

Baptism of the Holy Spirit

by Richard Owen Roberts

The sermon explores the vital role of the Holy Spirit in regeneration and the necessity of faithful proclamation of God's Word in the life of the church.

Duration: 4:26:56

Scripture: Joel 2:28, John 3:3, Acts 2:1-4, Hebrews 11:6

Topics: "Holy Spirit", "Spiritual Renewal"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of faith in seeing and experiencing the kingdom of God, contrasting the eternal with the temporary, and the necessity of being born again to perceive spiritual truths. It delves into the response people have to biblical truths as an indicator of their spiritual state, highlighting the need for genuine transformation and seeking the baptism of the Holy Spirit. The message encourages deliberate prayer and faith for the empowerment of the Holy Spirit in ministry and personal life.

Transcript

The kingdom of God and as demonstrated in that quotation I've just given you from Hebrews 11, they can't see the kingdom of God because they don't have faith. Has it occurred to you? Has it become a vital part of who you are? The realization that because God has put faith in you the unseen and the eternal is much more dominant in your life than the present, than born again, by whether they are dominated by the unseen and the eternal or whether they are dominated by the present and the passing. So the words of Jesus to Nicodemus One cannot see the kingdom of God unless they are born again.

Isn't it sad when we read the next statement? Verse 4 Nicodemus said to him, how can a man be born when he's old? He cannot enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born, can he? The response that people make to biblical truth is a clear indicator of where their hearts are. Whether they have been born of the Spirit of God or not. When you think of Nicodemus does not your own spirit wish that Nicodemus had but no sound thinker has ever concluded that.

Normally the birth of water is connected with a physical birth. The bag of waters, the bursting of it and the immersion of a real life, new, precious human being. So born first physically, born second spiritually.

But now let me ask you to think with me about the overall nature of this passage. In this passage Christ is clearly drawing a comparison of physical birth with spiritual birth. But the common interpretation that is

given to this passage by the bulk of churches denies that comparison.

I spoke briefly about decisional regeneration. That a person makes a decision. They accept Christ and they are pronounced born again.

Now this gentleman here appears to be listening intently and I appreciate that sir. May I ask you a question? I hope without embarrassment. What did you do to gain the alert and sharp mind that God gave you? Did you hear what he said? He denies having any part in the matter.

He says it was given to him by God. If you ask a person with brown eyes, why did you choose brown eyes? If you ask a person with red hair, why did you choose red hair? All of us know that we have no input ourselves into our human birth. Now wouldn't it be absurd if Christ was such a lousy teacher that he drew a parallel out of non-parallels.

If he drew a parallel with physical birth when there was no physical birth that paralleled it. Or to state it otherwise and again confirming what I just said. If in physical birth we have no input, how then can we suppose that in spiritual birth we have input? That we are the determining factor? The parallel demands a parallel.

But you see the bulk of the interpretations given to regeneration are very much dependent upon human doings. Baptismal regeneration. If it's infant, it's obviously not the decision of the infant, but the infant's parents.

If it's education, again, it's the decision of the parents or the pastor or somebody. If it's reformation, then that's a decision the person makes. If it's decisional regeneration, it's their decision.

But this passage demands that we dismissed all of that and we recognize that regeneration is an act of God. Now that brings us very close to the heart of true Christian leadership. If you believe that regeneration is a work of the Holy Spirit, then certain responsibilities are piled on you.

I believe with all my heart that men are not regenerated by any of those four false things. But that regeneration is by the Word and by the Spirit. That puts upon me two great obligations.

First, to proclaim the Word. When the pastor introduced me last night to you, I hadn't got his exact words in mind, but I'm sure the tone of them was. We invited him because we knew he would speak the Word.

It's the Word that regenerates. So your task, if you're a Christian leader, is to become thoroughly acquainted with the Word and to proclaim the Word with accuracy. But regeneration has two aspects, the Word and the Spirit.

It is possible to proclaim the Word in a deadening fashion so that the hearers are bored or the hearers are so dull and disinterested that it has no impact. Your task as a leader will be to proclaim the Word of God in the power of the Holy Spirit. And therefore at the heart of what I must convey to you today and tomorrow is the necessity of proclaiming the Word accurately and of proclaiming it under the enabling grace and power of the Holy Spirit.

And isn't it wonderful that although this passage leaves us with the conviction that Nicodemus was not born again on this occasion. You've noticed these words before. Verse 10, Jesus said to him, are you the teacher of Israel and you do not understand these things? Truly, truly, I say to you, we speak that which

we know and we bear witness of that which we have seen and you do not receive our witness.

If I told you earthly things and you did not believe, how shall you believe if I tell you heavenly things? And every indication is that Nicodemus left that night without being born of God. But it's a very happy thing to remember at the time of the crucifixion Nicodemus participated with that wealthy Jew in arranging the body of Christ for burial. And obviously in doing that he put himself at odds with the Jewish leaders who crucified Christ.

So we have reason to believe that he was born of the Spirit of God. But I hope you've gotten a hold now of the two great issues I have sought to emphasize. Regeneration by the Holy Spirit and proclaiming God's Word totally free of the need of human transformation, but in the power of the Holy Spirit.

And what I have tried to set before you is this simple fact. If I don't know the God of the Bible, I will not be able to faithfully serve and to the benefit of souls minister. So what I think about God determines everything that follows.

But now with that before us, I'd like to press a little further on this matter of ministry in the Word and in the power of the Holy Spirit. Will you turn backward in your Bible, please? To the book of Numbers chapter 11. Numbers chapter 11.

Now this is a passage concerning Moses. And an immensely insightful passage. And a passage that I would urge each of you to think most seriously about.

I shall not need to read the entire chapter, but certainly enough to give you a deep sense of what is being said. So Numbers chapter 11 at verse 1. Now the people became like those who complain of adversity in the hearing of the Lord. And when the Lord heard it, his anger was kindled.

And the fire of the Lord burned among them and consumed some on the outskirts of the camp. The people therefore cried out to Moses and Moses prayed to the Lord and the fire died out. So the name of that place was called Tabrah because the fire of the Lord burned among them.

And the rabble who were among them had greedy desires. And also the sons of Israel wept again and said, Who will give us meat to eat? We remember the fish which we used to eat free in Egypt. And the cucumbers and the melons and the leeks and the onions and the garlic.

But now our appetite is gone. There's nothing at all to look at except this nana. Have you ever considered the words of verse 5, the emphasis upon free? Free.

Free. Was that a lie? Did they actually eat the fish and the leeks and the cucumbers and the melons free? Yes, they did. But why? They were slaves.

They had no income. What they did eat, they ate free. But can you imagine murmuring against God because you're no longer slaves and that is thankfully what they're doing.

So verse 10, Moses heard the people weeping throughout their families. Each man at the doorway of his tent. And the anger of the Lord was kindled greatly.

And Moses was displeased. So Moses said to the Lord, Why hast thou been so hard on thy servants? Why have I not found favor in thy sight? That thou hast laid the burden of this people on me. Was it I who conceived all this people? Was it I who brought them forth that thou shouldest say to me, carry them in

your bosom as a nurse carries an infant to the land which thou didst swear to their fathers.

Where am I going to get meat now without reading the whole? I think you get the picture of a grumbling complaining people. Now that's the church in North America for the most part. A body of grumbling complaining people.

The level of discontent in the bulk of the churches is so great. It's almost beyond imagination. But notice now what happens.

Verse 16. The Lord therefore said to Moses, Gather for me 70 men from the elders of Israel whom you know to be elders of the people and their officers and bring them to the tent of meeting and let them take their stand there with you. Then I will come down and speak with you there and I will take the Spirit who is upon you and will put him upon them and they shall bear the burden of the people with you so that you shall not bear it all alone and say to the people consecrate yourselves for tomorrow you shall eat meat for you have wept in the ears of the Lord saying Oh that someone would give us meat to eat.

But now focus upon this thought. There was a murmuring grumbling complaining people that Moses was faced with day after day after day. It became too much for him.

He couldn't endure it any longer. That's what we're faced with today. Thousands of men leaving the ministry every year.

One denomination alone in America had 14,400 ministers leave the church in a single year. Some of you have traveled in the United Kingdom probably know it even better than I do. My own family came from the Principality of Wales and I have often been there preaching.

It's a dreadful thing to go into a village where there are 14 meeting houses. 11 of them with the windows broken out, the roofs caved in. Three of them still meeting.

The Church of Wales has seven members all women over the age of 75. Not a young person anywhere near. Then a Baptist Church of maybe 22 people and a lot of murmuring and complaining among them.

Then a charismatic church where they used to have 12, but they split yesterday and now they've got seven in one and five in the other. A dreadful problem of murmuring and complaining, but the picture presented here in chapter 11 there was only one man upon whom the Spirit of God rested. Moses.

And we don't know how many people he had. Some say 600,000. That number is mentioned in the passage, but I believe the more prevalent opinion is there were at least a million and a half.

Some say two and a half million people. I don't know. It doesn't really matter.

But remember now what God says he's going to do. He's going to take of the Spirit that is upon Moses and put it upon these 70 elders. Now that's the basic picture of the Old Testament.

The bulk of the people without the Holy Spirit and doing what is natural to the flesh. Murmuring, complaining, manifesting their discontent. And you know as well as I do that a high percentage of church attenders in your country are on the move.

They come to this church for a while. Then they go to that church, and there's just milling around. So a church can go from 20 to 2,000 in four years time and never have one single convert.

Because discontented people are moving about looking for something different. But fix in your mind this picture of one old man with the Spirit of God upon him struggling to lead this vast array. Then God himself improves the situation by taking of that Spirit upon Moses and touching 70 elders by the Holy Spirit.

Well, that's an improvement, but there's no real answer. But now turn if you will to a familiar passage in the book of Joel. I trust that all of you are well acquainted with this marvelous book.

I'll try to give a brief summary of the first chapter and the beginnings of the second chapter, but in the book of Joel we have the record of an incredibly large infestation of locusts. The words are spoken in verse 2 of chapter 1. Hear this, O elders, listen all the inhabitants of the land. As anything like this happened in your days, or in your father's days, tell your sons about it.

Let their sons tell their sons and their sons the next generation. At no time in history was there ever a infestation of locusts to equal that which was experienced in Joel's day. And the details come out very, very specifically.

Even the animals of the field are moaning and groaning because there's nothing to eat. The drunkards are forced into sobriety because all the wine has been, has ceased to be produced because the grapes have been utterly devoured by the locusts. Everybody is impacted hugely.

In chapter 1, we have the picture of this plague from one perspective. In chapter 2, the prophet goes back and goes through the details again from another perspective or angle. And again, without being too extensive in this, turn to chapter 2 at verse 12.

Yet even now, declares the Lord, return to me with all your heart and with fasting, weeping, and mourning, and rend your heart and knot your garments. Now return to the Lord your God, for he is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger, abounding in loving kindness, and relenting of evil. Who knows whether he will not turn and relent and leave a blessing behind him, even a grain offering, and a libation for the Lord your God.

Blow a trumpet in Zion, consecrate the fast, proclaim a solemn assembly, gather the people, sanctify the congregation, assemble the elders, gather the children and the nursing infants. Let the bridegroom come out of his room and the bride out of his bridal chamber. Let the priest, the Lord's ministers, weep between the porch and the altar and let them say, spare thy people, O Lord, and do not make thine inheritance a reproach, a byword among the nations.

Why should they among the people say, where is their God? And again, without great detail, the place of the solemn assembly in the life of the church. Has this church had a solemn assembly? Not really. Now, all of us are aware of repentance and of the necessity of personal repentance.

But very few seem to have considered that just as every individual sins and must repent, so every entity sins and must repent. Now, perhaps entity is not a word you use every day, but when I use the word entity, I'm thinking of that natural accumulation of a people. When a man and a woman marry, they form an entity that we usually refer to as a couple.

When they're blessed with children, we have a larger term, a family. A church is an entity, a school is an entity, a business is an entity, a city is an entity, a province is an entity, a nation is an entity. So just as every individual sins and must repent, so every entity sins and must repent.

And the solemn assembly is God's provision of a way of repentance for a corporate body. And if you were to study this passage with any care, and there are dozens of a similar nature throughout scripture, you would discover that there comes a time in the life of every entity where in order to go forward spiritually, in order to really be in a position to receive the abundance of God's grace, some form of a solemn assembly is an order. A time for weeping, a time for fasting, a time for effectual fervent prayer.

So this passage gives us a description and gives us some of the necessary details of how important the solemn assembly is. The honeymooners, for instance, had their honeymoon canceled because they must be present at the solemn assembly. The nursing mother cannot stay in the nursery, but she must be present.

Everybody is required to be present and to participate with all of their heart. But my purpose is not to give you a lengthy statement of that, but simply to point out that because a solemn assembly was urgently needed, a solemn assembly was truly held. But look, if you will, at chapter 2, verse 23.

So rejoice, O sons of Zion, and be glad in the Lord your God. He has given you the early rain for your vindication. He has poured down for you the rain, the early and the latter rain, as before.

And the threshing floors will be full of grain, and the vats will overflow with new wine and oil. Then I will make up for you the years that the swarming locust has eaten. The creeping locust, the stripping locust, the gnawing locust.

Now fix those words in your mind. I will make up for you the years that the locust has eaten. Now, I, of course, haven't the privilege of knowing you folk in any real personal fashion, even your dear pastor, while we've met.

I don't think we could really say that we were intimate friends. I would be open to it, but our lives are so busy that some of what we desire simply can't happen. But some of you can remember better days for the church.

Having been preaching for over 65 years, I have seen huge changes in the church. I believe we are living at a time that could be described as the years that the locust had eaten. We are seeing less and less serious spiritual interest.

At the time when our situation has become absolutely desperate, we have fewer and fewer people calling upon the water. But here in this passage, at the time of absolute urgency, a solemn assembly was called. God did come.

God did forgive their sin. God did heal their land. And God said, I will make up for you the years that the locust have eaten.

Now, I would not want to leave those words without saying, what an incredible, joyful promise that is. All these years that have been lost to sin and waywardness in the church, God can make up for. In front of us, there will be a time of harvest so great, so magnificent, that we cannot help but look forward with great joy and anticipation.

Now, some have taken some of the praises here and pushed them in a ridiculous fashion. For instance, the early and the lacquer rain. What does it mean? Well, accompanying this terrible infestation of locust, there was also a drought.

There wasn't a thing to eat. The locust had devoured everything edible, including curtains off the wall and shoes on the closet floor. But God says, I'm going to move the rainy seasons closer together.

The early rain will be abundant. The sunshine will pour down and the crops will come to maturity with unusual speed. And then the latter rain will come at just the right moment, and you shall have a harvest that makes up for all the lost years.

Now, with all that in mind, turn, if you will, to the end of this second chapter. Starting at verse 28. So, chapter 2 of Joel, verse 28.

And it will come about after this, that I will pour out my spirit on all mankind. And your sons and your daughters will prophesy. Your old men will dream dreams.

Your young men will see visions. And even on the male and the female servants, I will pour out my spirit in those days. And I will display wonders in the sky and on the earth.

Blood, fire, columns of smoke. The sun will be turned into darkness, the moon into blood, before the great and awesome day of the Lord comes. And it will come about that whoever calls on the name of the Lord will be delivered.

For on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem, there will be those who escape, as the Lord has said, even among the survivors whom the Lord called. Now, again, without going into all the possible detail of the passage, you remember, as well as I do, that on the day of Pentecost, Peter said, this is that. And Peter identified what happened on Pentecost with this passage in Joel.

Now, let me rehearse what I've been saying. I have said regeneration is by the Word and by the Spirit. There was poor Moses, leading a vast horde of people.

He alone had the Spirit upon him. And unspiritual people were doing what is to be expected. Murmuring, complaining, grumbling, making it very difficult for their God-appointed leader.

So God, in his mercy, says, appoint 70 elder. And then God takes a portion of the Spirit on Moses and puts it upon the 70 and relieves Moses somewhat, but not completely. So that by the end of his life, at the waters of Meribah, this is recorded in Numbers chapter 20, the people are again murmuring and complaining, giving Moses an incredibly difficult time.

And God comes to Moses and Aaron. They fall flat on their face before the Lord. And they experience what many of us have longed for, the manifest presence of God in our midst.

And then the Lord gives an order to Moses. They were complaining about the lack of water and the order, speak to the rock. But Moses is angry.

He has grown weary of the muttering and the complaining. He takes the rod that is in his hand and he whacks the rock. The first time that there's a record of water coming out of a dry rock, the Lord had commanded Moses to strike the rock with the rod.

But the second time, the command was to speak to the rock. And instead, Moses struck it. And you remember the solemn words that follow.

God said to Moses, go up on the mountain where you can overlook the land of promise and lie down and die. So Moses never finished his life work. Moses was not commanded by God simply to lead the people out of Egypt, but to lead them into the land of promise.

But because he sinned, God in essence said to him, because you did not maintain my holiness before the people, you have forced me to maintain it myself at your expense. Lie down and die. And although Moses argued with God, his argument was not successful.

There were other occasions when his argument was successful. But this time, God made it clear. I must maintain my holiness at your expense.

But now in Joel, we have this incredibly magnificent promise. And look again, just to let it fix itself in your mind. I will pour out my spirit on all mankind, not upon Moses alone, not upon 70 elders alone.

But upon all mankind. Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy. Your old men will dream dreams.

And your young men will see visions. Just imagine what that could mean to us. Your old men dream dreams.

I've done a bit of that this morning. I have told you the way it used to be. I have seen so many times entire congregations bathed in tears.

I have seen people turning to Christ in a glorious fashion. Many, many at the given occasion. And I've been in situations where week after week after week the Lord was adding to the church those he was saving.

I can remember the path. I can't glory in it, but I can praise God for what I've seen. The old men dream dreams.

I dream dreams of it happening again. In my mind I can see this building totally inadequate. I can see you forced to erect a large tent seating 10,000 people jammed full with people coming to Christ.

May sound idle to you, but it's happened many times before. There was a preacher in Wales in the 1700s by the name of Daniel Rowland. He was a clergyman of the Church of Wales.

He was a playboy type. The sportsman, the drinker, the carouser had a little handful of people in his church, and he was full of jealousy because in a church not too far removed there was a non-conformist who was seeing great crowds. So Daniel Rowland disguised himself and he went off to listen to this preacher whom God was blessing with many, many people and conversions.

And what Daniel Rowland discovered was that Philip Pugh, the preacher in the non-conformist Church, was preaching on the law of God. And Daniel Rowland said to himself, I can do that. And he went back to his parish church and began preaching on the law.

And people began weeping and coming to him, asking them what they could do. And of course he had no answer. So he put on his disguise again and went back to listen to Philip Pugh.

And this time he was preaching on grace. And Rowland said, I can do that. And he began preaching on grace and people began being born again of the Spirit of God.

But he didn't know what was happening to them. Then a very prominent preacher, an educator who had started what was called the Well-Circulating Charity Schools, and it was his goal to teach everybody in the Bible. And this man, his name was Griffith Jones, was preaching in Daniel Rowland's district.

And Daniel Rowland decided to go and listen to this preacher. In the midst of his sermon, Griffith Jones suddenly stopped. He looked down.

And then he looked up and he stared right in the eyes of Daniel Rowland. And then he prayed, Lord, convert this proud Anglican clergyman. And spoke some very plain words to him.

And Daniel Rowland went home under the profound conviction of the Holy Spirit. He was radically transformed. And from a handful, his congregation began to grow.

They had people who left their home after work on Saturday night. Walked all night to be on the grounds to hear the preaching of the Word. Stayed all day and then walked home Sunday night.

There were crowds of 10,000 people gathering in a rural area, as rural as this. Conversions by the thousands. So when I dream dreams, when I dream of the huge tent erected here to accommodate the crowds, it's not just foolishness.

It's dreaming that the God who has done such wonderful things in the past will do them again. But it's not only the old men dreaming dreams, but the young men seeing visions. Think of the younger fellows here this morning.

What if each of these men had the Spirit of God come upon them in incredible power? And they began to see visions of how they could effectively serve the Lord. And God began to give them a picture of how they could proclaim the Word of God in the power of the Spirit and transform not just this region, but the whole of Canada. Is that absurd? No.

No. This has happened before. Surely it can happen again.

And these dreams, and these visions, and this power of the Holy Spirit, both upon male and female, both upon bond-servants and free. And these, as I said, are the words that were picked up by the Apostle Peter. But let's go just for a moment to the book of Acts.

And see, indeed, the very words spoken by our Savior. And how God, indeed, brought these things to fulfillment. Let me read out of chapter 1, a section familiar to you.

Verse 4 of chapter 1. Gathering them together, He commanded them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait for what the Father had promised, which He said, You have heard of from Me. For John baptized you with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now. So when they had come together, they were asking Him, saying, Lord, is this the time You are restoring the kingdom to Israel? He said, it's not for you to know the times or epochs which the Father has fixed in His own authority, but you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you.

And you shall be witnesses both in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and even the remotest part of the earth. And then chapter 2. The day of Pentecost had come, altogether in one place. Suddenly there came from heaven a noise like the violent rushing wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting.

There appeared to them the tongues as a fire distributing themselves, and they rested on each one of them. They were all filled with the Holy Spirit. They began to speak with other tongues as the Spirit was giving them utterance.

And of course some of us shy completely away from these things because of the tongues. And we're worried that some foolish excess might occur. I want to be very candid with you, dear people.

For quite a while, I determined not to speak much about the Holy Spirit because I didn't want anybody to think I was a Pentecostal. And I didn't, and I still don't. I believe that that movement has done incredible damage because of the false teaching involved.

But I finally came to that point where I realized the whole church was being robbed of what we desperately need because some foolish people had pushed it to an extreme. And I set my heart to no longer participate in silence. This is too important a matter.

Remember, regeneration by the Word and by the Spirit, and we've got to come back to an appropriate, accurate understanding of the place of the Holy Spirit in our personal lives and in the life of the church. And isn't it wonderful that at Pentecost the promise of the Father given through Joel was fulfilled. And that little group of 120 is immediately enlarged by 3,000 and soon thereafter another 5,000 until the Church of Jesus Christ covers the earth.

But now, for years, we have been shrinking. The church has been going backward, and we've got to come back to biblical center. Leadership apart from the Holy Spirit is nonsense.

About 25 years ago, I received an invitation to speak in a conference over Labor Day weekend. That's normally the first weekend in the month of September, and I was asked to speak at this conference sponsored by the Texas Baptist men. It was a strong movement in Texas among Southern Baptists that were seeking to return to the Scriptures.

So, I don't know, some of you may know the name Henry Blackaby. He and I were invited to speak at this conference, and we had often preached together in a great variety of settings. When I was invited, I was plainly told, you are not welcome unless you bring your wife.

And I asked the reasonable question, does that mean you're willing to pay the expenses of my wife's coming? And I was assured, absolutely. Almost immediately, when my wife and I got there, we recognized something that was very distinct. There was a man leading that movement who had something about him that distinguished him from most of the other men I knew.

What we became conscious of was this man would speak of the Father, as if God really truly were his Father, and as if he knew him intimately. And he would tell the group about things that the Father was doing, things that the Father had said. And the feeling Maggie and I got was, this man knows the God of the Bible in a way few others did.

Now, he was a leader of this major movement. Baptists in Texas, which is our largest state, are vast in number. And here was an incredibly large and splendid movement fortifying the work of the church and expanding God's doings around the earth.

But the thing that became so clear to us was he had a position of leadership unlike that of most leaders we have known. He walked so close with God that you felt stupid and grievously in error if you didn't follow

him. We had seen lots of instances where men tried to get other people to follow them, and they used to whip.

But this man just simply stated, this is what the Father has directed, and this vast array of people were learning. This man walked so close to God that we would be making a dreadful mistake if we did not walk close to him. Well, being a Southern Baptist work, the time came when this man was forced to take retirement.

He didn't want to, but the laws of that denomination made it clear that anyone being paid by the denomination had to step down at a certain age. And the man that was named to take his place had a military background. And his idea of Christian leadership was to give a command and then pound anybody that didn't follow.

And that movement went from great strength down to an incredibly low period. I myself preached at that conference 20 years in a row with a single exception, and the exception was on a Thursday night my wife went crazy. She awoke me in the middle of the night. You see, on the Sunday before when she was taking a shower, she slipped and she fell, and he broke, she broke four or five ribs on one side.

I had to rush her to the hospital, not knowing what was wrong. And they had put her on a medication, and by Thursday on that medication she lost her mind. Woke me up in the middle of the night, and I'll tell you specifically what happened.

I sleep on the right side of the bed, she on the left. In the middle of the night she woke me up stroking my arm. Now my first thought was, isn't this wonderful? After all these years, in the middle of the night, my wife is showing this kind of affection.

Then suddenly it dawned on me, she can't be doing this. She's broken her ribs on the right side, she's sleeping on her left side, facing the wall, not facing me. So I leapt out of bed, turned on the light, and to my amazement she was absolutely stark, raving lunatic.

And when I got her to the hospital, their first assumption was that she'd had some kind of a stroke. But after very extensive tests, they said, no, it's not that. Her problem is that she has the lowest level of electrolytes ever recorded in this hospital.

No one has ever survived with electrolytes so out of balance. And they said to me, we will try gradually to raise the level. But normally, even when they're not this low, the person has a seizure and they die.

So they held out no hope. But by this time I was able to call the Texas Baptist men, and so this wonderfully large conference went to prayer for my dear Maggie. And God, in his incredible mercy, brought her back.

The insanity left. And by God's mercy, she's whole and holy today, praying for us here. But I mention all that, I just thought a human interest might not hurt you.

But I mention it mostly to speak about leadership. That for years, this movement was led by a man who walked so close to Christ that you knew you needed to follow. Then it was led by a man with a military background who issued orders and expected people to follow.

And the movement went to pieces. Fortunately, after three years or so, he resigned. But the movement has never recovered that stature of true Christianity.

So I'm giving to you an urgent warning. Walking in holiness, in the power of the Holy Spirit, is absolutely mandatory for fruitful life and ministry. So I want to ask you to turn to a final passage for this morning.

And it is the words that I cited last evening, but I gladly return to them now, because the quotation that we read from the lips of Christ in Acts chapter 1 is the quotation that we look at now in Luke chapter 3. This will be, for some of you, very familiar, but I find often that the most familiar passages re-presented become extraordinarily powerful in my own life. So, Luke 3, and let me read the background of it. In the 15th year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, and Herod was Tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip was Tetrarch of the region of Aeturia and Trachonitis, and Xenius was Tetrarch of Abilene, in the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John, the son of Zacharias, in the wilderness.

And he came into all the district around the Jordan, preaching a baptism of repentance for forgiveness of sins, as it is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet, the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make ready the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. Every ravine shall be filled up, every mountain and hill shall be brought low, the crooked shall become straight, the rough roads smooth, and all flesh shall see the salvation of our God. Now that's the longing of every true Christian heart, that all flesh should see the salvation of God.

You dear folk have had many, many reasons to rejoice. The way God has blessed this church. Those of you in other churches started through the ministry of this church, have reason to be grateful that God has truly been with you.

But the day has not yet come in our lifetime when all flesh sees the salvation of our God. Now maybe you think that's too much to hope for. And I know that the day will come when it will be much more splendid even than what I'm about to say.

But I believe that we can live expectantly, that the day will come in our lifetime when vast numbers of people will see the salvation of our God. Obviously John the Baptist is quoting from Isaiah 40. And if you haven't fixed in your mind the picture of true repentance, it is splendidly portrayed in these words of Isaiah.

Repentance is making ready the way of the Lord. It involves bringing down the high places in our lives and in the life of the church. It involves filling up the low places.

It involves eliminating the crooked ways. And it involves making the path straight. But it's not my purpose to go into that at length now.

Rather to pick up the reading again at verse 7. He therefore began saying to the multitudes who were going out to be baptized by him, you brood of vipers, who are in you to flee from the wrath to come? Therefore bring forth fruits in keeping with your repentance. And do not begin to say to yourselves, we have Abraham for our father. For I say to you that God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham.

And also the axe is already laid at the root of the tree. Every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. So when a person claims repentance, we are obliged to examine the fruit.

True repentance is a display of the power of God in the transformation of a life. And the warning is so clear and so severe. If a person claims to have repented and yet there is no suitable fruit, that person is but a

tree that will be cut down and thrown into the fire.

But again, that's not my purpose in calling the passage to your attention. In verse 10, 11 and 12. And 13 and 14.

We have three groups approaching John and asking a question. Verse 10, the multitudes were questioning him saying, then what shall we do? And he would answer and say to them, let the man who has two tunics share with him who has none. Let the man who has food do likewise.

And the second group, some tax gatherers also came to be baptized and they said, teacher, what shall we do? And he said to them, collect no more than what you've been ordered to. And then the third group, verse 14, some soldiers were questioning him saying, what about us? What shall we do? And he said to them, do not take money from anyone by force or accuse anyone falsely and be content with your wages. Now, where would unions be if that statement were heeded? There was a time when unions were necessary because big companies were trampling and cheating their employees.

But now, for the most part, unionism is simply greed and doing untold damage. But again, that's not my purpose. Rather, let us focus on what follows.

While the people were in a state of expectation and all were wondering in their hearts about John, as to whether he might be the Christ, John answered and said to them all, as for me, I baptize you with water. But he who is mightier than I is coming, and I'm not fit to untie the thong of his sandals, and he himself shall baptize you in the Holy Spirit and fire. Now, last night when I made reference to the passage, I gave just a brief statement about the fact that there are two contrasts in verse 16.

The contrast between the person of John the Baptist and the person of Christ and the contrast between the baptism of John the Baptist and the baptism of Christ. Now, we were going to adjourn at 1130 around that time, so this has worked out ideally. I have just enough time left to lay this out in front of you, then Lord helping us this afternoon, we'll have a more serious look at this passage.

I just want you to get a hold of the concept. I will repeat a little of what I said last night. Now, the passage we looked at in James 4 had the clear-cut seventh statement, humble yourself in the presence of the Lord.

This passage gives us an incredible help in true humility. I don't know whether the funny or the comic strip that used to be in the papers in the States ever made its way to Canada. Do any of you remember the name Casper Milk Toast? Doesn't really matter.

There was this comic strip about a man who was hand-tacked. His wife was the dominant part of the marriage, and he was this timid soul, and every time his wife spoke, he trembled, and he clung to her apron string. Tragic picture, but for many people humility is on that order.

Humility is pretending that what is true is not. Let me simply illustrate. As you can well imagine, it has been my privilege on countless number of occasions to be the guest in homes.

In amazing number of circumstances, I've gone to a home as a guest for dinner, and an absolutely magnificent spread has been set before me, and I have said in complete sincerity to the housewife, that was a magnificent meal. She has responded by saying, oh, it's not anything. We eat every day in this house, and I'm watching her husband, and I'm seeing written all over his face, we haven't had a meal like that for 16 weeks.

You see, her idea of humility is to pretend that it's not anything special, and we see that all around us. People don't know how to receive compliments, genuine, honest compliments, and they pretend that the compliment is invalid, but there is a wonderful key to real humility in this passage. So let's think a bit about John the Baptist, things that we already know, but perhaps haven't brought to the forefront, and they haven't impacted us as the authors.

I said last night, Christ's statement about John the Baptist was that of those born of women, there is none greater. Now, we know something about the incredible experience of John's father, Zacharias. When in the temple, performing his regular duties as a priest, an angel appeared to him, and an angel gave him a message of vast importance.

The angel told him that he would have a son. He identified the work of that son, and it was all fulfilled in an amazing way. And that same angel, some little while later, visited the young Virgin Mary, and promised that she would have a child.

And that that child would be conceived by the Holy Spirit. And we know that when Joseph discovered that Mary was pregnant, he didn't want to shame her publicly, but he decided to put her away privately. And an angel appeared to him, and assured him that that which was growing in Mary was not the result of an illicit relationship with a man, but the activity of the Holy Spirit, that that was conceived in her, was truly the Son of God.

And Joseph was told, thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sin. Not in their sin, not despite their sin, but from their sin. But we know also that after that visit by the angel to Mary, she determined to go and see her cousin Elizabeth.

And when she was approaching Elizabeth's home, she called out a greeting, and the babe wept in Elizabeth's womb, and she herself was filled with the Holy Spirit. Now, I want to put a question to you, dear folks. Do you think John knew anything about that? Do you think his parents kept those amazing things secret? I'm a father.

I remember well the time when I felt compelled to tell my only son the urgent prayer that I had prayed for him for years. I was on my way to the Orient for meeting. My son at that time lived in Southern California.

I called him and said I was on my way to Singapore, but I had to lay over in Los Angeles for the night and fly to Singapore the next day. I told him what hotel I was going to stay in and said, Bob, if you're free, I would love to have a visit with you. So he came that evening to the hotel, and he and I sat talking about those urgent, intimate matters of faith in Jesus Christ and service in the kingdom of God.

Then I felt prompted, and I said, Bob, no one but the Lord knows this. But let me tell you what my prayer for you has been for years. Bob, I had been praying that God would make you infinitely more holy and useful than your father.

He looked at me with amazement. He said quietly, for a few moments, and then he said, Dad, let me assure you, I will never forget. And in the subsequent years, there's many a time when a look from my son has reminded me that he has not forgotten.

It is still my prayer. I have desired myself to be as holy and as useful as a man can be in the kingdom of God. But my greater desire is that my son might be more holy and useful than me.

I believe John knew what his father had experienced in the temple. I believe he knew what happened to his mother. I expect he knew what happened at the time he was given his name officially.

John had learned a powerful lesson that if you haven't learned, you must learn it. True humility is not denying facts. True humility is keeping the facts in proper relationship to the greater facts.

As important as John was, as vital as his ministry was in the kingdom of God, in comparison, John was nobody in relationship to Christ. If indeed you're going to take seriously last evening's words, humble yourself. There's only one way of true humility, and that's refusing to compare yourself with any other being except Christ, and keeping your eyes constantly on Christ.

And no matter how high God may elevate you in this life, you will always know that it is as nothing in comparison with Christ. That as I said in this passage, are two contrasts. The contrast of the person of John with the person of Christ.

And the contrast of the baptism of John with the baptism of Christ. Have I criticized John? Have I suggested to you that John was no consequence? Of course not. This is not a criticism of water baptism.

It is simply keeping water baptism in its appropriate place. In comparison with the baptism of the Holy Spirit and fire. Is it not tragic that most of us have paid closer attention to the lesser baptism and neglected the greater baptism? But thank God, it's not too late for repentance.

Now is a good time to break for lunch. And then I'd like to come back to this passage and speak carefully about the meaning of baptism with the Holy Spirit and fire. Lord, thank you for the kind attention of these dear people.

Will you burn into every heart that which is from you and vital to their life and service. Will you accomplish your very will and purpose in these hours together, we pray in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

We the food is prepared. If you would just make two rolls, start to make your way in and you can sit there and then you can walk out. Okay, there's a there's a plate that has we're having summeries and chips.

And there's a plate that has meat in it already. It has one one of our kinds of cheese that they have there in it. So take one of those and if you would like to make your own with whatever it gives you.

I'm sorry to let you go. Okay, without any further delay make your way down the hall. Well, how long It will make an announcement once Once you see that everybody's done So So Well, did y'all get a refreshing nourishment there Yeah, grateful for that Yeah, all the labor to prepare that that's great So grateful for all of you who have showed up and have the opportunity to listen in I'm, so grateful and I knew he Mr. Roberts would not be bringing all kinds of Books and charts and man-made methods of leadership I knew which manual he would be bringing and i'm so grateful for that is what what is needed so much because That which can be shaken will be shaken and It is so that that which cannot be shaken will remain standing and that's the word of god And that's that's what we need and we're so glad for Dr. Roberts and bringing us the word so Lord bless you as you Continue to share With us what the lord laid on your hearts Now the one thing astonishing Is the fact that none of you has interrupted me That's most extraordinary I have lots of privileges with speaking various groups in daytime meetings of this part But it's most extraordinary If there are no interruptions Now I might assume that's because this is all old information and I haven't said anything useful to you it might be because You're thinking it's too respectful or disrespectful rather to interrupt But what a pity it would be if a question did exist that needed answering and you didn't

Interrupt and ask it.

So again I urge you to feel that liberty I have a lot more to say But I believe by the grace of god I can say What is important to say and still accept questions or statements on your part So although I don't have any grounds to think you're Earnest to say something. I do want to give you that opportunity Are there any questions or comments you would like to make? Yes I missed something there uh Just as a word of explanation It's almost commonplace for older people to lose a bit of their hearing So whenever you're addressing an older person Be very clear that you speak up. So I want to hear what you said Would you stand up and speak it out so I don't miss it? Now you said In regard to Nicodemus, but go from there As far as you're born again, we only find it between him and Nicodemus' conversation And we don't find it in his teaching anywhere else We don't find the term born again but the term Regeneration appears.

I am currently writing a book on the subject of regeneration just using the biblical passages In Ephesians, for instance In chapter 2 You were born dead in trespasses and in sin And when you put the whole of the biblical teaching together Then you get this profound Evidence that all of us start life dead You know, we've heard it said Those who are born once die twice Those who are who have been born twice die but once Now that's perhaps in some respects a little too much of a simplification, but it's a wonderful truth We are born first dead in trespasses and sins and So that's the first death, the death of trespasses and sins If we remain dead in trespasses and sins and we die a second time in an eternal Judgment from God in which we are separated from God forever.

You know when you think about heaven and hell What if I were to ask you What is the most marvelous part of heaven, would you say? Well, it's the streets that are paved with gold Well, honestly, I can slip and fall on concrete I can imagine how slippery Gold street would be I don't have any excitement at all about gold streets Now granted God could make non-slip gold But somehow the idea of gold streets, I don't find alluring or We read about the foundations of precious jewels Well, I don't happen to be into precious jewel They don't stir any interest or excitement in me It's when you start to talk about who's there That heaven gets really interesting My own dear parents In the glory I'll get to see them again.

Many of you have children Who you have reason to believe are there But it's not even The family and the friends That is the greatest excitement It's the Lord himself That's that's what heaven is all about and think of it like this in heaven We will know the unbroken presence of God the unbroken Presence now those of you who are true believers in this life Have not known the unbroken presence For we do sin and our Wonderful fellowship with him Is interrupted some of us have had serious seasons of backsliding And we have known that broken fellowship Some of us have been part of churches that have split And the anguish that comes when a family of believers is all knocked apart Often results in a season of doubting and uncertainty for us And while we know to a wonderful level The presence of God we don't know the unbroken presence So the sweetest part of heaven Is the unbroken presence of God, but what is the worst aspect of hell?

Is it the fire That is never extinguished Is it the worm? That never dies Is it the evil that goes on and on and on? Well, all that is terrible But the very worst part of hell is one can be there 10 000 years or a hundred thousand Or a million and never once can they think sooner or later God will come Because hell is marked by the unbroken absence of God Now if you're silly If your mind and heart don't function together Maybe that doesn't say anything to you But once you become aware Of how precious the presence of the Lord is Then the absence Is too much to bear so born once die twice But born twice And you die But once now sometimes Christians don't seem to have this straightened out when a person's life on earth ceases Is that

described as death I remember as a young person That being at a graveside And hearing the preacher say That brother so-and-so is asleep and being troubled by What I thought was death Being called sleep But in actual fact, that's it now christ When he suffered he died But when we suffer and pass from this life It will not be death But sleep asleep in christ and then awake forever to the presence of christ But now understand this and this is where the vitality the urgency of regeneration the new birth comes in I mentioned just briefly in passing the two kingdoms Kingdom of god kingdom of satan kingdom of light Kingdom of darkness kingdom of life Kingdom of death kingdom of righteousness Kingdom of evil now here is what the new testament clearly sets forth One Does not enter The kingdom of god was does not even see the kingdom of god apart from the regenerating work of the holy spirit You see much of the church Has messed this up a decision Doesn't bring me into the kingdom of god baptism doesn't bring me into the kingdom Education doesn't bring me into the kingdom Reformation doesn't bring me into the kingdom I become a citizen of the kingdom of god by birth the new birth the second birth Now that is a very essential part of the new testament the existence of two kingdoms and the absolute fact That entrance into the kingdom of god is by birth one can't make application to be a citizen of heaven and by fulfilling some Requirement become one one has to be born into that kingdom So the focus of the new testament Which is very very theological and part of the reason We see so much trouble and the church is Diminishing is because we shy away from doctrine for those of you who love to read and read serious things And would like to something that will help you to Get these matters Lined up correctly.

I want to recommend a book that I put together didn't actually write it I simply edited it. It's called salvation in full color What I did was to select 20 sermons preached in the 1700s in the united states by preachers Who knew the baptism of the holy spirit and fire? Now, let me take just a moment to help you to catch something our danger Is in using Terms that have a radical Meaning as if they were synonyms Were you ever guilty? of speaking of conversion And salvation and Regeneration as if they were all one in the same Well, that's quite a common problem But think now of what a terrible thing it is To make the holy spirit in your mind More stupid than you are Now most of us have the grace to admit. We're not very smart When I was speaking last evening about the sermon on the mouth about the poor in spirit Is not part Of what makes us poor in spirit is the realization That despite all the wonderful Opportunity god has given us to grow In grace and in the knowledge of jesus christ.

We're still very much like beginners We're ashamed of ourselves really For how little we know Now when I wish to speak to you suppose That I wish to speak To the pastor's wife and I say to her. I think it's quite wonderful that you wore that bright orange jacket today And you look at her And you look at me And you say my word are you totally colorblind She doesn't have on a bright orange jacket No, when we speak to one another for the most part at least we are able to use words That other people can relate to We give meaning To words sometimes we use a word.

We don't really know the meaning of and we make a mistake But generally speaking we are able to convey our hearts to others by the correct use of words And surely we must acknowledge That the holy spirit is more capable of speaking accurately Than we are Now would the holy spirit take words that have radically different root meanings And make synonyms of them Well, that's a trick that we might use But we could not accuse the holy spirit of that Now a lot of confusion exists because we have been very careless In the use of new testament terms, so i've recommended a book honestly i'm not desiring to sell books In fact, I have been blamed by many people Of being totally in the wrong about pushing literature I've had people say to me did the holy spirit lead you to write that book?

Yes Did he lead you to publish it? Yes And now he's leading you not ever to mention it so nobody knows anything about it I mean it doesn't make sense, does it? But I am nonetheless very reluctant to mention Things that I have a part of because I really have no interest in promoting Self or even in making money out of ministry But nonetheless i've taken the liberty to mention a book and I want to give you because it's related now to your question I want to give you just an overlook of these matters You could lay out in a line The great words of the new testament the doctrinal words you could put them in proper Sequential order I shall not attempt to give you the whole Picture And some of the terms that the new testament uses some professed christians choke over And I don't have any desire to cause you to choke And if you're uncomfortable with some of the words i'm going to give you Don't choke just let them Why?

Because i'm not pushing a doctrinal position just sitting in front of you What we call the order of salvation So I will begin at a place where many choke election that god himself elects persons to Salvation as I said if that troubles you don't Don't let it bother you just kind of push it aside for now if the lord wants you to believe in election He'll convince you of it It's not necessary for me to do so but that's The normal beginning point there is a latin expression that all pastors used to be Acclaimed with the order salutis or the order of salvation So before the foundation of the world God chose a people So the only people saved Are those chosen by god christ himself?

Spoke very plainly on this but as I said, this is not to make you choke But then there's an ongoing order Obviously a part of this plan of salvation is repentance And faith now, how can a person who is dead in trespasses and in sins repent What the church has been doing Has been offering a message Which makes no sense biblically And laying out a plan for people Which they have no capacity to fulfill So you have and i'm leaving out a lot but you have the election and you have regeneration Remember our lord's words They have eyes to see And they cannot see They have ears to hear and they cannot hear They have a heart With which to believe and they cannot believe for their heart is a heart of stone Ezekiel has some wonderful passages in which god says I will replace the blind eyes With seeing eyes the deaf ears with hearing ears the hard heart of stone with a heart of flesh Regeneration is that which god does by putting In place of a heart of stone a heart of flesh Replacing deaf ears with hearing ears replacing blind eyes with seeing eyes Now, I don't know to what extent you've been able to observe this But years ago a man And his wife were profoundly converted in the ministry in which I was engaged and then they became anxious for the whole family And so every time opportunity presented itself they were bringing their family members around me And this woman in particular had a large group of brothers and sisters and she was very anxious For all of them to meet me And one sister in particular came around frequently And I witnessed to her time after time I shared the good news of christ with her And it never seemed to make any difference then years later I saw her again in a different setting And she began telling me how to become a christian And it was so clear to me all the times I had shared christ with her She didn't get any of them She didn't even know what I was saying Because she was dead In trespasses and sins and then The lord himself Brought her to life And she didn't know But what I had never heard the truth And she was sharing it with me.

She thought perhaps for the first time So simply this friends God begins the work then at The moment that's appropriate From his perspective he Brings life to that person We call it the second birth the new birth Regeneration One passes from death to life or using the words in corinthians If any man be in christ, he is a new Creation all things are passed away all things become new I had a prominent attorney profoundly regenerated Man on the west coast. He was the vice president of a large shipbuilding company And he called out of the blue one day And said mr. Roberts my wife and I wish to join your church So I

asked if it would be acceptable for me to come to their home And I went to their home And they expressed this desire to join the church Now it was a church that had paid no attention to its own standards But nonetheless was the standards were written in When the church was founded now one of the standards was Membership in this church Is severely limited to those persons who can provide credible evidence of regeneration Are those familiar words to you credible evidence of regeneration All of our churches in the early years had statements to that effect So I say that to this lawyer And this wife And he says to me now. I hadn't known this before He says to me.

I am an attorney I know what the word credible mean I know what the word evidence means I thought I knew what the word regeneration meant But honestly when you put those three terms together I have no idea whatsoever what you're talking about so I say to him well, then you see You cannot join the church He got angry He said I thought the churches were looking for members and I said some apparently are But i'm not looking for members I'm looking For an opportunity to help Well, he said I suppose I ought to thank you for coming but you can go now I said now wait a minute You asked me here Politeness demands That you let me ask you some questions well All right. What? I said let me make an observation you tell me if i'm right or wrong My observation is not that you're the kind of a person that leaps to something and then forgets it But that when you make a decision it's an important matter to you Is that a correct observation? Well, yes, he said it is So then I said would you mind telling me? Why? you decided To join the church. I had already asked him if he had ever come and he told me no So now i'm asking him tell me why you decided to join the church Well, he said You need to understand I'm 50 years of age This is a second marriage My wife is 40 It's her second marriage We have two children from our union little girls The last Few sundaes i've been bringing them to your sunday school When I came this was a monday when I came yesterday And brought the girls into the building the lady in charge of the small children's department Was groaning because the piano player Had called in sick And when I heard her groaning I said to her I play the piano some Mind you Not the kind of songs I would suppose You would use in sunday school but if you had printed music Maybe I could help you And the lady said why yes, please we're ready to start sit down at the piano the book is open To the song we're going to sing And he said I sat there And my eyes went over the music And I remembered That in all my life I had gone to sunday school once And the song they sang At this sunday school When I was a child was a song That was in front of me And so I put my fingers to the keyboard And I began to play And the children began to sing Jesus loves me This I know For the bible Tells me so Little ones to him belong We are weak but he is strong and something happened inside me And I went straight home And said to my wife.

I'm ready To join the church. Ah I said to him It's exactly as I suspicioned Now will you take an assignment from me He said not without knowing what the assignment is I reached into my pocket. I pulled out Some of you have seen copies of this a little red booklet an off print of the gospel of john and And some of the passages marked in red with arrows and some boldly emphasized with black underlining I said I want to give you this booklet and ask you to master it Now he said wait a minute I told you not without knowing what is that booklet And I showed him the cover I said it's an off print of the gospel of john And he said then what do you mean by master it?

I said read it over and over until you can honestly say Everything I'm supposed to believe I believe And everything I'm supposed to do I've done He said give me that booklet I like the way you do things I stood And I said I will expect to hear from you again And I left and in two or three weeks He called gave his name Would you come immediately? to our home And I went And he and his wife met me at the door Broad smile And they said to me We are prepared to give credible evidence of regeneration And indeed

they did I knew that was going to happen once I realized that that little children's song Had been used by the holy spirit To bring him into life now when a person has been regenerated made alive By god himself Through his word through his spirit then god offers them the two precious gifts of repentance and faith And when they lay hold of those gifts and act upon them then they are Justified now some of us may not be straight on justification Perhaps you have heard the definition frequently given the justified person Who is who is the person?

Who has been made by god as if they never sinned to be justified To have god look upon us as if we had never sinned Now understand this Justification is a decision god makes Did you hear that? Justification is a decision god makes God looks at us and says This person is now Just they are as if they have never sinned That decision on god's part Is made by the way in which we have embraced the dual gifts of repentance and faith When we have reached that point where we hate sin and ourselves And we see that christ and christ only is our hope And we cast ourselves entirely upon christ And our only hope of forgiveness And life eternal is christ himself so regeneration Followed by the gifts of repentance and faith acted upon by us lead them to Justification and when a person is justified they are adopted into the family of god So they are able using the words of the apostle paul in romans chapter 8 to say Abba father father my father that assurance that radiant Realization that indeed I am a child of god that I belong in his Eternal family that it didn't get there by education or reformation or decision or even baptism but by The new birth By the exercise of the dual gifts Of repentance and faith now listen, there's much more sanctification, of course follows and then the final redemption But there's a single word that covers all of that It's the word Salvation just for a moment.

Will you think in terms of a large umbrella? Can you in your mind envision yourself with an umbrella in your hand and you open it up And you hold it over your head. Now, what is the construction of that umbrella? Well, you know that it has this series of spokes or spars or call them whatever you will A small umbrella may have eight or ten of these points And all of that is covered with some kind of a fabric That keeps the rain off. So think of the word salvation as the gospel umbrella And that umbrella has 20 of these spikes I've mentioned just a few of the 20.

The book I've mentioned will give you the total list So now come then to the very urgent and practical The question is regularly asked can a person be saved and lost? Is there such a thing as? Assurance Of salvation. Again, no interest in getting into a theological controversy But because salvation is the work of God and it does include regeneration, justification, adoption, etc Is God in the business of changing his mind? Does God start something and then decide he doesn't want to follow through? No, of course not But what I've tried to do is to answer your question by giving you a larger picture and saying regeneration is the place where all of this starts as far as we can see I haven't used the word conversion, but that's a part of it. I'll simply add that a conversion Is that which appears when the inward work of God in the gifts of repentance and faith in justification and adoption becomes outwardly apparent.

Some of you ladies love flowers as does my dear wife and very often she will put on our table A vase full of buds And when we go to bed at night, there is this vase full of buds But when we arise in the morning, some of these buds have opened up into beautiful flowers That's what true conversion is when that inward work of God takes on outward aspects And the inward work is visible to the naked eye I hope that helps you to get the picture So the possibility of salvation without regeneration is non-existent And the tragedy of these false views of regeneration is that a person Can go all the way through life thinking They're a christian And yet no real work of God has occurred within them Now that was such a long answer that might Frighten anybody else from asking a question But on the other hand, I think it's an urgent matter that

we see these things In relationship. So in essence what i've said to you is the holy spirit is more intelligent than we are And whatever words he uses we better understand and use as he does Anything else you would like to add? And again if you have any objections if you think i've Misrepresented these things you are free to say so I would urge you though To exercise a bit of caution because i'm probably in a position to put you under the bench with the answer But nonetheless you are welcome to speak up our concern Is it not pastor that some definite forward progress take place? If we cheapen the gospel if we misrepresent it to others We're not Advancing the kingdom of christ. It's the truth That sets people free sir right Now granted what? Answer i'm going to make will not necessarily be acceptable To you what I will represent Is the position of the church throughout history in seasons of Normality, let me just lay a foundation for what i'm about to say As the church goes into declension as it's going downhill The tendency is to rethink everything and to draw conclusions Vastly different from what the church stood for throughout all generations Preceding it now.

Let's take just a very simple Matter, but one that arouses a lot of difficulty in churches the place of church music I expect there's nothing creating greater controversy in the church world than music And we've got all these people telling us if we don't bring the music up to date We will use lose all the young people Now that's sheer nonsense The most vital churches I know use nothing but ancient hymns And there are so many young people there that you almost have to use A microscope to find anybody in your own age bracket But my point is simply this at a time of moral and spiritual decline no decisions no rethinking of the basic principles of christianity Can be safely made and yet in seasons Of moral and spiritual decline all these things are reconsidered And decisions are made that are completely erroneous So in this deep deep season of moral and spiritual decline What constitutes sexual sin has been rethought?

And we're now told that fornication Is acceptable for unmarried believers And that homosexuality and lesbianism are not forbidden by god So we have a whole new view of sexual morality We have a whole new view in terms of what is the right relationship between the christian and the world Virtually every issue of any consequence has been rethought during this season of terrible moral and spiritual decline that followed the second world war And among them this whole issue of free will Now let us understand this from the biblical standpoint and please let me state again.

I'm not trying to persuade you That's the holy spirit's work I'm simply representing the historic position of the church god created adam with a free will But adam allowed the influence of eve to affect him And as a result of their sin they lost the ability to choose to do good They were crippled We have a special term that describes the crippling effect of sin Depravity And I trust you understand The meaning now, this is not a biblical term drawn straight out of holy scripture But it's an analysis of the scriptural teaching and the word depravity means a person has lost totally Their ability to go in a straight line.

So over here we have a doorway And i'm eyeing that doorway and i'm saying I must enter through That doorway and wisdom says take the shortest possible route To that doorway and depravity says try this Try that go over this way Depravity makes it impossible For me to set my eye on the place to which god has called me and to go straight to it And this is the nature of all Those who are unregenerate They have an utter inability To do what is right Now I I know this is controversial and again, I want to say I am not trying to persuade you of anything I'm simply giving the historic position As long as a person is dead in trespasses and sins, they cannot choose to do good To obey god To hearken to the scripture It's when the spirit of god quickens them Then they are unable to do what the flesh cannot But if you hold to a different position, you're not an enemy of mine I'm not going to be troubled if you do I want to tell you plainly I did not always believe What I believe now And nobody got me in a corner and pushed me into the position i'm

stating As I studied my bible As I pledged with god for life I came gradually to see That salvation is a work of god.

Now. Let me give you a beautiful beautiful statement Out of the gospels you remember after christ was born How his parents mother true mother mary and joseph the adopted father Took him into the temple And in the temple there was that old man Who was waiting in the temple? Day and night for the lord's promise to be fulfilled And when mary and joseph entered carrying the babe simeon Stepped right up to them here now here now Let me take that babe. And so the babe is handed over to simeon and simeon said Now may your servant depart in peace For I have seen your salvation Salvation is not a theory It's not an experience It's not a series of acts of obedience Salvation is a person.

It's when the person of christ enters our life That salvation occurs Our salvation is in his hand. It may take you a while To adjust some of your thinking and again i'm not concerned about that I am concerned. However That you understand that god is the savior God the father god the son god the holy spirit When jesus came to earth he came with the objective of doing everything the father Had intended for him to do and he kept assuring his followers.

It's necessary for me to depart For if I do not depart The one whom you desperately need cannot be sent and he was referring of course to the holy spirit Salvation is god And no matter what your present view The one thing I would beseech you Not to let happen Is to low grade salvation to drag it down to man size Salvation is god at work And the higher my view of god as i've told you already The lower will be my view of self and the more astute and accurate my view of sin and the more accurate and precious my view of salvation So no matter where you start It's really where you finish that counts Has it dawned on you?

That christianity is not merely a good beginning but a glorious ending The book of hebrews is so rich and so precious The young jewish converts warned so carefully in hebrews That having come to christ they must not turn back to the world and that series of six powerful warnings Explaining why they must not turn back your task my task every passing day Is to have a higher and a higher view of god And when my view of god is right Then my theology will be right And if my view of god is low and erroneous Then my theological view Will be low and erroneous And my task is not as I said to persuade anybody but to elevate god and to demonstrate how vital His salvation is Over against how absurd and unsaving are the views of men Anybody else with a matter and if you don't like My answer you're welcome to probe further Any further comments?

Well again, let me urge you to feel the freedom to interrupt at any point Now let's pick up where we left off in the morning session back again To the gospel of luke chapter three and Let me reiterate what we've looked at and then lay hold as carefully as we can verse 16 in particular of the third chapter of the gospel of luke I laid out in the beginning this morning the five prominent views of regeneration Regeneration I tried to make it clear That the reason Moses was faced with such incredible difficulty in his life and ministry was because the people Did not have the holy spirit And I hope that you were quick to see That a people today who do not have the power of the holy spirit at work in them Will give their pastor the same kind of trouble that the people gave to moses in his kindness god Took a portion of the spirit that was upon moses and put it upon the 70 So now there are 71 With a measure of the spirit But still hundreds of thousands without the holy spirit So moses fails miserably at the end of his life By losing his temper whacking the rock with the rod Water still comes out But god says because you did not hold me holy Before the people because you did not maintain My glory you forced me to maintain it at your expense then we looked at numbers 11 And I made comments and then we turned to joel And I showed you again the promise of the

father and we looked briefly at acts And saw the fulfillment of the promise and now we've turned to loop three.

I've told you the two Contrasts that are made the contrast between the person of john and the person of christ And i've simply mentioned the contrast between the baptism of john And the baptism of christ. Let's pick it up there I've tried to make it clear.

I am not depreciating water baptism I'm merely saying That in comparison water baptism is of minor consequence in comparison with the baptism of the holy spirit and fire Now I understand perfectly well That most of you regarding me as a total stranger Most of you don't know enough even about my background who I am So, how how can you know any better than to think i'm one of those wild silly off-target crazy Pentecostals or charismatic So you could investigate and find the truth And you don't need to what does it matter?

I'm representing to you not some wild ridiculous viewpoint But the biblical truth The baptism of the holy spirit and fire is a vastly greater importance than the baptism of water And therefore it is reasonable to ask Each of us asking our own heart Have I been baptized in the holy spirit and fire Now for some of us that would be a terribly difficult question to answer Because we haven't got much to go on We've heard the wild extremes of some We know they're wrong But what does the passage really mean?

And what does it mean for you? This has been called a leadership Conference or something like that What does it mean to be a true leader? And certainly what does john mean when he says he shall baptize you in the holy spirit and fire Well, let's try to begin By asking what is the difference? between a baptism of the holy spirit and the baptism of fire How could I possibly know? Whether it's something I really have if I don't even know what the terms themselves speak of Now the baptism of power Is not difficult to understand We read briefly from acts 2 When christ made it crystal clear carry in jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high And as we have studied the book of acts it has been very very clear that when The baptism of the holy spirit happened at pentecost people Who had no power at all? were suddenly radically Transformed by the holy spirit and we've only to think in terms of peter peter who it seemed Perpetually had his foot in his mouth A peter who was a braggart Who had an answer for every matter who had no hesitation about boasting about his own strength and ability peter who had denied christ with curses merely because A slave girl had connected him with christ is now a radically different man He stands at pentecost and preached with such power That an amazing number of people came under profound conviction And were crying out What must we do to be saved and not fewer than three thousand Are transformed by the power of god in a single day So we can with relative ease ask the question Do I personally know the baptism of power?

Now believe me friends The purpose is not to make you feel weaker Or more ashamed but to encourage you to believe That what john the baptist said Is true You may not have entered in any real fashion into this But that doesn't make it untrue So the baptism of the holy spirit is a baptism of power But now what about the baptism of fire? Some of you have carefully considered this. What have you concluded? that the baptism of fire speaks of Anyone care to contribute? Well, it's appropriate that the leader lead so pastor.

What is the meaning of the baptism of fire? David was having decided not to fire burn within him That it was not and same with the disciples Yes, so it clearly represents a fire burning within Now we can be perfectly safe in saying at least two things that the baptism of fire represents the scriptures speak from time to time Of the refiners fire So gold Is put into the furnace And the impurities within the gold rise to the

top And are scooped off And the gold is refined by the fire We know for certain that that is a part of the baptism of fire the refining process And some of you have been in the fire You know At least something of what it means to have the impurities of your life brought to the surface by the trials by the tribulations By the immensity of the difficulties of your daily life But then there's another matter that internal fire that fire that burns within So the least that we can say Is that the fire the baptism of fire? represents the purifying process of the holy spirit And the creation of passion within the being of the person baptized in fire long ago that well-known preacher in England John Wesley said concerning a fellow worker in England had three William Grimshaw The whole of England would be ablaze for God For William Grimshaw is a man of fire And everywhere William Grimshaw goes the fire of God falls I know men Who everywhere they go?

The fire dies They say they're believers the tragedy Of what we often see in the church that one man Seeking earnestly the face of God Will be used to build up a congregation from 40 to 400 Then perhaps He passes away Or perhaps is clearly called by God to another place And the man that follows him can in less time than it took to build that work up Pour enough ice water on it So that it shrinks back to even smaller than the earlier handful There are clearly men of fire And clearly men Who are without fire now the word fire itself is a kind of a word That we know can represent false or true And our danger is drawing back because of the false fire But if you will Just put this simple array of truth in your mind the baptism of the holy spirit Refers to a baptism of power And the baptism of fire refers to a baptism of purity and passion Nothing wild or crazy about that All of us need power All of us need passion All of us need purity Now the words that are here Make this a very definite matter.

Let me read again verse 16 John answered And he said to them all as for me I baptize you with water but he Who is mightier than I is coming And I'm not fit to untie the thongs of his sandals he himself will Get that he himself will Baptize you with the holy spirit and fire. It doesn't say if you're fortunate He may It doesn't say if you seek it desperately enough, there's a possibility It says plainly he will baptize you in the holy spirit and fire Now let's prayerfully thoughtfully carefully Consider that truth And let me introduce it to you By the use of a term that I made mention when I gave you the order of salvation And I stressed The beginning point which some are content to call election And I spoke about Regeneration and I spoke about the gifts of repentance and faith and I mentioned justification and adoption I gave ever so slight an Interpretation of conversion and I said I've left a lot out Well, obviously a major part that I left out was the doctrine of sanctification Now most of us know that word and we have perhaps some measure of understanding Of what it really speaks Now listen carefully There is a danger of thinking that Christ is our justification And our duty Is to sanctify Ourselves now anyone who has tried to be good Has found it very Exasperating we make a little progress Then we do some stupid thing we let our mouth run wild We say something very injurious to others I don't know any way to more quickly kill Your love of righteousness Than to try to be good Did you ever have the feeling well I've been good now for seven weeks in a row And I'm just tired of it and today I'm just going to please myself Well from the looks of you, maybe some of you know what I'm talking about experientially But trying to be good is very very exasperating If I may speak of a political matter as affects the United States just to illustrate What I'm speaking about?

I think most Canadians are better informed about political matters in the United States than most Americans are Concerning political matters in Canada My wife and I were residents of the state of California At the time Ronald Reagan was governor of that state And we understood That Ronald Reagan had higher aspirations Than the governorship of California We knew he had his eye on the nation's highest political position And so we were in no way surprised when Ronald Reagan announced his candidacy for the presidency of the United States Now perhaps you're too young to remember this or perhaps Although you

know more about us than we know about you You may not ever have caught this but ronald reagan had a favorite saying That slipped into his speech with some frequency He would say i'm going back to the ranch Now ronald reagan owned a small ranch in california And when he got tired Of the political trail He might very well say i'm going back to the ranch Now all the time That he was a candidate for the presidency He had the right to return to the ranch He had the right to return for a few days He had the right to say i'm sick and tired of the rat race of running for president. I quit Because he was only a candidate But the day came When he was no longer a candidate The day came when The majority of the voting population determined of the lousy choices we faced.

He was the best And he was elected president of the united states And from that time on he lost his freedom of choice He was no longer A candidate He was the elected president of the united states Even long after his term of office was fulfilled. He was still the president Nobody of any common decency Would refer to him without speaking of president reagan now look All of us know That god has called us to a life of holiness I gave you this morning a statement about my only son I told you what my continual prayer was for this son That he would be more holy and more useful than his father Because I know That without holiness no, man Shall see the lord I know that we are commanded be ye holy As I am holy But if you see yourself as a candidate for holiness That will have a very different impact upon you Than if you see yourself as having been elected to holiness Will you turn now don't lose your place in lieu But will you turn to the book? of ethesians and let me Call to your attention some words that doubtless You have observed before But perhaps You have let them slip This is the book of ephesians Chapter one I want to read two verses verses three and four so ephesians one verses three and four Blessed Be the god and father Of our lord jesus christ Who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in christ Just as he chose us in him Before the foundation of the world That we should be holy And blameless before him in love Now let those words sink in Consider what they really mean Before the foundation of the world You were chosen or you were elected by god to be holy This was god's purpose from the time He first thought of you long before your physical birth God determined that he Would quicken you from the death of sin Gift you with repentance and faith and enable you to live wholly before him So put it this way You were elected to holiness not by me Not by your church but by god himself And did god ever fail?

In any purpose he ever had Our problem is often That we see ourselves as candidates For holiness And we are trying to be good And we are often discouraged And sometimes disgusted at our ongoing failure And many in the church have just given up And they say i'm as holy As I ever will be what's the sense of trying I never get anywhere and even poor paul had the same problem because paul said the things I Would not I do and the things I would I do not and they pretend that that's an excuse For their own failure in holiness.

Now, that's a gross Misuse of scripture because paul is describing himself In that in-between state after he's been awakened made alive by the holy spirit, but before repentance and faith are in place and god has transformed his life and he is struggling to cease doing The rotten things and to start doing the right things and he's constantly frustrated But just lay hold of this simple truth now this purpose of this session is not to teach you Sanctification i'm just using sanctification as The background now of this baptism of the holy spirit and fire when you recognize that god Has chosen you From before the foundation of the world to be holy And blameless before him in love And you face the fact this is not something I must strive to become This is something I must receive in faith Remember paul's words Reckon yourself to be dead indeed unto sin and alive unto god And do you remember the words of first corinthians?

Chapter 1 verse 30 But of him Are ye? in christ jesus Who with god is made unto us Wisdom That is righteousness and sanctification and Redemption you say I I don't believe that's what my bible says No, I agree It's not Your bible says But of him are ye in christ jesus who is made unto us wisdom karma righteousness Karma Sanctification karma redemption karma, but it's a problem of punctuation What it says Of him Are you in christ jesus? Who is made unto us? Wisdom and then you know those two dots one over the other Sister what do those two dots mean? Yes And it means that what follows? Clothes out of what is just before the two dots What is the wisdom of god? well Back in the old covenant The fool Has said in his heart.

There is no god But the wise man is the man who knows god Now In first corinthians 1 30 The wisdom of god has three very distinct and precious parts righteousness Sanctification and redemption Now think carefully I know that after lunch, it's kind of hard to be totally attentive But let's do our best But of him Are ye in christ jesus? Who god is made unto us wisdom now? I inserted the words as is because in spoken english, we don't include the punctuation So if it were written correctly the two dots would be there That is the equivalent of the two dots But think now of what it says the wisdom of god consists of these three parts righteousness Sanctification and redemption Righteousness what does that refer to? Well, i've already spoken a bit about it. I use the term justification When god makes a decision concerning us When god says it is evident now That my gift of repentance and faith are in place in your life And you are acting as a repenting believing person And therefore we are justified So god never again looks at us As if we were sinners Let me put it in this simple way Can you imagine me standing here just as I am And then god enters the room and he has fashioned a pure white garment that he puts over me Then from then on god never looks at me From beneath But only from above And every time he looks at me he sees me not in my filth Not in my sin But he sees me clothed in this white garment representing righteousness He sees me as justified but this pastor just maybe once in 25 years Has just a little nasty streak And so he sneaks up behind me and he raises the hem of the white garment And he said look at the dirt beneath the garment I am still a sinner Despite being covered with the robe of christ's righteousness So my duty as one who has been justified Is in faith to live as the man who is both made righteous by the eternal decree of god and is becoming righteous through the practice of faith I am to be the man who recognizes That I was chosen in him before the foundation of the world to be holy and blameless The teaching of the bible is true righteousness Is manifested in the life Not by a trying to do better But by the exercise of faith So every day When I acknowledge myself just as paul said dead indeed to sin And alive indeed in christ Through faith that day I can walk in the beauty of holiness. It's while my eyes are on christ that holiness is taking place It's when my eyes turn away from christ That the old man begins to show Again, i'm simply saying to you dear brothers and sisters true holiness Is ours by faith not by striving Not even by fresh new Decisions There's a place for striving.

There's a place for decisions But we have sanctified by Faith now we have explained To people who are lost Who are puzzled about salvation? And we say to them That they can be saved by faith And often they will say to us that's too simple surely there must be something I can do And we assure them. No There's nothing you can do It's when your trust is entirely in christ when all other hope is gone And you cling to christ and christ clings to you That you are justified But some of us who are very good Explaining that to the lost haven't been all that good explaining sanctification to ourselves So now I told you with three things that flow out of the word wisdom righteousness Or justification Sanctification as expressed in first corinthians 1 30 and number three redemption Now we can confuse ourselves Because the word redemption is used two ways In scripture and our old hymnology Helps us in this Do you remember that old hymn?

Redeemed how I love to proclaim it Redeemed by the blood of the lamb Redeemed by his infinite mercy His child and forever I am that's redemption in the past tense Christ is our Redeemer Some of you folk I guess you probably did you have such things as s and h green stamps here in this country? Did you have a season when trading stamps were popular? Oh, well, i've got an illustration that may not fit some of you but in the states There was a long period of time when if you made a purchase of gasoline, they gave you these stamps And If you went to the grocery almost everything you bought the merchant distributed some kind of stamps now those stamps would be pasted in redemption books And as a boy growing up in new york state I had the task of licking the back of these stamps and pasting them in these redemption books And one day my parents said to me we now have three and a half books of s and h green stamps And we're going to the redemption center and because you've pasted the stamps in the books We want you to come with us and choose our award So we went to this redemption center And we looked around at all these things They had there That we could not afford and we examined a number of things Where it took more than three and a half books And some things it took less but the one thing we really focused upon was an electric toaster That took three and a half books of stamps So the stamp books Were handed over the counter And the electric toaster was passed over to us And for the first time in our home We had toast Not made on the end of a stick Or a long fork held over the open fire but toast made In an electric toaster it was a glorious day.

I can still almost taste that toast But a redemption center that meant to buy back Now christ is our redeemer We were born not as children of god but of the evil one We did the works of our father He sinned we sinned all of us in early life had proven ourselves Not children of god, but children of satan but then christ became our redeemer our family relationship Changed our citizenship was transferred by birth From the kingdom of darkness To the kingdom of light we become members of the household of faith That's redemption in the historic sense But as I told you there are two uses of the term redemption in scripture The second Is future There's another term that covers future Redemption that is glorification Now to be justified what must I do Come now Surely you can answer that Yes, I have to have faith I have to entrust myself to the redeemer I have just been telling you That sanctification is also ours in faith As I realize that christ is my holiness And as on a regular basis I say today I'm dead to sin.

I'm alive in christ today I walk the walk of faith today. I refuse to be a party to sin Today i'm going by god's grace to live the righteous holy life Of the redeemed in christ jesus and to whatever level my faith rises. That's exactly what happens I move forward in holiness by faith when my eyes turn from christ to myself or to you I have a fall But now if I am justified by faith And sanctified by faith, how am I made? glorified or redeemed in the second future sense Well, you'll think that the appropriate thing to say is by faith But no, that's not appropriate I'll come over here to this brother And i'll say to him directly would you like to be redeemed in this second fashion No You don't want to be in glory You do Well, you just said you don't Obviously I haven't made the matter clear enough redemption and glorification Redemption in this second sense of future.

They're one in the same What does the true believer who has been justified and is being Sanctified by the power of christ. What does the true believer have to do to be redeemed or glorified? Drop dead I mean it drop dead If you are justified by christ and being sanctified by christ When your moment comes and you drop dead in the flesh, then you'll be in the glory It's a guaranteed thing those whom god justifies and sanctifies He glorifies Now that I think is simple it may be put in front of you today in a little different way Than you're used to and you may have to grapple with it. But now i've used that Simply to help you to get the right picture of this matter of The baptism of the holy spirit and fire.

I want to repeat words I already spoke The last time we turned to luke 3 and I read verse 16 again to you he shall baptize you in the holy spirit and fire Not he might If you're fortunate Not there is a possibility if you're good enough But he shall the bulk of the people That I meet with Know nothing experientially about the baptism of the holy spirit and fire If talk to a hundred people in a given circumstance a hundred of them can talk about their baptism in water But not one of them Will say anything about their baptism In the holy spirit and fire I'm, not trying to put words in your mouth None of you have told me What your understanding?

Of this matter is Or what your experience is But i'm telling you That we are told absolutely When he has come he will baptize you in the holy spirit and fire And those words do have The precise meaning that we have already discussed The baptism of the holy spirit the baptism of power the baptism of fire the baptism of passion and purity sister Now that's an important question and that's where the great Division occurs in the church the bulk of the church was believing that it's automatic That when you're converted you're baptized in the holy spirit and fire But along came this group Initially known as pentecostals And they said what we see in the church does not represent what we saw in the book of acts And if I may be very personal as a boy I became deeply aware Of the difference between what I read in my bible and what I saw in my church That didn't come to me as a criticism But as a longing As a desire I found it hard to believe that I had everything I needed to be an effective servant of christ And to live all out for his glory and I expect that's what some of you have found You have been grateful for what you have But for some of you, I believe there's been a hunger for something more So our pentecostal and then our charismatic friend Want us all to know that once we sought the gift of tongues and spoken tongues Then we had the baptism of the holy spirit and fire, but that's all proven fraudulent many people who speak in tongues Sin like the devil himself I've heard them cursing.

I've heard them Speaking the most vile things and yet saying they're full of the holy spirit I don't want that for myself. I don't want that for you I want the real thing And I don't want to be content with less than god gives So honestly, I think we can dismiss the possibility That is ours automatically now the reason I gave you that lengthy statement about sanctification Did you assume that because you were christian you were automatically as holy as it was possible to be?

No, most of us have felt very earnestly that we need To strive more that we need to do better And we have tired ourselves out in this effort To live a more godly life And then it's when we discover that christ is our holiness and in faith We embrace the fact That we were elected by god himself before the foundation of the world To be holy and blameless before him And as we live in that truth, then we seek god almighty Through the finished work of christ and through the power of the holy spirit Enabling us to rise Increasingly in holiness and what i'm saying to you is The baptism of the holy spirit and fire Is to be embraced in faith everything That we need not only to live a true christian life But everything that's needed to turn our world christward Is ours in the finished work of christ His finished work includes this baptism of the holy spirit and fire Now I have a dear son I've mentioned him in terms of the prayer That I have prayed for him for many years Now my son lives in the state of tennessee, and he's been Wrestling with a very great problem because he has been members of a church for years Where he and his family are starving to death spiritually I have preached there And I have visited there when the pastor was preaching And at my son's request I listened carefully To the pastor's sermon which was in many respects good and then my son asked me to tell him What I really thought of the sermon and I said I believe this desperately sincere man has been very badly injured By the church Not the church he's in now, but a former church That he's hurting inside So he's preaching to try and help the wounded But not everybody's wounded at the same

time The bulk of the people in his church are hungry They want the greater truths of god's word They want to hear the gospel preached in all of its fullness They want the gospel preached in the power of the holy spirit and with fire And that's the way most of you are You want all that god will do?

And you want the knowledge of all that god has done So my son's wife Has been begging him to leave the church Because the children are starving and she's starving and my son Is starving so he's been calling me a lot lately and saying dad.

I must have help So when we talked last week I said bob Let me make a recommendation Get two or three men That you can trust that you know Have the same hungry heart you do Go to the pastor and say pastor We want to meet At least once a week for the next month with you praying That you will enter into The baptism of the holy spirit and fire you see this pastor in great Earnestness has been saying I am ministering to the people that god has given me And he's unaware that many of his congregation is starving And the baptism of the holy spirit and fire makes a person alert to who is there and what their needs are And he determined To follow that Advice and to say to the pastor We're going to pray Specifically for the next month That you will seek in faith this baptism and if indeed You embrace the finished work of christ.

We know your ministry will change, but if you will not seek it, we have no choice But to leave Those those are hard words But I want to ask you now all pretense all Misinformation laid aside Have you claimed? the baptism Of the holy spirit and fire Obviously god is god And he loves variety He's not made us all the same He didn't intend for us all To be the same The evidence of this baptism will appear differently from person to person But all that we are And all that we do Must be affected by the power of the holy spirit at work Within us Why not make this a matter? of deliberate prayer And a matter Of deliberate faith I'm not asking for something that is a mere possibility I'm asking for that which has been assured In the book of acts All that 120 Were baptized in the holy spirit and fire I don't need to say anything about tongues if god wants to give the gift of tongues god is god He does what he pleases But to make that the standard is absurd But to believe god for all That he's accomplished in christ Is right It's been my privilege as an old man And indeed it began many years ago to know personally Many of the people that god has greatly used in the church over the last hundred years I could name some and their names Would be familiar to you I had one dear friend Who in his 90s?

Was in scandinavia preaching in the power of the holy spirit His home and office were in california When he came home he was meeting with his ministry staff And they were praying together Asking god what can we do now? That will advance your kingdom throughout the world And my dear friend in the midst of prayer with his fellow workers Had a heart attack He was rushed to the hospital But there was nobody there To be treated He had left that carcass that shell And had gone home to glory in the midst of intensive labor None of my close friends ever thought of retirement They all thought day by day What can I do to better bring glory to my lord and they've all Come to the same conclusion The baptism of the holy spirit and fire Anything you want to question Any additions or subtractions You wish to make so i've said it's not automatic If you say it accompanied salvation Then you'll continue to live in your weakness And your failure it's a matter of faith And by god's grace of appropriating What christ has done time wise I guess we're right at that hour of adjournment that was suggested If you have anything you want to say personally, maybe you're hesitant To say it publicly i'm not in a great rush.

I shall be glad to speak with any of you But obviously what we all need is not me But the lord we thank you father that the work of christ Was not inadequate But that absolutely everything we need Is provided by

him Forgive those lord Who have failed to exercise faith In the finished work of christ prompt us by your spirit To enter into deeper regions of faith Than we have gone before and grant The outpouring of your spirit upon each of us and upon all Whose lives we touch We pray in the name of jesus christ our lord our Salvation our hope Amen very much For sharing that with us I was thinking that you know regardless of where we find ourselves In our relationship with the lord I think wherever we're at We have a desire for more I think of moises up in that mountain in engulfed in the glory of god Where the rest of them could only stand? away from the mountain and observe Moses went right into the cloud into the presence of speaking with god there And you would think wow, that would be enough if I could just have that Moses said lord Show me your face.

He wanted more And god did show him more And if that is the heart If that is in our heart of desire god also wants to give us the desires Our heart if we will delight ourselves in him and so let's uh In wherever we're at in our walk with the lord, let's let's seek him Let's seek his face Let's seek him for that which He desires to impart to us so that we may grow that we may Be more effective for his for his kingdom That's my prayer desire As he mentioned if you wanted to speak with you personally if you have some things that you would like to talk about Unless we will be dismissed, uh tonight we start at seven o'clock again and encourage you to Invite others to come come prayerfully To hear the word of the lord uh, if there's any of you that have any needs that Have not been met yet as far as maybe a place to stay for a night or any other needs that you may have Please feel free to come and talk about it and we'll uh, we'll try to accommodate you As good as possible and then tomorrow morning we resume again at nine o'clock Um Like here as well, you know, we expect quite a bit more people Who have indicated that they were going to come tomorrow where they would come today because of work arrangements and schedules and so on but We look forward to what the lord has yet in store for us. So thank you all for coming for your attentiveness and God bless you

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