

# Yielded, Blessed and Broken

by Zac Poonen

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*Zac Poonen emphasizes the importance of living as true witnesses for Christ by surrendering our lives and resources to God for His glory and the blessing of others.*

**Duration:** 57:50

**Scripture:** Acts 1:8

**Topics:** "Surrender To God", "Christian Witness"

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## Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of learning from the Old Testament, particularly the failure of Israel to be witnesses for God on the earth. It highlights the need for Christians to be true witnesses by living out their faith daily, showing the world the beauty of serving God. The sermon also stresses the significance of surrendering all to God, seeking His blessing, and allowing Him to break and mold us for His purposes, ultimately leading to a life that glorifies God and impacts others.

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## Transcript

We know that three-quarters of the Bible is Old Testament. And even though the Old Covenant that God has made with Israel was abolished, there's a lot of instruction in the Old Testament that we can learn from. One of the things is the failure of Israel to be witnesses unto God for God on the earth.

They were not blessed only for themselves. When God called their father Abraham, what he told Abraham was, I will bless you, Genesis 12, 2, and you will be a blessing. And verse 3, all the families of the earth will be blessed through you.

So God's purpose was that Israel should be, even though they were not called like we Christians are to go to all the nations to make disciples, they were to be a witness on the earth as a nation to show the world what a wonderful thing it was to serve God and to live by his principles, obeying his commandments. And we know from the history of the Old Testament that they failed repeatedly, again and again and again and again. God would restore them, send prophets, but they would fail again.

That's one of the things we can learn from the Old Testament, and you see that the burden of all the Old Testament prophets was repentance, repent and turn back to God. In their failure to be his witnesses, we see the classic example of Jonah, that when God wanted to send him to be a witness to Assyria, Nineveh, he refused to go initially. They didn't take their calling seriously.

And I believe that that's something that we have also failed as Christians. And we need to think about that. I don't mean just going and telling people Jesus died for your sins.

Jesus never said, you shall bear witness to me. He said, you shall be my witnesses, Acts 1.8. There's a world of difference between being a witness and bearing witness. Bearing witness is like standing in a court and telling people what you saw, what you heard.

And we can be like that, telling people what Jesus did for us. But being a witness means that our life, our way of life, has to show people how wonderful it is to live for Christ and to serve him. And if people don't see that, we may not be called to travel all the world, but we have a little world and the neighbors around us, our relatives and people we work at in our offices.

And they must see what a wonderful thing it is in our lives to live for Jesus and the difference that Christ has made in our lives and in our homes. And if that, if our relatives and our neighbors and our fellow workers in the office are not seeing it, we have to say that we have failed just like Israel. In Galatians chapter 3, we read these words, When Israel failed, God set it aside and chose those who would respond to him in the nations of the world to be his witnesses.

They're referred to as the Gentiles in the New Testament. And we read in Galatians chapter 3 and verse 14, the reason why Christ became a curse for us on the cross, verse 13. Verse 14, is so that, I mean, did you know this? Why did Christ become a curse for us on the cross? Christ became a curse for us, verse 13, in order that Galatians 3, 14, that in Christ Jesus, this blessing of Abraham that we just read might come to all the nations of the world.

That we as Christians are to be a blessing to all the families of the earth. I mean, the ones we come in touch with, obviously. So that we would receive the promise of the spirit through faith.

So we see there that the whole purpose of the gift of the Holy Spirit was to make us a blessing to the families of the earth. But there's so much confusion concerning the gift of the Holy Spirit in the world today. We have these two extremes of those who have gone into fanaticism and extreme teachings on the Holy Spirit.

On the other side, those who react against those extremes and say, we want to have nothing to do with that. Well, the devil's happy with both groups. He doesn't care which side of the cliff you follow, or left side or right side, so long as you miss the narrow way.

And unlike all those Old Testament people, unlike Israel, who only had commandments, we have an example. There was no one in the Old Testament who could ever say, follow me. They had commandments, very good commandments, but no example.

Not even Moses, Elijah ever said follow me. The first person who said follow me was Jesus. And then, the Apostle Paul, follow me, as I follow Christ.

And you and I are supposed to say that to others. Follow me, as I follow Christ. See what Christ has done in my life.

See what Christ has done in my home. See how Christ has helped me to bring up my children. See how Christ has changed my attitude to money.

See how Christ has made me love my enemies, bless those who curse me. Many other things like that. So, this is the purpose of the gift of the Holy Spirit.

The power of the Spirit will come upon you, and you shall be my witnesses unto the uttermost parts of the earth. So, that's what I want to share a few thoughts on. You know, it's interesting that among all those, you know, that the Jewish people are very clever.

Even today, they are some of the cleverest people in the world. They are very, very clever in Jesus' time. They've been blessed with tremendous intelligence.

But it's those intelligent people who studied the Bible from cover to cover, Genesis to Malachi, those days. Who read it, studied it, and felt that Jesus was the Prince of Devils. You know, you can be intelligent.

You can be a Bible scholar. You completely miss what God is doing. In those days, it was the second person of the Trinity on earth.

And they couldn't understand Him. In these days, He is the third person of the Trinity. And a lot of intelligent Christians can't understand Him.

So, it's very interesting to see how in the midst of these intelligent Jewish people, Jesus picked some simple fishermen who were not the cleverest. I mean, there was a Bible school run by Gamaliel in Jerusalem, but he didn't go there and pick up any of those students. He picked up people who were just faithful in their ordinary tasks, fishermen, tax collectors who were despised like Matthew, and others who were just laymen.

And trained them for three and a half years. They were still not fit. Said, you need to go out and be my witnesses to the uttermost parts of the earth, but don't attempt it till you're filled with the Holy Spirit.

And when they were filled with the Spirit, you know how they turned the world upside down. It wasn't with cleverness. They were not clever people.

In fact, all the clever priests and all looked at them and wondered how these uneducated people could manifest such power. In one place, we read that Acts 4, that 5,000 people were saved. How could these fishermen handle this type of situation? The Lord had prepared them for that when He fed the 5,000.

Turn to Matthew chapter 14. And there we read how Jesus taught them some principles. How to handle 5,000 believers who need spiritual bread and food.

And you don't have much resources to meet that need. You don't have the intelligence of some of these other people here. You don't have the scholarship of some of these other people here.

I'll teach you how to meet the need. And that's what you and I need to learn. Many of us are not scholars or very intelligent or intellectual.

But God can teach us today by that. In Matthew chapter 14, we read verse 15. When it was evening, the disciples came to Him and said, The place is desolate and the hour is late.

Send the crowds away. They may go into the villages and buy food for themselves. You know, when we are overwhelmed by the need of people who are hungry for the Word, it's very easy to say, send them away.

Let them go and read the Bible themselves. Let them take care of themselves. The Lord says, No.

You give them something to eat. Brothers and sisters, if you know the Lord, the Lord says to you, You give them something to eat. There are people around you who don't know the Lord like you, who don't know His Word.

You give them something to eat. It's our responsibility. And this is how we can say, many of us may be saying this, We don't have the resources.

We don't have the intelligence. We don't have the scholarship. We don't know the Bible so much.

We don't know any Greek or Hebrew. Why, we've only got so... We know so little. We have only five loaves and two fish.

Verse 17. Verse 18, He said, Bring it to me. And He ordered the people to sit down on the grass.

And He took the five loaves and two fish. We know from another gospel that it was a little boy who had this five loaves and two fish. His mom had packed up his lunch for him.

That was his lunch. It's a little boy's lunch. That's all five loaves and two fish.

You know, five small little buns and two small fish. That was his lunch. And when the disciples... He was the only one who had any food there.

And when the disciples went to him and said, Son, will you give that to Jesus? All of it? I think he didn't hesitate. He said, Sure. That teaches us even little boys and girls, God can use them to feed 5,000.

You don't have to be a great scholar. You don't have to be clever. But you have to give everything.

That's important. If you hold something back, I believe that even if you had given four loaves and one fish, saying, At least I better keep some for myself, that miracle would not have taken place. It's the first lesson that we need to learn.

If we want to be a blessing to others, be the witnesses that God wants us to be. Number one. Give all that you have.

I don't mean put your... Empty your bank account and put it in the offering box. Don't give it to the church. Give it to Jesus.

Don't give it to some covetous pastor. Don't give it to some greedy television evangelist. Give it to Jesus.

It's not that guy who's your bridegroom. It's Jesus who's your bridegroom. And it's not just money.

I don't think God's interested in our money. It's a wrong emphasis that we see in Christendom today, where whenever you hear the word give, immediately people think of money. But you know in the New Testament, when it talks about give, it says present your body.

That's what he wants first of all. When you get married, what do you want? Would you marry your wife for money? I hope not. You want her.

Isn't it an insult to Christ to say that when he marries you, he wants your money? If a human being... I got married. I didn't want my wife's money or her father's money or any such thing. Is Jesus worse than me? He's not interested in our money.

He's interested in us. I beseech you brethren, present your bodies, not your tights, like you hear so much in many churches. Present your bodies.

So when I say give all, I'm not talking about money first of all. That is there, but it's way down in the list. It's your body.

It's your ambitions. It's your plans. It's much easier to give 10% and think your responsibility is over.

When I gave my life to Christ 51 years ago, it wasn't money. I gave my life because he had given himself for me, and that's what changed my life completely and brought me to a very satisfying position today. So when we think of giving five loaves and two fish, it may be very little you have, but give it all.

Give it all. Present your bodies first of all. That's number one.

Anybody can do that. A little boy can do that, a little girl, grown-up people. Lord, here are my eyes.

They are yours. I've used it for the devil in myself for so many years. I've used it to read a lot of garbage and look at a lot of corrupt stuff on the computer and elsewhere.

I've finished with it. It's yours. You know, it's literally like taking your eyes and giving them to somebody else, and then you're blind.

It's only what he wants to see with the eyes that you want to see thereafter. That is true Christianity. You can feed the 5,000.

I'll tell you that. God can pick up on nobody and use him or her or a little child to bless thousands, but you've got to give them all first. Take your tongue and say, Lord, here's my tongue.

I've said a lot of rude things, angry words to different people, said a lot of things I shouldn't have said, and I give you my tongue today. Everything I have, my mind, whatever level of intelligence you have, say, Lord, I want to use it for you. Some of us have got good degrees from colleges.

In your profession, you're very clever. How much do you use your intelligence for God? Some of you do business, and you make money. You're clever.

What about using that cleverness for God? God gave me a certain amount of intelligence, and I decided. Of course, I was earning my living for a number of years, and I decided while I was earning my living that I would use also my intelligence to study the Scriptures. Use it for God.

God didn't give you your mind just to make money. That's only to earn your living. God gave you your mind so that you might give it to him, like that boy gave his five loaves and two fish.

You may wonder why God uses certain people and not others. The reason is they gave everything, and the others didn't give everything. The others gave maybe 10 percent, maybe a little bit here, a little bit there, but it wasn't completely under the Lord's control.

A lot of it was for themselves. The great danger is when you keep it for yourself, it's like keeping some money in the bank and some money under your pillow at home. The thieves will steal what's under your pillow.

That's what happens when you keep some of it for some of your body, some of your abilities, and etc. for yourself. The devil gets a hold of it.

He's the thief. So the first step is to give everything. Lord, I will not hold back anything.

And that's the only thing that those early apostles had that Peter and James and John had, which the Pharisees didn't have. Whatever he had, he gave up. I mean, he was a married man.

He was earning his living through fishing. And he said, Lord, that's fine. You called me to live for you.

I give you all. Now, I'm not saying you've got to give up your job. That's a special calling God gives to a few.

But even in our secular job, Paul was in a secular job. He was making tents. He supported himself.

But he gave all to the Lord. He lived for God. He even gave up the desire to get married to the Lord.

That must have been a tremendous sacrifice. You know how we all long to be married? Paul gave up even that. That, again, is a special calling.

Not everybody's called for that. You don't have to feel guilty if you're not called for it. If God calls you, he gives you the grace for it.

But 99% of people, he doesn't call for that. But even in our married life, you say, Lord, I give my home to you. So that's the first principle.

You can be a little boy, boy, man, woman, anybody. You give all to him. In the Old Testament, we read that there was a thing called the burnt offering.

You read in Leviticus chapter 1. And you've heard me say this before, that they couldn't take that bullock they brought and put it straight on the altar. They could have done that. In fact, it would have been much easier.

Just take the bullock, put it on the altar, and burn it out. But there was a reason why everything in the Old Testament had symbolism. The Lord told the priest, you've got to cut it up into pieces.

And that must have taken a long time. It's a pretty laborious process to cut up a bullock. I mean, each bullock being cut, can you imagine how hard those priests had to work? Their hands would be aching.

The Lord said, you've got to do that. Because that was symbolizing that when we present our bodies, see, the burnt offering is a picture of how Jesus presented his body and how we are to present our bodies to him. It's not a sin offering.

It's a burnt offering, an offering of worship to God. And Romans 12 says, when we present our bodies, that's our spiritual service of worship. It's like the burnt offering in the Old Testament.

You can't say, Lord, here's my body. You've got to cut it up. Here are my eyes.

Here are my tongue. Here's my hands. It's piece by piece.

Otherwise, we think we have given everything. We haven't. Here's my mind.

Here's my passions. Here's my ambitions. Here's everything.

My body and mind are yours. And it's when the whole burnt offering, the last piece, imagine this priest cutting up piece by piece. And he puts the last piece on the altar and says, Lord, it's all yours.

The fire would fall from heaven. Let me show you that verse in case you don't know where it is. In Leviticus chapter 9, it's good to see the symbolism in the Old Testament of these things.

Leviticus chapter 9, it says here in verse 24, verse 22, Aaron lifted up his hands toward the people, blessed them, and the burnt offering, after making the sin offering and the burnt offering and the peace offerings. And then when they came out, it says in verse 24, the fire came from the Lord and consumed the burnt offering and the portions of fat on the altar. That's a picture of the Holy Spirit's power coming upon people.

The fire from heaven was fulfilled on the day of Pentecost and ever since the day of Pentecost on all those who put every piece upon the altar. There would have been no fire that day if some priest had covetously kept one leg or something for himself. And that's the reason why there's no fire in the lives of many a believer.

Even a 12-year-old boy can be filled with the Holy Spirit like that little boy who gave his all to Jesus. And then, of course, you can't be a blessing. You can try and do a lot of good to people.

I mean, doing good, many people can do. There are a lot of people in every religion who do good to others. But it's usually good in a very temporary way for earthly things.

You can give them food, clothing, and many things like that. But to bless a person in an eternal way in the sense of leading him into fellowship with God, that's the greatest blessing. You know, the greatest blessing I can give to another person is not just food.

Of course, if he's hungry, I'd give him food. Or if he's naked, give him some clothes. But that doesn't help him eternally.

It's just temporary. The greatest blessing that I can ever give to another person is to lead him into a direct connection with God through Christ. Then I've changed him for eternity.

And for that, we need the power of the Holy Spirit. We see here in the Old Testament and even in the story of the feeding of the 5,000, the first step is giving all on the altar and saying, Lord, it's all yours. Why do we hesitate to do that? Because we think we can make a better deal with our life than the Lord can.

But we can't. I mean, if anyone recognizes that the Lord can do more with my life than I can, he would not hesitate to give it all. I'm very thankful that the Lord made that clear to me 50 years ago, that He could do something better with my life than I could.

So I gave up my plans. Now, the second thing I want you to see is in Matthew 14 that when Jesus took the five loaves and two fish, the first thing He did, verse 19, it says He looked up toward heaven and He blessed that food. When we surrender all to the Lord, as I said, the Lord blesses us.

And the greatest blessing, He saw that in Galatians 3, the blessing of Abraham, I will bless you, the promise of the Spirit. That's very clear in Galatians 3, 14, the blessing of Abraham, the promise of the Holy Spirit. Don't despise that.

Don't turn away from it because of the extremes and the fanaticism you see here and there. I remember when I first came across some people who claimed to be filled with the Holy Spirit and I went to that church. This is way back in 1963.

I turned away from it. I said, Lord, I don't want that. That's just a lot of noise and emotionalism.

I'm not interested in that. And I began to seek God and I said, Lord, I want what your apostles received on the day of Pentecost. That was different from what I see around here.

So I would pray to God in my room. And I said, Lord, if it takes 10 years, 10 years, that's fine. But I want something genuine.

Not conceited to think that I can be witness to the ends of the earth without the power of the Holy Spirit. That means I can do something better than those apostles could because I've got the scriptures and I've studied the scriptures and I've got so much knowledge and I can explain this and explain that. No.

I said, Lord, I can't. I need your blessing. I need the blessing of Abraham, the promise of the Spirit upon my life.

It requires humility to acknowledge that. Jesus knew the scriptures at the age of 12. Enough scriptures to confound the greatest scholars in Israel.

But yet, before he began his ministry, we read the Spirit of God came upon him. Even upon Jesus. He was born of the Spirit.

The Spirit was within him all the time. But he needed an anointing to serve. What did Jesus do when he was 31 that he could not do when he was 29? I mean, he was just as holy when he was 29 as when he was 31.

I'm sure many people in Nazareth were blessed through this humble carpenter. Just the way he lived and spoke to people. I'm sure his words, he wasn't just silent all those 30 years.

He would have spoken to people. And what do you think? He wouldn't have been passing on the latest gossip like a lot of believers. He'd have been talking about things of God.

I mean, when he was 12 he was talking about it. And his whole attitude when he was 12 was, don't you know I must be about my father's business? That was his attitude the rest of his 18 years too. So if he could talk to the priests about God's Word when he was 12, I'm sure he spoke to a lot of people in Nazareth about God's Word just like you and I are doing.

And don't you think a lot of people were helped by what he said? Sure. Why did he need the anointing of the Holy Spirit when he was 30? It says in Luke 3, it says he prayed as he went into the waters of baptism. He was praying.

Luke 3 says, I know Jesus' prayers were always answered immediately. And as he prayed, he went into the waters. He came out.

The prayer was answered. I know what he was praying for. He said, Father, you called me to serve you.

I want you to anoint me with the Holy Spirit. And sure enough, when he came up out of the waters, the Spirit of God came upon him. What did he do thereafter? He set people free from the power of the devil with his words and by his actions.

And that's the thing that made me see my need. See, if my Savior, who was so perfect, who knew Scripture so well, needed the anointing of the Holy Spirit, how much I need it. We read even in the Old Testament that there was false fire.

In fact, in that Leviticus 9 passage, we read the very next verse in Leviticus 10 says about Aaron's sons bringing a false fire. God consuming them. Wherever there's the true fire, there's the false fire.

Wherever there's the genuine, there's the counterfeit. Men do not counterfeit worthless things. Nobody counterfeits brown paper and newspaper.

People counterfeit diamonds and gold. And if there are counterfeit manifestations and gifts of the Holy Spirit, it proves that the genuine power of the Holy Spirit must be pretty valuable, not cheap like brown paper. The devil's determined, as I see it today in Christendom today, I don't think there's anything being counterfeited as much as the power of the Holy Spirit.

I can see how much the devil hates that. Counterfeit it. Counterfeit it.

So that people either go astray or some sensible people will react against that and say I have nothing to do with it. What's the solution to all this? For me, the solution is very simple. I run the race looking at Jesus.

I don't look this side or that side. I look at Jesus and I say, Lord, you sought and you never had any counterfeit. You had the genuine power.

I want to run the race looking at you. I don't want to be conceited to think that I can serve you for one day without the power of the Holy Spirit. There's hardly a time, my brothers and sisters, I'll tell you honestly, when I get into a pulpit without seeking God for the power of the Holy Spirit.

I say, Lord, I can say clever things. I've got a lot of Bible knowledge, but it's not going to... My five loaves and two fish. I wonder sometimes whether I even have that.

If you don't bless it, it'll remain five loaves and two fish. I can give a little crumb. Imagine if I had five loaves and two fish and I tried to distribute it to all of you.

How much will you all get? You won't even get a taste of it. I can give a little crumb. Sure, I can give something to someone.

I know you can do something without God's blessing, without the power of the Holy Spirit. You can give a little bit here and a little bit there and be satisfied. Oh, that guy got a crumb from me.

Praise God. He said he was blessed by that crumb. And that other person got a little crumb from me.

Is that all Almighty God wants to do through you? Look at the examples in the New Testament. Look at the examples in history. How much God could do through one man? Think if you removed the Apostle Paul

out of the New Testament.

One man, that's all. What would be left? Or out of early Christianity? Or you just removed those 11 apostles of Jesus. 11 people, that's all, in a world full of millions.

Just take those 11 people out of the early Christians. What would be left? There wouldn't be any Christianity today. They didn't bless people with crumbs.

The Bible says it was like rivers. Rivers of living water. I want each of you, my dear brothers and sisters, to believe that.

God can use one man to influence millions. And you can be that. If you surrender all, give all to Jesus.

Don't hold back one loaf or half a fish. No, give it all. He'll take care of you.

He'll take care of your children. You will lack nothing. You won't even lack things on this earth.

If you seek His kingdom first and His righteousness, all that you need on this earth will be added to you. I've proved that in more than 50 years. But you don't, surrendering all is not enough.

You need to be blessed. Jesus took those five loaves and blessed it. Cry out to God for that.

Remember how David, I mean not David, Jacob, when he was alone with God, he laid hold of God and said, I will not let you go unless you bless me. Genesis 32. You know, when you begin to pray like that, and I haven't prayed like that just once.

There are many times you need to come back to God and say, Lord, I seem to have lost a little bit of that fire. I seem to have lost a little bit of that fervent love for you that I had in my younger days. I got taken up with ministry and work like Martha.

And I'm not sitting at your feet enough like Mary and Jesus. You said, one thing is needful. And Lord, I've lost my first love.

I want to come back to you. We need to go back to God again and again. Say, I will not let you go unless you give me this power.

How many of you will do that? How many of you will go back to Jesus again and again and say, Lord, I will not let you go unless you bless me. You are the baptizer in the Holy Spirit. Remember what John the Baptist pointed to Jesus and said only two things about him.

Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world. We've seen him as that. Then he said, Behold, he who immerses you, that's the meaning of baptism, he who immerses you in the Holy Spirit and fire.

See him as the Lamb of God who took away your sins. See him as the one who immerses you. You don't need to go to a man.

Man cannot fill you with the Holy Spirit because Jesus is the baptizer. John the Baptist said that. He was the most, greatest prophet on earth up until that time.

And he said, I can only immerse you in water. Sorry, I can't immerse you in the Spirit. You've got to go to him.

He will immerse you in the Spirit. I tell that to people. I can't lead you to be filled with the Spirit.

If I lay my empty hands on your empty head, what will you get? Nothing. He's the one who immerses in the Holy Spirit. Go to him.

I can immerse you in water. Seek God, my brother, sister. You don't have to go to a meeting.

You don't have to go to an emotional meeting where some clever fellow works people up. Get alone with God in your room. Surrender all and say, Lord, send the fire upon my life.

I do that many times. I say, Lord, I can't live without it. I want you to bless me.

I don't want... So that's the next step. Eagerly desire that blessing like Jacob. You know, Jacob had spent all his life grabbing other things.

Grabbing the birthright and stealing it from his brother and grabbing his uncle's daughter, grabbing his uncle's property. But one day he emptied his hands and let go all of that and said he grabbed all of God and said, Lord, now I want you. And when the day comes in your life and you say, Lord, I don't want these other things.

I want you. A lot of things the world offers me, a lot of things the Christian world offers me, but I don't want all that. I want you.

And you lay hold of God. I will not let you go unless you bless me. God can use you more than people who are more intelligent than you.

God can use you more than people who are greater scholars of Scripture than you are. It's a blessing of God that we need. When God blessed Abraham, though it took time, his promise was fulfilled.

And that blessing is for us. So that's the second thing we must bear in mind. And then thirdly, it says he, you know, we think, and this is the mistake a lot of our dear Pentecostal brothers have made, they think that, well, you surrender all and the fire has come, that's it.

No, it's not it. It's something more. And that's where a lot of people can make a mistake who have been filled with the Holy Spirit.

It says he took the loaves, it's all in verse 19, he took it, he blessed it, and he broke it. There are three things, he took, he blessed, he broke. So when you give yourself to the Lord, he takes, he blesses, it's still five loaves and two fish.

When he breaks it, it becomes a blessing to thousands. Of 5,000 men alone, there were probably many women and children, maybe 10,000. There's no limit to how much God can do if he breaks you.

And that message of brokenness, the way of the cross, is the thing that's missing in Christendom today, in every group, unfortunately. When I was a young Christian, the church I went to taught me, I must read the Bible every day. They told me four things.

I must read the Bible every day, I must pray every day, I must seek fellowship with other believers, and I must witness. I did it. I was thoroughly defeated in my life.

I couldn't honestly tell people that Christ had given me victory. I couldn't honestly say, like Romans 6, 14, sin does not have dominion over me. I couldn't testify like Paul in Philippians 4, 4, that I rejoice in the Lord always.

I couldn't testify like Paul in Philippians 4, 6, I'm anxious for nothing. These are all verses in Scripture. They never told me the one thing that Jesus said I must do daily.

These four things are good. Read the Bible, pray, witness, fellowship. Those are not the four things Jesus said.

Jesus said, if you want to follow me, take up your cross daily. And I'm sorry to say, nobody ever explained that to me. They taught me the meaning of the tabernacle and so many other things, how they could, how the Gospels fitted in with each other and how this, the doctrine of justification and sanctification and glorification, but they didn't tell me what it was to take up the cross.

So I had all this information in my head, but I was defeated by sin. And I knew that Jesus didn't come to give me information. His name, thou shalt call His name Jesus, the first promise in the New Testament, because He will save His people from their sins.

So I realized, I needed to know something about the cross. And I'm very thankful that very early in my Christian life, God began to explain that to me. That there was a cross, not only that Jesus bore every day for 33 years.

Many people know the cross He bore for the last 12 or 15 hours of His life, but they don't know the cross that He bore every day for 33 and a half years. And He could not have told us to take up the cross every day if He had not done it Himself. Because He's talking about following Him.

If any man will come after me, that means follow Him. He must do something daily, obviously, which Jesus Himself did daily. What was that? What did He do daily for 33 and a half years? There was a cross where He died to Himself every day.

That is the missing message, the most important missing message in today's Christendom. The Baptists will criticize the Pentecostals. The Pentecostals will criticize the Baptists.

But if you go to both those churches, you'll hardly hear the message of the cross today. It's easy to find fault with others and say what they're missing. We need to see what we're missing.

And we can sit here and criticize other churches, but I want to ask you, brother, sister, is there a cross in your life? Do you know what it is to die to yourself, to deny yourself and take up the cross every day? See, here on Sunday, it's very easy to listen to these things and nod our head and say, yeah, it's a great message, but tomorrow, or even this afternoon, you'll be tested. We're in a certain situation where I want to allow the Lord to break me, to break my plans and my high thoughts about myself. For many years, I never understood what this verse meant.

1 Peter chapter 5 and verse 6. Humble yourself under the mighty hand of God that He may exalt you at the proper time. Now, a lot of people think of it like this. Be willing to do lowly jobs in the church and one

day, the Lord will make you a leader.

You know, Elisha poured water on the hands of Elijah. He was just a servant and one day, he became a prophet. And a lot of people willing to do small jobs now in order to become a great man one day in the eyes of Christendom.

That's not what this verse means. Once you understand the mind of the Spirit, you'll realize that the only thing you want to be exalted over is sin. I don't want to be exalted over people.

I don't want to have authority over people. I don't want to have authority over a single person. I want to have authority over sin.

That rules my life. I want to overcome anger. I want to overcome jealousy and bitterness and pride and selfishness.

I want to overcome a whole lot of things. That's what I want to be exalted over. Is that what you want to be exalted over? It's more important.

Like it says in the Proverbs, it's better to rule your spirit than to rule a big city. If you can't rule your spirit, even ruling a big city is useless. What do you want to be exalted over? He will exalt you.

And then you begin to think, I'm going to be a great preacher. No. You're going to overcome sin.

The thing that's made you a slave all your life. God's going to exalt you over it. I thank God for giving you light on that.

You know, you go to the Scriptures and you find what you want to find. Because you made up your mind, this is what you want. And you can be an utterly selfish person and find words that feed your selfishness.

That can't be the Holy Spirit. Then you got a wrong interpretation. The people who go to the Scriptures and learn there how to make money.

I mean, is this a book of economics or something? No. How crazy can you get? Or how to become famous? I'll be a great preacher. No.

You'll be exalted over sin. The world won't have a hold on you. You won't be afraid of the devil anymore.

Demons will flee when they know you're coming there. That's what I want to be exalted over. That's what you should be exalted over.

But how does God exalt that? The one who humbles himself under the mighty hand of God is the one who's going to be exalted. And this mighty hand of God is not some supernatural experience that gives me a tingling feeling down my spine. No.

The mighty hand of God is that which crushes you and breaks you. Not your personality. No.

He never breaks and crushes our personality. He'll never break a bruised reed or quench a smoking flax. But He wants to break our self-will and our high thoughts about ourselves and our pride.

And He allows so many circumstances to crush us. Financial difficulties. It's the mighty hand of God.

Don't go running to man. Go to God first. Sickness.

We believe in doctors and medicines, but go to God first. Say, Lord, what are you trying to tell me through this? Problems in the home. Difficult children.

A difficult partner. God can use these things to crush you. And if you just keep blaming, Oh, my children are like this.

Oh, my wife is like this. Oh, my husband's like this. And don't see that God's trying to do something in you.

Then God will never be able to accomplish. This is what I mean by brokenness. The circumstances of our life.

A difficult boss. A difficult neighbor. The circumstances that you're facing right now.

Which you're trying to escape. Jesus faced a situation like that once when He was approaching the cross. I mean, He wasn't afraid of anything throughout His life.

He didn't care whether people called Him the devil. He'd bless them. People spat on Him.

He'd forgive them. But there was one thing He dreaded. Only one.

That is, that break of fellowship on the cross. It's the only thing He dreaded. And as He approached the cross and He knew that for three hours the fellowship with the Father would be broken as He bore our sin, that as a man, Jesus became a little troubled.

Nothing else troubled Him. He wasn't troubled that He'd be willing to die a million physical deaths for our sake. He wasn't scared of that.

And we read in John chapter 12. He's very honest. Verse 27.

My soul has become troubled. Do you know it's not a sin if your soul is troubled? Jesus never sinned. But there was some trouble in His soul.

I mean, He wasn't troubled because He lost some money. Judas Iscariot was stealing His money all the time. That didn't trouble Him one bit.

That shouldn't trouble us. God will provide us for our need. He wasn't troubled because people called Him the devil or because His reputation was stolen.

He wasn't bothered about any of these things people are worried about. He was troubled because His fellowship with His Father was going to be broken pretty soon. That's the only thing that should trouble us.

If anything breaks our fellowship with God, that should trouble our soul more than anything else. All your Bible knowledge is worthless if you haven't come here where fellowship with the Father alone disturbs your soul. Break a fellowship.

It's the only thing that doesn't bother you. Nothing else. I travel a lot, as you know.

But, supposing I were to miss a flight or miss a train. That's all right, Lord. That's fine.

It hasn't happened. I go to these different flights and trains and I say, Lord, I don't want to be troubled. I want to be troubled if my fellowship with You is broken.

It's the only thing. You remember I told you once how I was troubled some years ago because some of the musical instruments were not playing properly. The Lord said to me, that doesn't bother me.

I said, great. Then it won't bother me anymore either. What bothers me is that a husband and wife in this church are not in fellowship with each other or two brothers are not talking to each other.

I said, Lord, that's what should trouble me from now on. The things that trouble you I want to trouble me. And the things that don't bother you may never bother me for the rest of my life.

That's how we come to rest. We get into unrest over so many things that don't bother God. And we don't get bothered by the things that do bother God.

Now is my soul troubled. We can go through different situations where we are troubled. What shall I say? What do most Christians say? Father, save me from this hour.

Get me out of this situation. Get me out of this problem. It may be the mighty hand of God trying to crush you and you're trying to get out of it.

What shall I say? Father, save me from this hour? No. But for this purpose, I came to this hour. Father, this is the cup which you gave me.

Shall I not drink it? That's why He told Peter to put his sword back. Don't cut off people's ear. This is my father.

I mean, the postman doesn't look very attractive, but the mail is from my father. He sent the cup. So don't get angry with the postman.

The cup. Judas Iscariot may be the postman, but the cup came from the father. I mean, that person who doesn't like you, who hates your guts, may be the one who is cursing you and swearing at you, but say, this is the cup which my father has given me to drink at this time.

Being insulted. I mean, you know through the years how people have said all types of things about our church and about me too. It's a cup which the father gives.

We drink it and we love them, bless them. We have nothing against them. Father, forgive them for they don't know what they are saying.

They never bothered to check up what we believe. It doesn't disturb us. Shall we say, save us from this? Lord, don't let these things ever happen to us.

No, no, no. This is the mighty hand of God crushing us, humbling us, making us nothing in the eyes of men so that we can be great in his eyes. This is the only thing that will matter in eternity.

So what shall I say? I shall say what Jesus said. Father, glorify your name. And even if we don't hear that voice audibly like Jesus heard it, the Lord will say, I have glorified it.

I will glorify it again. So this is how God crushes us. We have given all.

God has blessed us. The next step is broken. And there is never an end to this brokenness.

The Apostle Paul needed to be broken towards the end of his life with a sickness. Basically, God's will for us is health. Whenever we are sick, we should pray that we should be healed.

But sometimes God uses sickness to break us. And Paul called it a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan. Does God allow messengers of Satan to stick onto his servants? Sometimes, yes.

To break them. Even the mighty Apostle Paul needed to be broken. It says about Jesus in Isaiah 53.10, It pleased the Lord to crush him.

That's the way our Savior went. It pleased the Father to crush him. Shall I go another way? You will discover, my brothers and sisters, when you get into eternity, that the greatest men and women of God in the history of humanity were not the greatest Bible scholars, not even the greatest preachers, not the most gifted people, but those who allowed the Lord to break them.

Maybe some poor widow whom you never heard about who through her circumstances submitted the Lord to crush her. Some person sitting here whom you probably don't think much about. Some of them may be way ahead of you and me in eternity.

Their reward may be greater. I have no doubt about it. I have no illusion that I'm going to get the greatest reward in CFC.

Far from it. I know this. It's the one who has allowed God to break him and humble him who's going to be exalted on earth over his sin and in eternity in the presence of others.

And as a result of it, from your life, like those 5,000 were fed, I want you to have faith that God, if you fulfill the same conditions, God can use you, a simple, unknown person like you, a non-entity like you, known to nobody, God can use you to bless many, many people. Say, Lord, I want you to do that. I've only one life to live on this earth.

I don't want to waste it just accumulating Bible knowledge. I don't want to waste it just saying I went to church every Sunday. I want rivers of living water to flow through me in many directions.

Let's be bold. It's God's promise. John 7, 37 to 39 is not for preachers and full-time workers and like that.

It's for every believer. He who believes in me from his innermost being will flow rivers of living water. But you heard the conditions today.

Let's pray. While I head about in prayer, I believe the Lord has spoken to you, my brother, sister. I don't know in what area, but whichever that area is, will you humble yourself under God's mighty hand? Will you lay hold of him and say, Lord, I will not let you go unless you bless me.

And I will not let you go unless you've done your work, thorough work of breaking me till I become as broken as you want me to be. I've resisted your hand many a time, Lord, but no more. You shall have all today.

Young people, there's no respect of persons with God. We are all the same. Heavenly Father, we reverence you.

We bow before you. You are our God. You are our Father.

Thank you for giving us an example in our Lord Jesus, the way he walked on this earth in lowliness and brokenness. Help us to be witnesses to that life that it can be seen in us too. That like Jesus, when he was anointed with the Spirit, went about doing good and delivering people who were oppressed by the devil, that we should go around doing good, delivering people who were oppressed by the devil, and as God was with him, God will be with us.

We believe that. Thank you. In Jesus' name, amen.

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