

Two Mysteries Of God's Kingdom

by Zac Poonen

This sermon emphasizes the importance of being filled with the Holy Spirit to overcome sin and live a godly life. It highlights the need for believers to die to self, walk in the way of the cross, and seek the power of the Holy Spirit to live a victorious Christian life. The speaker stresses the significance of honesty before God, acknowledging one's shortcomings, and loving the truth revealed in Scripture to experience true transformation and unity in the body of Christ.

Scripture: Matthew 3:16, Romans 6:6, John 16:13, 1 Peter 5:5, 2 Thessalonians 2:10

Topics: "Holy Spirit Empowerment", "Transformation through Truth"

Description

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Transcript

The whole purpose of Christ's coming to earth was not completed with just saving individuals from sin. The coming of the Holy Spirit into man's heart could enable man to overcome sin. That was one of the primary purposes with which God sent the Holy Spirit.

So we have to say that if you are not overcoming sin in your life, you have frustrated the purpose of God in sending His Spirit. But there is also a second purpose. And that is described in Ephesians 3. As a mystery that was hidden from many ages.

He says in verse 4 and 5, You can understand my insight into the mystery of Christ, which in other generations was not made known to the sons of men, now is revealed by His holy apostles and prophets. What is that mystery? You never hear the word mystery in the Old Testament. A mystery is a secret of God that He reveals to those who fear Him.

The Old Testament says the secret of the Lord is with those who fear Him. There are many mysteries mentioned in scripture. In the New Testament.

Mystery of the kingdom of heaven. Mystery of iniquity. Of sin, of iniquity.

Mystery of sin. But then there are two mysteries which are called great mysteries. The one is in 1 Timothy 3.16. This is called a great mystery.

It is called the mystery of godliness. What that means is, it is a secret how to live a godly life. Forgiveness of sins is not a secret.

It is openly written in scripture. And lots and lots of believers have got that. But very few have understood the mystery of godliness.

The proof is that in so many millions of believers whose sins are forgiven, very few can testify to a godly life. But that is exactly like Jesus said, the way to life is narrow and very few find it. And we never find it unless we have a hunger for it.

See, the average believer is quite happy with his defeated life so long as his sins are forgiven. Some of you have been believers for many many years. But there are so many elementary sins which still defeat you.

You must be honest and confess, I have not understood the mystery of godliness. And you must be honest and admit, I have not understood that mystery because I have no interest in understanding that. That can be pretty humbling for an older believer to admit.

But if he is not humble enough to admit that, all your life you will remain there. See, god greatly appreciates honest people. It requires humility to be honest.

And if you are not willing to be honest, god will not lead us further. In fact, he will even allow you to be deceived. So let me just mention these two mysteries, two great mysteries.

One is the mystery of godliness, how to live a godly life. And he says, the answer is here, that Christ was revealed in the flesh. That's a point of great controversy with many Christians.

But if you don't understand this, you will never come to a godly life. It's written here. If you want to know this great mystery, you must say, lord, I want to see what it means that Jesus came in the flesh.

No, there is a difference between saying that and saying Jesus came as a man. The difference is this. When it says Jesus came in the flesh, it implies that he was tempted in all points like we are.

In the living bible paraphrase of this verse, it's written like this. It is true that the way to live a godly life is not an easy matter. But the answer lies in Christ who came to earth in the flesh.

And in this flesh, he was pure in his spirit. He was righteous and pure inside. See, this has been the problem from the day Adam sinned.

How can a man with this flesh live a pure life? The excuse that most believers make when they sin is, well, after all, we are human. But then we say Jesus came and lived on earth as a man and he never sinned. And we say, oh, but he was God.

Did he live on earth as God? If he lived on earth as God, he cannot say, follow me. See, an angel cannot fly across a swimming pool and say, follow me. I say, listen, I can't follow you.

Because when I go into the water, gravity pulls me down. But gravity doesn't pull you, so you can fly across. So if Jesus came to earth and he was not tempted like me, he would have been like that angel going through the earth without any pull of sin.

He means he wouldn't be pulled by temptation. Then I have to say to him what I say to the angel. I can't follow you.

Because you don't feel this pull that I feel. But Jesus more frequently said, follow me than believe in me. So many times he said, follow me.

He said, if anyone wants to be my disciple, he must deny himself, take up the cross and follow me. What does it mean to take up the cross and follow him? Every day. Luke 9.23, every day.

To take up the cross is to die. To die to myself every day. To die to my own will every day.

This is the best way to understand the cross. Where I want to do something and God wants me to do something else as a cross. There is a cross there on which I must die.

That's the meaning of taking up the cross. And if Jesus says that's the way to follow him, then he must have also taken up a cross every day. Otherwise he would have said, you just take up the cross and go.

Can't follow me because I never took up the cross. But he said, take up the cross and follow me. So there was an inward cross in Jesus' life for 33 and a half years.

He never needed to take a cross. When he was in heaven, because in heaven God could not be tempted. The Bible says that in James 1, God cannot be tempted.

So when Jesus was in heaven, eternal ages with the father, he could not be tempted. And the Bible says in Philippians 2, he voluntarily gave up that equality with God when he came to earth. Philippians in chapter 2 and verse 6, though he existed in the form of God that is from all eternity, he did not hold on to that equality.

But verse 7, emptied himself. What did he empty himself of? If a glass is full, how do you empty it? You pour it out. So there is something Jesus emptied himself of, this verse says, when he came to this earth.

When he became a man. He did not cease to be God when he was on earth. That is impossible.

See if a king disguises himself and comes and lives in the midst of, in a slum for a few years. He is still the king. He may be disguising himself and living there.

So, when Jesus was on earth, he was God. That is why he always accepted worship when people worshipped him. We cannot accept worship, angels also cannot accept worship.

And he could forgive sins. He was God on the earth. But, then what did he empty himself of? It is very important to understand this.

Even though in his person he was God. He gave up all the privileges of being God. For example, we read that the devil could tempt him in the wilderness.

God cannot be tempted. But he gave up that privilege because he became a man. And exposed himself to temptation.

And here is it. He exposed himself to the temptation means he exposed himself to the possibility of falling into sin. Otherwise he was not tempted like us.

The secret of Godliness lies here. That is what we read. In Hebrews 4. Now here is one of those verses that has not been translated properly in the Malayalam.

I think the devil has done a very clever work there. But every English translation and all other translations is very clear. So, listen to it as it is in English.

Which is how it is in the original Greek. We don't have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weakness. But one who has been tempted, Hebrews 4.15, in all things as we are.

Hebrews 4.15, one who was tempted in all points as we are. And yet he did not sin. That's where the Malayalam is slightly different.

Because there it says as though he was not even tempted. It's quite a ridiculous translation. Malayalam it says he was tempted in all points except sin.

Then what other temptation is there? Temptation to sleep? That's not a temptation. Or temptation to eat food? That's not a temptation. The only temptation there is in the world is temptation to sin.

So that's a meaningless translation. That's why I say it's wrong. And it's not like that in the original.

He was tempted as we are, but he did not sin. Now how does this help me? Because then I can see an example whom I can follow. Then I can see an example whom I can follow.

It's not a doctrine or a teaching. God gave the commandments in the old testament and said live up to this standard. God gave Moses 613 commandments.

But there were 603 other commandments about many many things in Numbers and Leviticus and all that. And they were told to keep it. Many of them could not keep it.

Jesus came and in the sermon on the mount raised the standard much higher. Not only don't commit adultery, but don't even lust with your mind. Not only don't murder, but don't even get angry.

See most Christians don't take these verses seriously. Because the devil has convinced them it is impossible. And as long as you say what the devil says it is impossible, it will be impossible to you.

From the beginning of time, from the beginning of human history, the devil has always told man, God's commands are impossible to keep. You cannot keep it. You can read it, but you can't keep it.

And he even says God doesn't really take it seriously whether you keep it or not. That's what he told Adam and Eve. That's what he told Eve, that yeah it doesn't matter if you keep it or not.

It doesn't matter if you disobey the small command from the tree. God is a good God. You are not going to bother too much about it.

But they discovered the devil was a liar. Do you know what's the first lie mentioned in the Bible? Do you know what's the first lie written in the Bible? It's not a big deal to disobey God for small things. That is the first lie mentioned in the Bible.

That is the implication of what the devil was telling Eve. Has God told you not to eat of this? God has said that if I eat it, I will die. And here is the first lie.

You shall not die. Is the devil telling that lie to Christians today? Remember that is the first lie. You shall not die.

God says you shall die. Devil says you shall not die. They were God's children there, Adam and Eve.

They died. Spiritually. Now how does the devil say today you shall not die? I want to show you.

In Romans 8, where God says you will die, the devil says you will not die. Let's turn to Romans 8. Romans 8 is written for born again believers. And he tells them, he calls them brethren in verse 2. He calls them brethren in verse 12.

That means he is referring to believers. He is not talking about unbelievers. Brethren, we are not under obligation to the flesh to live according to the flesh.

He says I don't have any debt to the flesh to do what the flesh says. I am in debt to Jesus to do what he says. I am in debt to Jesus to do what he says.

The flesh is telling me one thing. Christ is telling me something else through the spirit. And then he says, if you live according to the flesh, you will definitely die.

What is he talking about, physical death? Physical death, even Jesus died. And that everybody dies. But here he is saying, if you believers live according to the flesh, you will die.

Spiritually die. You will die. What does the old liar say? Satan.

You will not die. You ask Jesus to come into your heart, you won't die. But those are the people to whom the Holy Spirit is writing here.

Brethren means what in verse 12? They are people who have received Christ as their saviour. But then they play the fool with sin. They only want to keep on sinning and asking God to forgive them.

That means living according to the flesh. They don't take sin seriously. They disobey God.

They go according to their flesh. You will die. That's the lie the devil is propagating today.

Many believers are falling for that lie. They will get a shock when they leave this earth. They will discover that God's word was true.

That if they lived according to the flesh, even if they call themselves believers and broke bread every Sunday, they will go to hell. Because they lived according to the flesh. It's not a very popular message.

And the devil knows that. And so he's got thousands of agents who get up in churches and say you will not die. This is what's happening in Christendom.

It's a deception. And then you have to decide whether you're going to believe God or believe man. Are you going to believe your preacher or are you going to believe what God says? Romans 3 verse 4 says, Let God be true and every man a liar.

When God has said something, I have to consider everybody else as a liar. And Paul said to the Corinthians in 2 Corinthians 11, He says, I want to present you Corinthians as a pure virgin to Christ. 2 Corinthians 11.2 These guys are already accepting your tribes.

So he should go on in the next verse and say, I'm sure you will all be there as a pure virgin without any problem. That's not what he says. He says in the next verse, But I'm afraid that you'll be deceived.

Verse 3, you'll be deceived exactly like the serpent deceived Eve in Eden. And you will be led astray from that simple devotion to Christ. And you will end up believing verse 4 in another Jesus.

Another Jesus is one who cannot save you from your sins. Another Jesus is only interested in prospering you materially and make sure that you get a lot of money and your children get good jobs and they're all married and settled down. That is another Jesus.

And you're happy with all that, but you're defeated by sin. And the vast majority of believers I've met are like that. I cannot change them, but it's my duty to warn them.

And it says, I'm afraid, verse 4, that you may receive a different spirit. A spirit that doesn't make you holy. A spirit that just makes you babble in what you call unknown tongues, but doesn't make you holy.

And you will receive a different gospel. A gospel that does not teach you how to take up the cross and follow the Lord. He says, this is like the serpent deceived he.

So we must live in fear. That God has promised us something and we may not get it. See Hebrews chapter 3. In Hebrews 3, he says, don't you remember that those who came out of Egypt, verse 16, verse 17, God was angry with them for 40 years? Who was he angry with? Those who sinned, it says in that verse.

And God said to them, you will never enter my rest. Verse 18. So, what is the meaning there? This is a picture of believers.

They came out of Egypt redeemed by the blood of the Lamb. They went into the Red Sea and came out. This is a picture of water baptism.

The cloud came down upon them. That is a picture of the baptism of the Holy Spirit. And then, after all that, they never entered where God wanted them to enter.

God was angry with them. Do you think today, God is angry with some believers who are redeemed by the blood of the Lamb and baptized in water? Some people say that's impossible. It's because they haven't read Hebrews chapter 3. See what it says.

This example is mentioned and then what does it say to us? Chapter 4, verse 1. Therefore, let us fear. What should we fear? That God has given us a promise and we may not enter into His rest. We, writing to believers, let us fear that after coming out of Egypt and being baptized, we may not enter into what God has promised for us.

And it's at the end of that chapter that we saw chapter 4, verse 15 that Jesus was tempted like us. Because there lies the mystery, the secret, how we can enter into this rest. See, it says in chapter 4, verse 15 he was tempted like us but he never sinned.

He says, so what? Therefore, verse 16, let us come and receive that same grace to help us in our time of need. What does grace do for us? Grace is one of the most misunderstood words in the New Testament. In the Bible schools, they teach in English G-R-A-C-E.

God's riches at Christ's expense. And they call it the unmerited favor of God. Grace is not unmerited favor.

Non-Christians are also getting unmerited favor. Look at all the healthy people in the world, do you think they deserve that? Look at all the terrorists who are healthy enough to go and kill people. Their health, they don't deserve that health.

Look at all the crooked businessmen in the world. God is showing unmerited favor to everybody in the world. But that is not grace.

Let me tell you what grace is. We must always see it in scripture. Romans 6.14 Sin will not be master over you because you are not under law but under grace.

I could even ask a little child to answer this question from this verse. I'd say, listen son, tell me from this one verse. Just this verse.

Sin shall not be master over you because you are not under law but under grace. So, question number one. What is the mark of a man who is under grace? Anybody who knows English can answer that.

Sin will not be able to rule over him. Right. Question number two.

From the same verse. What is the mark of a man who is living under the law? Sin rules over him. Do you believe that? That every person who is ruled by sin is under the law.

It's like those old testament people who tried to keep the law but couldn't keep it. There are multitudes of Christians who say the same thing today. I tried to keep it but I can't keep it.

They don't have the power of the Holy Spirit. Jesus said you will receive power when the Spirit of God comes upon you. You cannot overcome sin without the power of the Holy Spirit.

It's like saying you can't run these electronic gadgets without electricity. No, a lot of Christians I have met I see their doctrines are all correct. I picture them like a man who has got a good working air conditioner in his house.

A good first class washing machine. Dryer. Many other gadgets like that.

Ceiling fans. So many gadgets. Freezers, refrigerators.

All in good condition. The only thing missing is electricity. He might as well not have any of those things.

There is no difference between a man who has got right doctrines but no power of the Holy Spirit and a man who has got all the wrong doctrines. This fellow can glory over that fellow saying that fellow's refrigerator is not working. It's an old model.

His air conditioner does not work. His washing machine is packed up. Maybe what he says is right.

But there is no difference between the two houses when there is no electricity. So we can say the doctrine of those CSI people is wrong. And the Roman Catholic doctrine is wrong.

It's like criticizing this other man whose gadgets are all packed up. But if you don't have electricity, even with all the right doctrines, you are in the same condition. Faith without works is dead.

James 2 says as the body without breath is dead. The doctrines in the Bible are like the parts of our human body. Some important doctrines like the heart and the liver and all that.

Other doctrines which are not so important but which are also part doctrines like hair and things like that. But if you have all the doctrines and the body doesn't have light, it's useless. I would rather have one man without one hand who is alive than a man with ten fingers and dead.

I'd rather have a man whose one or two minor doctrines are not so correct but he's filled with the Holy Spirit than a person whose doctrines are all correct but he's spiritually dead. The secret of godliness Jesus Christ was tempted like us and he did not sin because the grace of God was upon him. Do you know that Jesus Christ was the first man who walked on this earth with grace upon him? That's why he never sinned.

Not because he was God. He had emptied himself of that privileges of God. That's why he's an example for us.

The devil has blinded this truth from so many people. I never saw this for so many years in my Christian life. So many years after I was born again and baptized.

I never saw this great truth that Jesus was tempted like me. And all those years I was defeated. But when I saw this I saw Jesus came in the flesh and was tempted like me.

And I was filled with the Holy Spirit. Then I began to experience victory over sin in my life. Because then I came under grace.

Let's turn to Luke chapter 2. Have you ever noticed this verse? It's one of those verses in the new bible. What is it? It's talking about Jesus. As a child.

Jesus the child continued to grow. Luke 2.40 He continued to grow and become strong. Increased in wisdom.

And the grace of God was upon him. Do you know that the grace of God was upon Jesus? And what does Romans 6.14 say? When you are under grace sin cannot rule over you. It's like saying if I got a good umbrella over me the rain doesn't fall on me.

Because I am under the umbrella. But if I put my hand outside it gets wet. So grace is like an umbrella.

If I live under it sin cannot touch me. Dear brothers and sisters face up to this. Don't justify yourself.

Jesus told the pharisees you are those who justify yourself. Then you will never be saved. Acknowledge the truth that you are sinning because you are not under grace.

You got forgiveness of sins but you have not understood what it is to come under grace. God's word is clear. Romans 6.14 Sin shall not rule over you if you are under grace.

But sin is defeating you. Why is your anger defeating you all the time? Why is your unforgiving spirit defeating you? Why is it you can never overcome the habit of gossiping and backbiting against others? Why is it you can never overcome anxiety and fear? Some people don't even think anxiety is a sin. You

know who said don't be anxious? Three times in Matthew 6. Do not be anxious, do not be anxious, do not be anxious.

The last ten verses of Matthew 6. Three times Jesus said. Do not be anxious, do not be anxious, do not be anxious. The same Jesus who told Moses don't commit murder, don't commit adultery, don't steal.

Do you have to take that seriously? Don't commit murder. What about don't be anxious? It's the same God who said it. The reason my brothers and sisters is we have not come under grace.

As I said yesterday I don't blame you, I blame your teachers who have not taught you the truth. Now is the opportunity to understand it. Jesus did not sin because the grace of God was upon him as a child.

Right through his life he was under grace, he never sinned. This is the secret of godliness. And how did he end his life? Hebrews chapter 2. Hebrews 2 we read in verse 9. About Jesus suffering death on the cross.

How could he go to this terrible death on the cross? Says in verse 9 last part, by the grace of God he tasted death. By the grace of God in the beginning of verse 9. So as a child grace of God was upon him. On the cross he went to the cross through the grace of God.

His entire life he was under this umbrella of grace. And he says follow me. If you come under grace you will also not sin.

The apostle John towards the end of his life. He saw the sad condition of the churches as you read in the book of revelation. So he writes a letter.

Why did he write this letter? 1 John chapter 2 verse 1. My little children I am writing these things to you so that you don't sin. That's why he is writing. Have you ever heard a message where somebody preaches that you should not sin? Or do you hear a message that says as long as we are on this earth we will keep on sinning? What does Peter say? He read what John says.

Let's see 1 Peter chapter 2. Verse 21 and 22. You have been called. You believers have been called with this purpose.

Now a lot of people think my only purpose is to go and witness to others and bring them to Christ. That's good. But that's not the purpose with which you were called.

You were called with this purpose. Christ suffered for you. Leaving you an example.

Now listen to this. It's almost unbelievable. To follow in his steps who committed no sin.

Have you read that in your bible? To follow in the steps of Jesus who committed no sin. Is it possible? The devil says no. The holy spirit says yes.

Because he came in the flesh and was tempted like you. Once I understood this truth. 35 years ago.

It changed the direction of my life. Changed my life. Changed my home life.

And I understood how it was to build the church as the body of Christ. See most churches are like a congregation. A great bunch of people and one preacher gets up there and preaches to them every Sunday.

That's not the church. That's a congregation like the old testament congregation. The church is the body of Jesus Christ.

Every member works with the others. And there's only one head. That's Christ.

That is how every local church must function. But that is the second mystery. Mystery.

We saw the first one. Here's the second mystery in Ephesians 5. I told you there were two great mysteries mentioned in the new testament. One is the mystery of how to live a godly life.

That is to see that Jesus came in the flesh and was tempted like us and he did not sin. Many times after I understood this truth I was in my thirties when I first understood this clearly. And when I was tempted whatever temptation I would say Lord Jesus when you were in Nazareth you were tempted exactly like I am being tempted right now.

And I want to walk in your footsteps. I want to react to this temptation the way you reacted in Nazareth two thousand years ago. And the Holy Spirit would show me how Jesus reacted to that temptation.

He would give me the strength to resist, to react to the temptation in the same way. Now the second mystery is in Ephesians 5 and he speaks in verse 31 about a man leaving father and mother and cleaving to his wife. They shall be one flesh.

And then he says I am not talking about marriage. I am talking verse 32 about Christ and the church. This is a great mystery that Jesus left his father and came to be married to us.

A man should leave his father like Jesus left his father and came and got married to us. This is a mystery, great mystery. Christ and the church being the body of Christ.

In chapter 3 he speaks a little more about this mystery. I saw that in the beginning verse 4, 3 verse 4. My insight into the mystery of Christ and he says this mystery is this that the Gentiles should be fellow heirs with the Jews in the body of Christ. What does that mean? Now the Gentiles and the Jews were the greatest opposites in the world.

It's greater than the Brahmins and the Dalits in India. Or greater than the difference between a westerner and an easterner. And Jesus does this amazing work of bringing them all together.

Makes them one. Not only different cultures and languages but people with completely different temperaments. He makes them one see chapter 2. Ephesians 2 verse 14 He has made both groups into one and broken down the barrier of the dividing wall.

And he abolished all the enmity in verse 15 and made the two into one new man. And reconciled both these groups in one body. Now this could never be done in the old testament.

The Jews were only mingled with the Jews. two completely different people are not only brought together but made one. People of different temperaments.

You say that's not a great mystery. In our church we have people from many languages and many cultures and countries. Yes but it still may be a congregation.

They may not be one. If you want to know how difficult it is for two people to become one. After this meeting go and ask any married couple here.

They believe the same doctrine. They go to the same church. They speak the same language.

They belong to the same community. And they have tried for so many years but they are still not one. They are clashing.

Some of the good ones forgive one another after some time. But they clash again. It's very difficult to make two people one.

How to do it? Jesus says he abolished the enmity on the cross. Verse 16, through the cross he made them one body. That's where he put to death the enmity.

There is something in us that reacts to someone who is different from us. Even if it's your wife or husband. That's why there is a clash.

And the only way for two people to become one is like it says here on the cross. Then there is perfect peace. What does it mean to die on the cross? That means I die to myself.

Let me use an illustration. Supposing you were living in a very close neighbourhood to somebody else's house. And every morning at six o'clock the husband and wife are fighting in that house.

It's like almost like an alarm clock. They start off at six o'clock. Every day you got so used to it.

Every day you watched it for four or five years. And one day at six o'clock peace. So what happened? And you go and knock at the door.

And you discover the wife has died. Then there was peace. That's the meaning of dying on the cross.

The wonderful message of the gospel is I can die while I'm alive. Then there's peace. I use this example.

Here's a husband and wife or two brothers or two sisters. Always clashing. If one of them says I'm not going to cooperate for fighting.

I'm going to die. No sound. You try clapping with one hand.

No sound. This is peace. Where at least one person says I'm going to die to myself.

You keep on losing your temper. Do what you like. I'm going to die.

There's peace. And if both are willing to die then it's heaven. That's fellowship.

This is fellowship. If only one is willing to die there's peace. If both are willing to die to themselves there's fellowship.

The tragedy in many homes is there's neither fellowship nor peace. There's neither peace nor heaven. They both accepted Christ.

Neither is willing to die. Neither is willing to humble themselves. God gives grace only to the humble it says in 1 Peter 5. How do I get under this umbrella? God gives his grace to the humble.

If I don't get grace there's only one reason. Somewhere in my life I'm proud and God does not give me grace. Because he gives grace only to the humble.

So you have a proud husband and a proud wife they'll always clash because they don't get grace. Or two brothers or two elders who can't get along with each other. Or two sisters.

Doesn't matter who. You know that even Jesus could not get his eleven people to become one with each other. At the end of the last day of their life together at the last supper you know what they were discussing? The leader is going to die.

Now who's going to be the next leader? It's something like children saying daddy's going to die. Who's going to get the house now? Can you imagine discussing like that? Jesus is going to die. Who's the greatest? You or me? And Jesus was so sad but he did not blame them.

The reason was they did not have the Holy Spirit. And when they did not have the Holy Spirit even Jesus could not make them one. That's why he said in John 14 12 After I go I will send the Holy Spirit and then you will do a greater work than I have done.

That is another verse most people don't understand. Haven't you read that verse in your Bible? Okay you're going to get a new Bible today. You will do greater works than me.

If someone were to ask you what is the meaning of that verse what would you reply? And it's not only apostles. Every believer will do greater works than me. Is that raising the dead? I think the greatest work Jesus did was raising a man who was dead for four days.

What are you going to do? Raise somebody who was dead for six days? Have you ever heard anybody who did it? That can't be the meaning because that says every believer must do it. Walk on the water? Have you heard of anybody walking on the water? He's not talking about all those things. He's talking about something he could not do when he was on earth because people didn't have the Holy Spirit.

And that is to make two dissimilar opposite people one. To make a husband and wife one. Who are completely different from each other.

Sometimes a man says brother I got newly married and I discovered that my wife is completely opposite to me. I said then it's definitely God's choice only if she's completely opposite to you. You both love the Lord.

He brings together people who are opposites. And then I draw a little diagram on a piece of paper. I first draw a whole egg.

And then I say now I'm going to break this egg. And I break it into two. And I draw a diagram of these two halves.

You know with all the pokey on both sides. The egg when it is broken. I say this looks pretty ugly right.

I say that's you and that's your wife. Pretty ugly. A lot of pokey things that can poke each other.

But the wonderful thing is. Wherever there's a projection here there's a depression there. And wherever there's a projection here there's a depression here.

And when I put it together. It's amazing it just fits into each other. Because they were opposites.

That is how God brings husband and wife together. That's how God brings believers together. This is the mystery of the body of Christ.

See these two hands. See where the thumb is here and the thumb is here. Exact opposite.

Here the thumb is on left side and here it's on the right side. From you we look at it this is the other way. But it's opposite.

And that's why it fits so perfectly when you put it together. It would have been odd if my left hand was like this. That's a bit funny.

God made it opposite. And God made Paul and Barnabas opposite. One was a fiery man and the other was a gentle gracious man.

They both needed each other. It was sad that the devil came and divided them. That was not God's will.

God had chosen them to work together because they were opposites. I thank God that God has given me people to work with who are opposites. If you get to know my wife you will discover she is exactly the opposite of me.

I make all the enemies and she makes all the friends. It's grace and truth. The glory of God was seen in Jesus full of grace and truth.

And in a church also God brings different people with different personalities and fills them with the Holy Spirit so the beauty of Jesus can be seen in the whole body not in one person. Everywhere I go the devil is determined to bring division in that church because they are different. I am sure you folks have seen that in your own example.

Do you know the number of churches in India which are having court cases? New Testament pattern church, more court cases. Doctrine doesn't clash, clash, clash. And the court will appoint some Hindu man to oversee this Christian.

Can you imagine what heaven and the angels think about that? So many denominations it's there. And always the fight is over property. You know what Jesus said to Pilate? John 18 36 18 If my kingdom were of this world my servants will be fighting.

When you fight for earthly things you are proclaiming that your kingdom is of this world and not of Jesus Christ. If you fight because your brother cheated you of the property your kingdom will be of this world. One man came to Jesus once and said tell my brother to share the property with me.

Luke chapter 12 Jesus said I didn't come for all that. Let him have the property. You follow me.

Who would listen to that word of Jesus today? Dear brothers and sisters we need to see these two mysteries. One that Jesus came in the flesh and I don't have to sin. I don't have to fight for earthly things.

I can walk the same values that Jesus had. I can be one with people who are dissimilar to me. I don't have to clash with my wife.

I can cooperate with her. I don't have to clash with brothers who have different views from mine. God has made them like that.

And they are different from me so that together we can do God's work. But that unity can only be possible on the cross. That means I die on the cross to my own views.

And he or my wife or her brother dies to his views, her views. And in that death we are one. In my dying with Jesus I become one with others who die with Jesus.

This is one of the great truths in the New Testament of the way of the cross. I'll tell you how God showed it to me the first time. When I was a young Christian I was going to an assembly which only studied the Bible.

The Bible was very good. I was very happy to study the Bible. But I felt a lack of power in my life.

I was born again. I was baptized in water. I was studying the scriptures.

But I didn't have power. I was like a hand, good hand but paralyzed. All the doctrines were correct, five fingers.

Elbow, everything is there. But it's paralyzed. It's a member of the body.

Paralyzed. That's how I felt. And even when I tried to share the word it was such a struggle.

Because I didn't have power. So as I read the scriptures, I saw that there's a promise that Jesus will baptize you in the Holy Spirit and fire. They never taught that in the church I was in.

So I began to seek God on my own. I was working in the Navy those days. So somebody told me, you must go to the Pentecostal church.

The other ones who speak about baptism in the Holy Spirit. I'd never been to a Pentecostal church in my life. I didn't even know anything about them.

Anyway I went with this brother to one pastor. He said pray. He said let's pray.

And he told me, now keep saying Hallelujah. Keep saying Hallelujah, Hallelujah, Hallelujah, Hallelujah, Hallelujah. Keep on saying it.

And then you will speak in tongues. I said rubbish, I'm not going to do that. They didn't keep on saying Hallelujah on the day of Pentecost.

Nobody told anyone in the Acts of the Apostles to do that. I went to their meeting and there was such a lot of noise. But I didn't see holiness.

So I was disappointed. I came back to my room. And I said Lord whatever that is, I don't want that.

I want the real thing which Peter, James and John got on the day of Pentecost. I don't want noise and counterfeit. I want real power.

I want power to live a holy life. I want power to be a fearless witness for Christ. I want the power to be able to speak your word with authority.

And as I began to pray and seek God for a number of days, I would fast and pray. The Lord revealed something to me. Jesus, when did the anointing come upon Jesus? When he went into the river Jordan

and was baptized.

As he came up, the Spirit of God came upon him. And God showed me that there Jesus was accepting death to himself. When a person pushes somebody under the water, Jesus is accepting somebody pushing him down to death.

And coming up out of the water is a picture of resurrection. And then the Spirit came upon him. So, what the Lord showed me then was, if you are willing to choose the way of death to yourself, my Spirit will rest upon you.

And as long as you walk the way of death to yourself, my Spirit's power will rest upon you. But if ever a day comes in your life when you don't want to walk that way, my Spirit will depart from you. So, I saw there is a close connection between the power of the Holy Spirit and the way of the cross.

That was 1963. That's the first time I really experienced an anointing of the Holy Spirit. And I began to have power to minister the word.

And soon I left the Navy. And I had power to minister the word and write articles and books and all that. But even though I had that power, I still did not know the secret of really overcoming sin in my thoughts.

So, I knew that there was something more I needed to know. I was defeated, defeated. I backslid inwardly.

And I said, Lord, I want you to do something for me. I want you to fill me with the Spirit again. Give me power so that my inner life becomes pure.

You know, we can go to Jesus again and again when we have a need. But we must be honest about our need. I was preaching in a church those days.

In Bangalore, 1974. But my inner life was not corresponding with what I preached. By the way, that is true of many people who preach.

They preach a higher standard than they are living in their thought life. And they won't acknowledge it. I decided I am going to acknowledge it.

I want to be honest with God. And the Lord asked me a question. Are you willing to stand up in the church next Sunday and publicly acknowledge that you are a hypocrite? That I am preaching what is not really true in my inner life.

My outer life is okay like the good Pharisees. And I said, yes, Lord. And that day God met with me.

He filled me with the spirit again. And turned my life around. I learned something that day.

That God loves honest people. All he wants is honesty. Absolute honesty.

Don't pretend. Jesus did not condemn adulteresses as much as he condemned hypocrites. He forgave murderers on the cross.

But hypocrisy said, how will you escape hell? So I learned something from that. That Jesus hates hypocrisy more than he hates murder and adultery. Now if some preacher or elder was a murderer or adulterer you would have no respect for him.

But if he's a hypocrite you say, well, all believers are hypocrites. That's not serious. We don't have a sense of values.

Dear brothers and sisters. God has got great plans for every one of us. And all you have to do is be absolutely honest about what God has planned for you.

God has spoken to you in these two days. And if you are not honest, you don't love the truth, God will allow you to be deceived about your true condition. So I'll close with this verse.

2 Thessalonians 2 2 Thessalonians 2 And verse 10 and 11. This is a verse written for those who don't love the truth and who don't want to be saved from sin. When they hear the word of God they don't face up to the truth about themselves.

They are too proud to acknowledge. They are a sin. Here's what it says.

God will deceive them. And he will make them believe a lie about themselves. It's written here.

God will deceive you and make you believe a lie about yourself. What does that mean? What does that mean? You will think you are spiritual when you are not spiritual. You will think you are filled with the spirit when you are not filled with the spirit.

You may even think you are born again when you are not born again. God himself makes you believe what is false. Why? Because you don't love the truth that God shows you.

And you don't want to be saved from that corruption. So I want to encourage all of you. Always love the truth about yourself.

Whatever God shows you. And you see something in the word of God which is different from what you have always believed. Love the truth.

Don't cling on to your old doctrine and say no no no I can't give up that even if God's word says something else. If I had been like that I would never have been filled with the Holy Spirit. Because the church I was in never taught me about being filled with the Holy Spirit.

I saw something in scripture. I saw this coward of a Peter suddenly became different when he was filled with the Holy Spirit. I said Lord I want that.

I'm not going to be disturbed because some other people have gone into some fanatic extreme. But I saw in the Acts of the Apostles how people were filled with the Holy Spirit. So love the truth.

Love the truth. Seek to be saved from all sin. And you can be absolutely sure God will never allow you to be deceived.

You will get God's best. In your life. In your home.

You will be able to build a church as the body of Christ. Thank you for coming all these two days. Thank you for listening patiently.

We praise the Lord for opening heaven over us. It's bar heads. Please respond to whatever God spoke to you in these days.

Say Lord I want to love the truth. I want to understand what it is to overcome sin. I don't want to just go around as part of a congregation.

I want to build the body of Christ. Help me Lord. Heavenly Father I want to thank you for your goodness to us these days.

For the word that you have given us so richly from heaven. And for all these wonderful brothers and sisters who are here. Who have taken so much trouble to come here and to listen to your word.

I pray the birds of the air will not take away the seeds sown. I pray that the word will not fall on hard ground. But it will fall on good ground and bring a hundred fold fruit.

Thank you. In Jesus name. Amen.

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