water others you'll be watered yourself.

You'll never be dry. You know why you're dry, brother? Because what God gave you you never gave to others. You kept it to yourself.

When you earn more money you say, ah, for myself. No wonder you're so dry today. When you got more knowledge of the Word ah, I can use this now.

To get more honor as a Bible study leader for yourself. No wonder you're so dry today. God's laws are unchangeable.

He who waters others will be watered himself. Say, Lord, I want to use everything you give me to bless others. Everything you've given me is for others.

There was a great man of God who lived many centuries ago who said listen to these words carefully All that is earthly is worthless unless it is used to serve the law of love. Everything we get is worthless if you don't use it to serve the law of love. And God tests us with the things He gives us to see whether we'll use it to spread His kingdom to serve others to bless others.

That is why we need God's power. And I want to say a word today concerning what it says in 1 John 4 also. In 1 John chapter 4 it says here Beloved, believe not every spirit but test the spirits to see whether they are from God.

When Christians begin to hunger for power and they don't want the power that comes through self-denial through giving up their own will and through seeking to be a blessing to others and they want power to excite them to tickle them they will easily be led astray into contrapheats. And those contrapheats can come from demons. I've heard with my own ears demons speak in tongues and when the demon is cast out they stop speaking in tongues.

I've also heard tongues from the Holy Spirit. Don't believe every spirit. When people are eager for something for example if you belong in an assembly where they'll always treat you like a second class citizen until you speak in tongues you know what will happen? You'll produce it one day.

Or the devil will help you to have it so that you join the club. And what's the use of that? You haven't got anything genuine there. There is a genuine gift but you haven't got that.

You were so eager to get the badge or to join the club that you produced something and you say, I got it. What have you got? Have you got power? Are rivers of living water flowing out from you? No. Don't fool yourself.

Don't believe every spirit. There are many contrapheats. If it's not from the devil it could be from our own soul.

There's a lot of soul power in man. Hypnotic power. Preachers can hypnotize you.

I saw one man once telling people after getting them to line up at the end of the meeting he said, look at me. A Christian preacher. Look at me.

And he gets them all to look at him, to submit to him and then he does something and they all fall flat. This is hypnosis. It's happening in Christian circles.

And people think it's the Holy Spirit. It's a myth. There's no difference between that and hypnosis.

And he's got a scripture for it. I heard him say that. Peter and John said to the lame man, look on us.

There's a scripture for everything regardless of the means. Be careful. There are a lot of people who would like to have power over you and give you experiences which don't make rivers of living water come out of you.

Which don't bless others. Just tickle you. Give you some sensation and still keep you living for yourself.

This is a carpet. Don't believe every spirit. Soul power.

Healing that takes place through getting our attitudes right. And you don't need the name of Jesus but they put the name of Jesus in and people think that is a supernatural gift to the Holy Spirit. There's a lot of healing.

I believe in healing. I believe that Jesus heals the sick. But I believe a lot of things that go on today in the name of Jesus and healing.

Particularly when I see the amount of money that's raked in in the name of Jesus. It's clear. This has got nothing to do with the Spirit of Christ.

But I'm amazed at the number of believers who fall for this type of thing. Who fall for this type of deception. Who give their money to people thinking ooh, this man's a great man of God and all he's interested in is your money.

Dear brothers and sisters let me warn you. Seek for the genuine power of the Holy Spirit and when you get it it'll bring rivers of living water to flow out from you. That's how it was with Jesus.

That's the power He wants to give us. There are lots of counterfeits around us. If you go to the Word and compare everything with Scripture and see if that is the Spirit of Christ there manifesting itself in that man a spirit of humility purity freedom from the love of money if you identify that then you can go ahead but if it isn't there be careful.

Test the spirits it says to see whether they are from God. God wants to give us power to be overcomers to put the devil under our feet to serve Him to bless others. Let's come to Him in faith believing that He's a rewarder of all who diligently seek Him.

Power to overcome sin power to bless others God can give us both if we will seek Him. And so if you find your life dry perhaps you've seen the reason today. Maybe you're defeated and you don't mourn about it.

Maybe you're seeking for power but not to bless others but yourself. Rectify that motive and say Lord I want to cleanse this wrong motive with which I've been seeking You for Your power. And then that word will be fulfilled.

Will a righteous God delay long? Never. Jesus said He will answer them speedily. Let's pray.

Let's bow our heads before God. The preaching of God's word is not meant to give us all the answers. It's not even meant to meet all our needs.

Because God does not want our needs to be met by man. The preaching of God's word is meant to create a sense of need in your heart so that you can turn to God. And if you have found a sense of need being created in your heart a sense of your own insufficiency a sense of the wrongness of the motives with which you have been seeking God of the selfishness and the self-centered way in which you have lived your Christian life all these years then God's word has accomplished its purpose this evening.

Now respond to that word and turn to God and say Lord I want power in my life. The power, the genuine fullness and power and baptism and the Holy Spirit and fire. First of all to live an overcoming life and second so that I can be a blessing to others so that I can live a useful life on earth and not waste my earthly life.

I pray that many of you will respond to God this evening seeking God and saying Lord like Jacob said I will not leave you until you bless me. Heavenly Father I pray that you will meet with those who are seeking you I believe there are needy people here seeking you meet with them Lord give them a hunger and thirst that will never be satisfied till the mighty power of God has come and broken them reduced them to zero so that your power can flow out from their life. Hear and answer this prayer in Jesus name.

Amen.

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