

Born Again

by Sandeep Poonen

Being born again is a spiritual transformation that results in a fundamental change in identity, where an individual is reborn in Christ and becomes a new person.

Duration: 52:29

Scripture: John 3:3, Romans 5:5, Romans 6:4, Romans 8:6, 1 Peter 2:2

Topics: "Spiritual Renewal", "Salvation"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of being born again, focusing on the need to die to our old ways and be transformed by God's love. It highlights the significance of breathing in the love of God like oxygen, and longing for the pure milk of God's word to grow in our salvation. The speaker draws parallels to Romeo and Juliet, urging listeners to approach God's word with a heart that seeks to discover God's great love and be nourished by His truth.

Transcript

It's really good to be back here again after a while. All of my family and my brothers send their love and their regards. They're very jealous of me and I would be jealous of them if they got to visit.

I was jealous last month when Sanjay got to be here. It really is a great joy. We live far away but our hearts are never far away from you all, you must know that.

We think so fondly of you all. We talk about you often but you're always in our hearts and we can never forget what was put into us when we were infants growing up into children, into adults even. So we owe a whole insurmountable gratitude.

We were taught by a lot of the brothers and so I recently spoke a sermon on standing pure for God on a day of compromise and as I was preparing that sermon and even as I was speaking that sermon, I had pictures of the drama that was done by this church, by a lot of the young brothers at that time when I was still a little child, still in my head even as I was speaking. That was how the word of God came alive to me when I was a through the older brothers acting it out and showing me what Daniel and Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, what it meant for them to live pure for God. So it has been such a great privilege to be able to grow up in a church like this.

What a convicting word we heard just now. It just hit me that Samuel, the very first thing that God spoke to him, God spoke to him when he was a little child, I don't know, maybe seven or eight, the very first word God spoke to him is Eli is going to be judged because he didn't raise his children right. The very first things God told Samuel was that when he was a little boy and we find out that at the end of his life, that's the one thing that Samuel has disobeyed.

God spoke many things through Samuel but the very first word that God spoke through Samuel, Samuel had forgotten it. I'm sure he could have told the story for many years to all of his disciples, all the people to him, how God spoke to him when he was a little child. But he probably had to have a lot of shame when he said, what did God say to you? Because he would have said, well, I'm doing the same thing, my children too.

So it is a very convicting word that the first words that we have heard, the words that we've heard from the beginning, those truths may be the very truths that we are falling behind in, that we have fallen away from and we have forgotten the true meaning of it. I'm sure Samuel had much awe and reverence for God and how to raise up his children when he heard that first verse, first time he heard God's voice. But over the years, I'm sure it got old.

He said, I can explain it to other people. I'm not going to need to live it out anymore. And I wanted to speak today from one of the first words almost all of us hear when we come to Christ.

And it is a passage in John chapter three. And I think it's also appropriate that we had a couple of children dedicated that Jesus said that there's something brand new that has to happen when we enter the kingdom of God. And I wanted to talk about what God is showing me, about how I might have forgotten some of the things I've heard from the beginning.

A lot of you probably have heard these words early on in your Christian life, about being born again. And I wanted to share with you my thoughts of how God is showing me this and reminding me of the truths that we've heard from the beginning. There was a man, John chapter three, verse one.

Now there was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. This man came to him by night and said to him, Rabbi, we know that you have come from God as a teacher, for no one can do these signs that you do unless God is with him. Jesus truly answered and said to him, truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

Nicodemus said to him, how can a man be born when he is old? He cannot enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born, can he? Jesus answered, truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. This is what Nicodemus was. Nicodemus was somebody, probably an old man.

He had lived for many years. But I realized that there are a few things about Nicodemus that may remind me of me and us of who we think of when we think of when we come to God. Nicodemus had a lot of good things to say about Jesus.

Nicodemus said that Jesus came from God as a teacher and no one could do these signs that you do unless God is with him. What were the signs that Jesus had done? If you read the previous chapter, at least some of the signs that we know he did was he turned water into wine and we saw the miraculous power of Jesus and Nicodemus said that was from God. But not only that, Nicodemus also was heard, if

not he was not, he was there too, when he saw in John chapter 2 where Jesus cleaned out the temple.

Nicodemus watched that and saw Jesus throwing out all these money changers in his own temple where he probably should have done this. Nicodemus should have done it but he sees this young 30 year old man throwing out the money changers and something in Nicodemus says this man is from God because I too believe in the house of God being a house of prayer. I don't have the boldness to throw these people out but Jesus does.

He's a man from God and this is how we can be too. We can be people who are not just people who are Christians who know that Jesus is from God or Jesus is God but we can also be able to correctly discern people who come, who are men of God, who say I like that brother, I like listening to that person who preaches the sermon because he preaches truth, he speaks against the money changers in the temple, he throws them out, he speaks strong words of holiness. This man, I'm going to follow him, I'm going to listen to his sermons every week.

I'm going to listen to him and I'm not going to listen to these other guys who are on TV and making money. No, I'm going to listen to the right people and all these other people who are doing signs, they're not from God but this person is doing a few signs, that person is from God. I'm going to listen to him and that spirit can come into us too where we also have that and we can think that we have Jesus and that we are in the kingdom of God because we identify all of these things correctly.

We're not listening to the wrong doctrine, we're not going to the wrong church, we're not doing the wrong kind of things and we can say these are all signs that I'm in the kingdom of God and Nicodemus probably came up to Jesus and probably said, hey I'm giving you a lot of compliments, I'm telling you God is with you. It's very rare when somebody comes up to somebody else and says God is with you and especially somebody who's been a religious leader for many years, an 80 year old man probably telling a 30 year old man God is with you but Jesus has words for him and had words for me and for us. Jesus was not interested in that and Jesus' words to me in verse 3 was this, what all of those things that you told about me are immaterial.

Just because you can identify doctrine correctly is secondary. Thank you for saying that, thank you for acknowledging where you are in terms of your understanding of it but it's secondary. All that you say about the men of God, all of the kind of people how you say this is right and this is not right, I'm glad you said that, I'm glad you recognize that but that's deeply secondary.

This is what I get from verse chapter 3 where Jesus is saying this is what I want to tell you. There's really something that is really true, truly truly you need to be born again to come into the kingdom of God. It's good that you recognize all these things, it's great that you recognize all of these things but it's all immaterial if you're outside the kingdom of God and Jesus says you have to be born again to enter into the kingdom of God, to see the kingdom of God and obviously the question is what does it mean to be born again and all of us may know this but even for the children we may know we're never going to be having to end our own life physically and be born again, that's not happening.

It's talking about a spiritual transformation, it's a fundamental, a foundational transformation that happens in our spirit that should define us. When we are born we have certain, we are people, we have certain persons, we have certain identities that are core to who we are, that defines us. Jesus says when you are born again there must be a brand new thing, not that you check off saying you believe in, not a bunch of ideas that you say I agree with this, I'm going to do all these practices, much much more than that, it has

to be a transformation of an identity.

There's an absolutely brand new person that is now there among us and nobody knows that maybe except you yourself because I know for myself, I mean when I grew up in the church I knew how to avoid showing the kind of wrong behavior that I shouldn't show and a lot of us who grew up in this church, a lot of us who have come to this church for a while know what we ought not to do. That's not a sign of being born again though, the born again that is true is something that is so fundamental that it defines who we are. Have you been born again? Have we been born again in which we can say I have a foundational identity that has changed, not different practices that have changed, not different behaviors that have changed but I am fundamentally a different person.

That is what it means to be born again. I'm a fundamentally at the most basic level, at the most deepest level, I am different now and how is that different shown? I saw what Jesus was saying in John chapter 3 verse 5 as demonstrating what that difference ought to look like. Truly, truly I say to you in verse 5 this is what Jesus seemed to be explaining it was that you have to be born of water and you have to be born of the spirit and I want to give you my simple understanding of what I to me born of water and born of the spirit looks like.

This may have been words that may have been difficult for you to understand. I know it was for me but I want to explain to you how I simply understand what it means to be born of water and I don't want us to get too carried away with this born again that we've heard it for so many years that we miss out that it means that we have to be born of something. When we're born of water that's why I get the sense that it is an identity thing that means I came from water and I came from spirit.

I want to explain what those two things mean the spiritual sense to be coming from water and to be coming from the spirit that if God looks at my spirit he sees that my spirit has been born of water and of spirit. What does it mean to be born of water that Jesus says you have to be born again. For me I think of that and again it's described for me in Romans chapter 6 which talks about us being baptized in water and the baptism in water is what it means to be born of water but the baptism in water is not the physical act.

The physical act is just a testimony hopefully of what is happening on the inside.

So even children you can be born again even though you have not been baptized as yet and maybe you're not old enough to be baptized you can be born again because you have to be born of water and I'm going to explain to you what it means to be born of water and it says this in baptism is a symbol most of you all of us may have seen baptism where somebody is put underwater completely and then is brought back up but being put underwater in Romans chapter 6 is explained what that baptism means when we put somebody underwater in Romans chapter 6 verse 3 it says do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into his death therefore we have been buried verse 4 with him through baptism into death so that as Christ was raised from the dead through the

glory of the father so we too might walk in newness of life verse 5 for we have been united with him in the likeness of his death because we who have died for he who has died is freed from sin the problem is my sin the problem is my disobedience to parents the problem is my not controlling my tongue or my eyes or my thoughts or my my ways in which I beat myself up or whatever it may be that is the problem so anything I might do on the outside all the good action doesn't do anything with the problem of my sin so when I as a child am struggling to obey my parents that's a problem of my sin what should I do I need to be born again what does that mean for me that means I have to identify completely in the fact that I too

this part of me that says I can do whatever I want has died not has been

given a little medication to keep himself sedated has not been given some kind of chains around his hands so that he cannot move wherever he wants no he has died we have completely put him to death and that putting myself underwater completely is a symbol of me bearing that way of life so I am saying when I am born of water that I am completely identifying in my identity and I don't know how to use all the right words to probably explain this truth probably but I hope you get a sense of what I mean it goes into the part of me that I am dead what is dead all of my own ways of thinking I must do it my way when my parents tell me to do something one way and I do it another way that is my way and God is saying you have to identify completely with Jesus's death we sang we glory in the cross of

Christ if I glory in the cross of Christ means I find great excitement and enjoyment in the cross of Christ that's a little bit of a crazy statement unless I really understand that it is because my sin that person of sin has to be completely dead and I've realized how many times I had that experience I was baptized here but it's so easy that over the years that very statement and that reality in which I was baptized and back then I was acknowledging that I was fully dead and I didn't want to live for myself anymore I knew my heart back then I know my heart back then I really wanted to live for God how I have to continue making that statement I have to continue asking myself are the choices I'm making going down the path of life or the path of that death that I put to death in the past

that's what I saw out of verse Romans chapter 6 verse 21 therefore what benefit were you then deriving from the things which you are now ashamed of for the outcome of those things is death and that was a question I had to ask myself about many things and I have to keep on asking myself about many things this way of thinking right now that I'm not good enough that somehow I didn't do what I should have done and I'm just not good enough now I have to ask myself what is the outcome of that thing that thinking in this case this outcome of this thinking that I'm not good enough where does it end me it ends me in death it ends me in me just feeling bad about myself but not the way of God because God says I am all I need to be in Christ that I have everything I need in Christ so this way of

thinking that says I'm not good enough is the way of death so I must reject that way of life this way of thinking that says I must disobey my parents is a way of death this way of writing an email in which I respond harshly and I respond without mercy what's I know I have a point I know I can say that I'm having an argument with a friend I know I can say that but what's the outcome of that I know when I was in college I used to argue so much about Jesus versus other religions and all that stuff and I understand its place but I saw how I won a lot of arguments but I never won their hearts I never won their souls to Jesus I went away thinking that I'd won the argument and I'd stood up for Jesus and I stood on his side but I didn't have a sense of their heart to try and win them to Christ

and so I see that some of the outcomes of even just arguing and arguing and arguing on all these intellectual matters can also have an outcome of death what is the outcome God of what I'm trying to do here what is the outcome of trying to send that email what is the outcome of saying that statement to my wife what is the outcome of it am I trying to get a punch in or I'm really trying to grow her gently towards the truth when I started to see that I must have one of those two outcomes always before me I realize what it means to be born of water I must completely say that my way of doing things is dead and Romans chapter 8 gives me a lot of verses on that I just want to highlight one of that Romans chapter 8 verse 6 verse 5 and 6 for those who are according to the flesh and the whenever I

read the word flesh I substitute it with doing my own will so for those who are according to doing my own will set their minds on the things of doing your own will and those who have their minds set on the spirit of God saying God what is your will do the things of the spirit for the mind the mind set on doing his own will once again is death but the mind set on never doing my own will that is the holy spirit never doing my own will is life and peace and I realized that there I was in one of two camps I was I was not 50 50 and that was a realization I needed to realize I wasn't kind of you know balancing act between the flesh and the spirit not between my will and God's will and I think that's a lot of the problems for those of us who may have claimed to be born again once and claim to

have Christ we can have this balance of mostly spirit and some flesh mostly God's will and some of the big things but in all of my day-to-day life my own will I want to do whatever I want and I have to send this email that responds in anger I have to do this thing that responds in anger so I in I'll go to church on Sunday I'll pray before every meal and all of those things but in those things the spirit in those things God your will God when I need my kid to get into some kind of education program God your will your will your will what should I buy this house your will but when it comes to just being different it's my will when it comes to speaking differently it's just my will and I realized that God was saying you have to be all in you have to be born of water which means you have to be

born of the mindset that says I'm done done I'm bearing this way of life and I realized that I have a great tendency and desire to bring up this old way of life because the flesh doesn't lie still very easily but to be born of water for me even in a present sense is to prove my energy and identity of being born as born in water is to be proof is to be align aligning myself to God's principle that I have died with Christ that my old way of living is dead dead consider myself dead to sin that when I see these things coming up I must realize God I don't consider myself dead to these things I want to be born of water I want to prove my identity as being born of this water but there's no glamour in just dying and I think for some of us I know for sometimes in my life I know this death to self

and taking up my cross it was the command of Christ but I followed it and I tried to follow it in a vacuum I tried just to be born of water where I kept dying dying dying dying dying that I made born of water to be the whole gospel that's not the whole gospel dying to self is not all of it Romans chapter 6 says that we have been united in the likeness of his death so that we may be also in the likeness of his resurrection Romans 6 verse 5 there is no death that God asks us to do without us for him promising and an additional resurrection as well and accompanying resurrection as well and so when I am thinking only of dying to self when I have thought only of dying to self I realize that I am not following the teachings of Jesus completely I'm teaching the teachings of Jesus only some of

the way that the teachings of Jesus says you must be born of water that means your identity must be fundamentally defined as I am dead the way I used to live my life me wanting to do my own will is dead not sedated not shackled up with with you know handcuffs dead we're going to consider him dead but not only that I'm also born of the spirit I'm born of God's spirit dwelling in me and here again I want to encourage even the children that you can be born again you can be born again so where you have a complete rejection of the way you used to live or the way you wanted to live or the way you find yourself living that is not according to scripture when God tells you to obey your parents or whatever it is you can be born again right now it is something that happens in the heart where you say

God I'm going to consider my that part of me that all those things about me that wanted to do my own thing I'm going to consider myself dead to that anymore it's like a dead animal it's like dead there's nothing like

in life about it but I'm also going to consider myself alive to you which means I'm going to ask your Holy Spirit to come upon me and this is to where I have realized the Holy Spirit differently than I used to understand him before not because I wasn't taught it right but because I've listened to many other things in addition to what was in God's word but I'm starting to see one of the I want to give you one mark of you understanding how the Holy Spirit can you can recognize the Holy Spirit and present in you and how you can recognize whether you are being born of the Spirit

and this is something that has become a real life changer for me so not only am I dead I must be born of the Spirit and Romans chapter 5 verse 5 is that verse for me that has been such a beautiful definition of what I any child I don't know what I don't care what age you are can always use this verse to understand whether you are born of the Spirit hope does not disappoint and that here's where it comes because the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us that's it the proof that you have the Holy Spirit is not that you love God but that you have the love of God over you and so for me that means I'd have the Holy Spirit I can invite the Holy Spirit to be present in me by always recognizing and remembering that God loves me this is

probably one of the first things you heard when you were four or five but this is the most beautiful truth this is the essence of Christianity for me is that God loves me it doesn't get more complicated than that it doesn't have to get more complicated than that I believe that I can live a beautiful life if I live my whole life in response to just this one truth that God loves me it is not even my love for God because that can be so broken it is the love of God it's God's love not my love and that is what the Holy Spirit wants to put upon you the Holy Spirit wants to keep rebaptizing you rebirthing that knowledge and that understanding that God loves you and this is a this is a truth that must become more and more beautiful over time that it is the love of God that is something that is so

enjoyable for me to be and I think of it like a waterfall I think of it as a river that I just need to get into that river I don't have to do a lot of things I just have to stay in there it'll wash over me it'll come through me I don't even have to start running in the river I don't try swimming in the river the river will just flow through me this is the love of God you can be sitting at work you can be driving to work you can be anywhere you can be going to sleep and you can have the river flowing at you through you what it's not your love for God it's God's love for you it can keep hitting you day in and day out and I find that God is telling me often just keep telling reminding yourself often that I love you just listen to my voice telling you whenever I'm warned you when you say God

speak to me he's telling me this I love you I love you let it be like the river why don't you why don't we all want to jump into this river why don't we all want to stay in this river the Christian life has become so much more complicated that we've made it about so many other things it is not that complicated it was simple about just getting into the river of God's love that was the Holy Spirit sent to baptize us into the love of God God will change us over time God will do all kinds of things through us over time but fun foundationally our identity is that I've got the love of God in me and children you can get that too you can go to sleep every night telling yourself God loves me that's going to be my identity why am I going to obey my parents because God loves me why am I going to do

things differently why am I going to be kind to my brothers and sisters because God loves me that's it I've got the love of God we know how much favor children get who are children of some big authority I mean the prime minister's children or the president's children or the head of the army we know how much favor they get in government circles they just people serve them people open doors for them because they're

the children of important people and that's what I have realized that I belittle God when I don't have that sense of great privilege because God is telling me you're my child you are a son and daughter your sons and daughters of great privilege we walk around with that sense of confidence and authority against the devil because we are children of God and we're not affected by

what other people say about us because we're children of God not because the bible tells me because it's commanded for me you know that too but it's because foundationally I'm a child of God and I'm whenever I hear people say bad things about me that the trick or the the path for me is to go back into the river of God which God washes over me telling me he loves me and I let him wash over me enough that I forget about what they have told about me because the love of God is greater we have to be born of that spirit God is saying get rid be done be dead with this life which says you must do whatever you want and be born be baptized be completely immersed in the spirit which tells you most of all first of all that he loves you the Holy Spirit is not an experience the Holy Spirit is not a

particular gift the Holy Spirit is the love of God that must wash over me first of all that is why it's available to children that is why it's available to you of any age you can be born you can have the Holy Spirit residing in you today because you listen to the voice of God which tells you he loves you he loves you he loves you when you're when your friends are bullying you when you're when people are telling you you're not good enough this is the person who's born again the person who chooses to listen to the voice of God who's telling you but I love you I love you I am God and I love you this is what it means to be born of the spirit and I you know we saw children you know we know how children are born into the world we know the first the first thing the baby must do and the baby must

breathe if a baby doesn't breathe we don't have life we have what's called a stillborn baby and that is what I've I found about my own life and about other people's lives who just believe in death to self who just believe in taking up the cross every day and trying to kill that life which is I want to be buried with Christ we end up having stillborn babies but are not crying out and not breathing in and I see that the love of God is the oxygen that us as infants must breathe in I talked about it being a river I also see it being that oxygen if you talk about being born again when a baby is first born again the first thing the baby must do in order to have life is it must have oxygen is this the oxygen that is fueling your life if we didn't have oxygen in this world we would die all of us

every single one of us no matter what the state of our constitution was we all need oxygen to live in the spiritual realm you our spiritual lives will die quickly if we don't breathe in the oxygen of the love of God not that you love God know that God loves you we must breathe it in all the time God loves me God loves me this is what sustains our spiritual lives is God loves me just as an infant cries out and naturally takes in oxygen so we too who are born again must naturally in the new spiritual realm take in the love of God no matter what my dad said about me no matter what my father said about me no matter what my friends say about me no matter what my co-workers say about me I must breathe in because I am born again I must breathe in the love of God every moment of every day and God

was telling showing me how far I am from reflecting this born again lifestyle I don't question whether I'm going to heaven or hell my point of this is not to tell you to question whether you're going to heaven or hell not at all I want us to truly act and behave like born again people people who have truly had this new birth experience where we're dead to that old life and we're breathing in oxygen the oxygen of God's love through the Holy Spirit telling me how much he loves me telling me how much he loves me maybe some of us have gone astray maybe some of us have forgotten what the the essence of our identity was supposed

to be maybe we have made it something exalted like loving God maybe we've made it something exalted like working for God let us put those to death too let us breathe in

the only oxygen that really exists which is the love of God which is God's love for you infinitely offered to you without a price breathe it in respond to that email breathing it in respond to our spouses breathing it in then we will make a difference in our daily lives not by saying oh the this verse tells me this I'm going to grit my teeth and obey no we must take a whiff of oxygen we must breathe in the love of God we must take five minutes maybe go somewhere secluded and breathe in the love of God and calm down and responding in anger and breathing God you love me how does a child of God who is so loved by the God the creator of the universe how does he respond to this email how does a child of God who has just sinned respond based on God's word how does a child of God treat the

promises of God when God tells me to come boldly to throne to God's throne for mercy and I've just sinned what must I do I must breathe in the oxygen of God's love for me even at that time even when I've sinned even when I've fallen even when I've not done the things I should do so even if I disobey my parents even if I don't do the right thing yes we didn't breathe in oxygen what must we do start breathing oxygen that's all that's simple I don't have to do penance I don't have to do six months of sitting in the back of the church and sitting and sitting by myself no I just have to breathe in the oxygen of God's love he's finished work on the cross for me and I can have justification with God as if he looked at me as if I've never sinned I can have that again because I breathe in God's

love for me I put on the robe of justification which means I've never sinned because of God's love for me this is what it means to be having God's love over me family of God we we must become natural children in the sense we must become it must become our identity to breathe in the love of God so many of our sins and our addictions and our habits are really a failure for us to breathe in the love of God like we should I know that that is so much of what makes us healthy people to know that we are loved even in the human sense children who are loved perform so much better in the spiritual sense it's the same too we don't perform well spiritually we're not able to act well spiritually not because we're not good enough not because we're really bad people no because we don't realize how much

we are loved it's got not very little to do with you it's got everything to do with God's love that is like a river flowing towards you you just have to say I'm going to stay in this and the devil and your friends and all these people will try and get you to go on this desert land but we're mad if we do that we've lost our senses God says come to your senses come and drink of me that you may never thirst again come into the river just let it flow over you breathe it in it's just that natural thing that babies do you don't have to take a course babies don't take a course on how to breathe it in they just breathe it in we must just breathe it in because he says it in his word that it's there over you we must breathe it in all the time and then we grow and we become mature as people

two-year-old five-year-olds fifteen-year-olds having breathed in the love of God all our lives then we're really children and then we can become sons in the household of God and one other verse that I wanted to show you also in that regard of what it means to be born again is in one peter none of this are things that you have not heard already this is just a reminder that we must desire therefore putting aside all malice and all guile and hypocrisy one peter two one and envy and all slander verse two like newborn babes this is the other thing a newborn babe does is love for the pure milk of the word long for the I'm sorry long for the pure milk of the word by it you may grow in respect to salvation that is the other thing newborn babies quickly cry for they breathe in oxygen so the very

first thing we must do is always be breathing in the oxygen of God's love but oxygen is not all that we need we also need milk and we need to drink in the milk and God and Peter is crystal clear long for the pure milk of the word this is what people who are born again have a natural desire for because I am dead whose I am dead this this part of me that says I must do my own thing is dead I'm now a newborn baby washing in the love of God but now I don't know what I ought to do I'm done with my will God what must I do how must I live my life you if you if you're dead if your will is dead God I don't know what to do and there'll come a hunger this comes the thirst God I want to know what you want me to do God how do you want me to act with respect to my eyes I want to put to death this part

of me that says I must let my eyes go wherever it wants okay I put that to death how should my eyes be though long for the pure milk of the word and the word will show you what to fix your eyes on what to set your eyes on what to set your hopes on God I'm done speaking words of anger towards my spouse and my brothers and sisters and co-workers I'm dead to that okay you're dead but how should I live with the love of God you hunger for the pure word of God's word which tells you how to do it otherwise we're like people without nourishment otherwise we're like children not knowing how to grow because we don't have food that we're getting into us and this is something that must slowly grow in us and it's not something for me that happened overnight for sure but and I'm not talking about a few

things I must make clear it's not I'm not talking about the amount of time we must spend in God's word we don't eat all the time it doesn't mean that we have to spend all our time in God's word but it is a way of thinking it's an identity that again I'm talking about in our deepest part of us God I am a person who cannot move forward who cannot grow in this Christian life if I don't have food and it's been a while since I've had food so I want food today God when I read your Bible my Bible I want food to help me I don't want food to give to other people in the next Wednesday meeting I want food to help me grow a little bit to show me how I ought to live God this is for me I want this food for me I am starving it's been a while since I had food from you and God gives us men and women of

God who can speak truth into our lives that's for sure food but God says you must also know that this is the source of all real food so you too can look at it and say God I want food today I just want something I want a little verse to take with me and if I don't get something in the time that I have to go I'll remember verses that you've said in the past and I'll keep reminding myself of it and if there's nothing else that I get from God's word today in the 10 minutes that I've read something nothing came to me and I have to go to work now I will remind myself of the love of God because that is for sure and I'll make that the constant oxygen I breathe and I'll whenever I get a chance get a chance to read God's word to say God how must I live not should I take this job not should I take

this house not should I do these things yes we can ask God for this too but in the areas of sin God in those areas how must I live I have such a strong tongue that keeps on lashing out at my co-workers God how must I live I want to be dead to that way of life but what must how must I speak give me food and this is how born again children act we breathe in God's love and we remind ourselves and we eat so to speak for our spiritual beings God's word over our lives and as we approach God's word I want to give you a little picture that has helped me understand how I must approach God's word and I want to use the the analogy of Romeo and Juliet most of you I don't know if you know Romeo and Juliet is a book was a story written by Shakespeare is a play written by Shakespeare many many hundreds

of years ago it's a story about a man and a woman who loved one another and it's written by this man called Shakespeare now we have a lot of us have read Romeo and Juliet a lot of us had to read it for

school or something like that in high school I had to read Romeo and Juliet a very basic love story if you haven't read it but when I was in I think it was in eighth or ninth grade I had to study Romeo and Juliet I read it and I read some other Shakespeare's words and I tried to copy it I tried to steal Shakespeare's words and use it in my own writings my own essays at school I try to use a little bit of Shakespeare you know because Shakespeare is very good in English and I'm not so I'll steal his words and I'll use his words but that's how I was as an eighth grader studying Romeo and

Juliet but you know you go to college and you find out that in college there are people in university who are writing PhD papers on Romeo and Juliet and are studying Shakespeare's words and driving down to the core language or I don't know what else into the culture of that time and describing the context and all kinds of minute details about Romeo and Juliet but then you have somebody like Juliet who would read Romeo and Juliet how would Juliet read Romeo and Juliet would she be trying to copy all the words and saying I want to impress everybody how I write like Shakespeare no would she like right like to analyze all the writing styles and the details of it no she reads Romeo and Juliet and she is reminded of Romeo and she's reminded of Romeo's love for her and she is nourished and she

leaves feeling so happy because she has read about Romeo in the same way there's God's word and there's us we can go as eighth graders who try to memorize a verse or two of scripture and try to copy it in our emails to others or try to preach it to others and this and that mostly to impress other people or we can be like PhD students who want to go back to the Hebrew and the Greek and I analyze deep words about what this word means and what that word means and what the context in Israel two and two thousand years ago and I must go to Israel to visit because I really need to find out what exactly Jesus must have what the water tasted was when Jesus was there all kinds of ridiculous things like that or I can be like somebody who is reading about her bridegroom and about the God who loves

him so deeply as he reads or she reads the commands of scripture and the promises of scripture and she has a heart and we can have a heart like the heart of Juliet has when she reads Romeo and Juliet a heart that says I want to discover Romeo in this I'm reminded again of Romeo and his great love for me I have to tell myself oftentimes when I read the commands in scripture that I find difficult that it is not just God who's telling me but the God that is love that is telling me it has made a difference for me to read don't lust with your eyes because you're committing adultery but to know that this is infinite love telling me this this is the one who loves me so deeply it's not this river of love flowing at me loves me so deeply and he says me who is love is telling you watch what your

eyes are doing it's not a command anymore it's love telling me it's love giving me all of these things that are in God's word and we must keep reminding ourselves that this is God's letter of his great love for us we don't have to make it more complicated than being birthed into his great love for us and we can get things complicated by making it about so many other things I pray that God will protect me and all of us from the tragedy of Samuel who started out hearing from God at such a young age was heard God's word to so clearly about how to raise children and then at the end of his life didn't raise his own children well in our way I hope that we may have heard the story the truth about being born again when we were 8 10 12 whatever it is but then now 20 years later 10 years later God

is saying you don't act like you're born again anymore you still love your old dead body you claimed once it was dead but you still keep holding it and loving the way that smells now and all of that stuff the things you used to be ashamed of the things whose outcome is death let's be born of water where we say God once again I want to be dead to those things God about once again I want to be born of the spirit which is his

unfailing infinite love for me let it wash over me no matter how many times I fall let the love of God wash over me through all my feelings through all my troubles through all my temptations let the love of God flow over me and God let me read your word as often as I can knowing that this is somebody who loves me infinitely who's telling me how to live life let's bow

our heads in prayer father I thank you for the great honor and the privilege it is to speak from this pulpit a place where you are mightily present Lord and you have spoken so many words of truth I bow and I worship you Lord Jesus I pray that these words may be true in my own life that I may really grab a hold of being born again that I may really show that I'm of a different sort that I've had a new birth experience that my way of doing things is dead that I'm fully alive to your love over me Lord that I will crave and desire the pure milk of your word give us all grace Lord Jesus as the days are coming to a close and we will see you soon Lord Jesus help us to make our garments ready and live in readiness that we may be ready for you Lord as born again creatures ready for heaven ready to

live in this new earth and new heaven that you've created for us in Jesus name amen

Video: https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/_dl3_N1pV58.mp4

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