

# The Three Baptisms That Jesus Spoke Of

by Zac Poonen

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*Zac Poonen discusses the three essential baptisms Jesus spoke of, emphasizing the importance of genuine discipleship and repentance in the Christian life.*

**Duration:** 1:01:23

**Scripture:** Matthew 28:19, Acts 19:4-5, Romans 8:17-18, Romans 8:28, Hebrews 12:1-2

**Topics:** "Spiritual Baptism", "Christian Suffering"

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## Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of three baptisms mentioned by the Lord Jesus. The first baptism is in water, representing repentance and faith, the second is the baptism of the Holy Spirit for present empowerment, and the third is the baptism of suffering to prepare for reigning with Christ in the future. It highlights the need to be willing to suffer shame and endure hardships for the sake of following Jesus, as suffering is a crucial part of the Christian journey towards glory and victory.

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## Transcript

I want to speak today about three baptisms that the Lord Jesus spoke about. The first of these is what is mentioned in Matthew's Gospel, chapter 28, where before he was ascended up to heaven, before he ascended, he said, these are the last words, and you can expect that someone who is just about to leave would say something very, very important in his last few words. And his burden was, verse 19, he told his apostles to go everywhere and make disciples in every nation and baptize them in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit and teach them to do all that I commanded you.

So, as far as Jesus was concerned, if you see the order there, he said, you've got to make disciples and then baptize them. In other words, right at the beginning, you have to tell them what it means to be a disciple of Jesus. A disciple is a learner and a follower.

So, if a man doesn't want to learn from Jesus and follow him, don't baptize him. Far too many people have been baptized who have absolutely no desire to learn from Jesus or to follow him. They live for themselves and for money and the world before they were converted, and they live for themselves and for money and the world after they are converted, except they've got a little bit of religious whitewash now.

Now, Jesus is not interested in such people. In fact, they are a hindrance to his kingdom. What Jesus said was going to every part of every nation and make disciples.

And that's the basis on which we started this church more than 29 years ago, to make clear to people what discipleship meant, which was not preached much. Even today, it's not preached much. But through the years, what has happened is that any work of God gets diluted through the years.

A person wants to be a disciple and comes to the church. And, of course, his wife comes along. His wife may have no interest in being a disciple.

And then his children come along. The children grow up. They may have no interest in being disciples.

And then the person's brother comes along and sister comes along and relatives come along and they're all welcome. Most of them may have no interest in being disciples. So you see what happens to a church over a period of 20-25 years is it may have started out with a real desire to make disciples.

And the people who started out may have been disciples. But over a period of time, every single church in the world gets diluted. And that's the state of affairs in every single denomination and every single church under the sun except something that's starting newly.

Give it 25 years and it'll be just like everything else. But Jesus said that you should never baptize anyone who's not a disciple, who's not serious about discipleship. And through the years, you know, we can make mistakes.

I know I've baptized people who later on I discovered they were not disciples at all. But at least I have a clear conscience that I made the claims of discipleship clear to people. I mean, if they fooled me, that's fine.

They can't fool God. I always say I'm like a person at one of these security checkpoints and by mistake I may lift the bar and let the vehicle through. But there's another security checkpoint further up the line which God mans and you'll never get through that even if you fool the first security checkpoint.

So it's very important to remember how important Jesus, the stress that Jesus placed on those who are disciples must be baptized. And you remember in Matthew's Gospel chapter 3 that John the Baptist, whose baptism was not the same as Christian baptism. In fact, those who took John's baptism had to take Christian baptism again.

We read that in Acts 19. John's baptism was not a baptism of belief in the Lord Jesus Christ. It was only a baptism of repentance.

It was half. The baptism Jesus commanded was the full thing. Repentance plus faith.

But John the Baptist didn't say to people do you believe in the Lord Jesus Christ? No. Today when we baptize people we ask that second question. That's what completes it in Christian baptism.

But John the Baptist prepared the way for Christian baptism by bringing his baptism which was half of Christian baptism which is a baptism of repentance. And in Matthew chapter 3 we read that John was baptizing people there and when a lot of Pharisees and Sadducees, verse 7, Matthew 3, 7 showed up to be baptized and he said to them, you brood of snakes. It's really lovely to read it in the Message Bible.

What are you trying to do slithering down here to the river? Snakes slithering down into the river. Do you think a little water on your snake skins is going to make any difference to you? No. And don't think you can pull rank by claiming Abraham as a father.

A little water on a snake skin doesn't change it. And that's what John the Baptist was telling these people. You think a little water on your snake skins is going to change you? No, it won't.

It's got to be a radical change of heart. He says, bring forth fruits that are in keeping with repentance. Verse 8. And don't say that so-and-so was my earthly father, so-and-so is my spiritual father.

There are a lot of people who glory in being connected with CFC. It counts absolutely zero with God. These are like people who say, Abraham is our father.

We are connected with brother so-and-so. It counts for zero with God because God sees each person's heart. And your connection with Abraham or with the greatest man of God alive makes no difference to God.

You've got to have a connection with Jesus yourself. That's what John the Baptist said. He says, what counts is your life.

And if you don't repent, it's no use. I'm baptizing you here in the river for turning from your old life. Verse 11.

For a kingdom life. So baptism is a turning. And that's what's... You know, it's a change of mind.

It's like the Indian translations have. It's a turning around of your mind. That's what baptism is.

Repentance is that I've finished with my old life. So baptism is actually a testimony about the past and a confession that I want to live different in the future. See, Romans chapter 6. It's very important for us to understand because many Christians, for them baptism is a ritual.

And I think there are a lot of people baptized in CFC who haven't really changed much in their life even after baptism. Whereas actually, you know, the difference between before baptism and after baptism should be the difference between being dead and alive. The Bible says we were dead in our sins.

We were made alive in Christ. A new birth, a real new birth is something that makes a person as different from his old way of life as a living person is different from a dead person. You see, a dead person just gets worse and worse and worse and worse and worse over the period of time.

First he begins to stink and the stink gets worse and worse and then the body begins to crumble and it becomes dust and finally even the bones become dust and everything disappears. Whereas a newborn baby who's got life is quite the opposite. It's going the other direction.

Every day, every month, every year things are getting better and better and better to spiritual growth and greater maturity and everything. So this should be the difference between being born again and before one is born again. And baptism is a testimony that I've come to that place where I've finished with the past, I'm starting anew.

So it says in Romans chapter 6 and verse 4 Therefore we've been buried 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. So you know there's a lot of difference between death and resurrection. And in baptism when you're being put into the water you're testifying to the old life being buried and when you come out of the water you're testifying, I'm a brand new person just like Jesus came out of the grave.

It's a break with the old life and a completely new beginning. And you know we have often said baptism is a symbol. It's a symbol.

Yeah, in one sense it is. But the interesting thing is nowhere in the Bible does it say baptism is a symbol. You can search and search and search the New Testament.

It doesn't talk about that. And they took baptism as not just a symbol but something real. It was a very real event where a person was finishing with his old life and starting with a new life.

That's why in the early days people got baptized as soon as they were converted. You remember the story of the Philippian jailer? He got converted at midnight in the jail when Paul was there in jail and there was an earthquake and he got converted and his family got converted. He took Paul home and Silas home and they preached the gospel there in the middle of the night, 2 o'clock in the morning.

They were listening to the gospel. He woke them all up and they heard the gospel and by 6 o'clock in the morning they were all baptized. Think of that.

That is pretty quick. They didn't even wait to gather the church. I mean, today we feel that the church must come.

Not necessarily. You can baptize a person all alone in his room. In his house.

And they did it immediately because it was a testimony. Have you really finished with your old life? Why do we have to delay so much today? Because we have such a lot of wishy-washy Christianity where you don't know the difference between those who are really born again and disciples of Jesus and those who are just coming along for the fun of it or because their parents were in it or some relative is in it or something like that. It's like these roads where you have a yellow line.

Clear yellow line. And sometimes they have these partitions between the two lanes and that's to show traffic going this way is this side and traffic going this way is this side. But over a period of time those yellow lines get worn out and erased and you can't see the difference anymore.

And that's somewhat of the state of Christianity today. In the olden days, the line was very clear. Those that are going towards the devil go that way.

Those that are going towards God go this way. And there's a very clear demarcation. In fact, Abraham said there's such a great divide between the two that you can't even cross from here to the other.

Once you've decided finally. But over the period of time, the devil succeeded in erasing that line and so you have I'll tell you in every single denomination I've gone to, every church I've gone to including ours it's very difficult sometimes to say who is born again and who is not. The lines have been so erased that everybody uses the same words.

They but I mean today you have people who claim they are born again who won't talk to somebody I can't understand that. Or who got a grudge in their heart or who take somebody to court they all claim they are born again. This is ridiculous.

These are all children of the devil. 100%. I mean, how can you be a child of God and have a grudge against somebody? I can't believe that.

You've got to be a child of the devil to do that. God doesn't have a grudge against anyone. Huh? Devil's got lots of that in his heart.

Because of this there's never been a radical repentance. And I want to say that to many of you sitting here. Maybe there was a time 20 years ago when you were saved and probably today you're lost.

Because a lot of people think that once you're saved you can never be lost. I don't believe that. In fact, the Bible says in Revelation chapter 3 that there's a possibility that our name can be erased from the book of life.

Jesus himself said that. You read that. I mean, was the Lord just trying to threaten people? So, it's how does that happen? How does a person's name get erased from the book of life? I'll just mention that verse to you in case you don't know where it is.

It's in Revelation chapter 3 and verse 5. If you overcome I will not erase your name from the book of life. Now, that's not an empty threat. Now, the devil says, oh, no, no, no, no.

That will never happen. That's exactly what he told Eve. When God said to Adam and Eve that if you eat of that tree you'll surely die.

Satan said, oh, no, no, no, no. Don't you believe that. That is the first lie recorded in the Bible.

Oh, don't believe what God says. That's not so serious. It's exactly the same thing he says today.

Jesus says, if you overcome, Revelation 3, 5, I will not erase his name from the book of life, otherwise your name will be erased. And the devil says, oh, no, no, no, no. Don't you believe all that.

God is a God of love. And do you know the number of so-called Christians who believe that their name will never be erased from the book of life. They just couldn't care less.

It's amazing. I'm really surprised at the number of people who just don't believe scripture. Jesus said, heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

They will not. So that's why I say, maybe you were converted genuinely 20 years ago, but probably you're lost today because you've gone back to the world and you started getting grudges in your heart and you don't forgive somebody and you've got a bitterness against somebody in the church and you won't talk to someone, you won't visit someone. Boy, I don't believe you're saved today.

You're lost. Completely lost. And I would say to you, who were converted 20 years ago, repent.

Repent today. A little water on your snake skins is not going to change you. God looks at the heart.

And the Bible says, if you endure unto the end, you'll be saved. That's the gospel preached throughout the New Testament, and we're not ashamed to preach it. So, why do things happen like this? Why do people fall away like this? Why do we need verses like, for example, Hebrews chapter 6? Let me read this.

Hebrews chapter 6. Here it speaks in verse 4 about people who've been enlightened, who've tasted the heavenly gift, that's, the heavenly gift is forgiveness, who've been made partakers of the Holy Spirit. That means they're baptized in the Holy Spirit. Real, fine Christians.

And tasted the good word of God, verse 5, and tasted the supernatural powers of the future age. That means they've experienced some miracles from God in their life. And then, after all this, verse 6, they fall away.

Now, some people believe it's impossible to fall away. Well, I suppose if you don't believe the Bible, you can't believe anything. I believe the Bible.

That's the only difference between me and them. And it's impossible, because when they fall away like that, and go right back to the world which crucified Christ, and start loving a world which crucified Christ, they themselves, verse 6, last part, are crucifying Christ again. Because, it says it's impossible to renew them again to repentance.

You know, some people can go so far that it's impossible to renew them to repentance. But, before you get that far, it's possible to repent again, and say, Lord, I'm not what I was 20 years ago. I had a sensitive conscience 20 years ago, or 5 years ago, or 2 years ago.

But, I seem to have slipped up. I've just allowed the spirit of the world to come right into me, and repentance is no longer part of my life. Do you know the greatest need in Christian preaching today is the message of repentance? The greatest need for Christians is repentance.

Turning from sin. The last messages that Jesus preached to 7 churches, to 5 of them that had sin in their life, He said, repent. Revelation chapter 2 and chapter 3. Repent, repent, repent, repent.

And, I'll never get tired of preaching it, because sometimes I feel, in many places I go, I'm a lone voice preaching against sin, preaching against worldliness, preaching against the love of money, preaching against bitterness, preaching against, you know, anger, and sexual lust, and telling lies. Hardly anybody preaches on these things today. But, I'm going to continue, till the Lord comes.

Preaching the same old things which are found in the Bible. Because, then nobody's blood will be on my hands. I can't save everybody, but if they get lost at the judgment seat of Christ, they will not turn around to me and say, Brother Zach, you never told me the truth.

I'll say, I certainly did. You heard it, you had no interest in obeying it, that's another thing. But, you heard it from me, alright.

And, you heard it many, many times. I want to say, sin is a terrible thing. I want to ask you, how many of you believe that getting angry is worse than getting AIDS? I think that probably less than 1% of believers who believe that getting angry is worse than getting AIDS.

I'll tell you why it's worse. I know people who have AIDS and who got converted and are born again and who are going to Heaven. Their AIDS is not cured.

I mean, they got it in their unconverted days and they were born again. After that, they repented of their sin. But, they die of AIDS and go to Heaven.

But, I tell you, Jesus said in Matthew chapter 5 verse 22 onwards that if a man loses his temper and he doesn't get a control of his temper, he can go to Hell. You read that. It's in Matthew 5 verse 22.

If a man has got angry with his brother and he says to his brother, you fool or you empty head, you're in danger of Hell fire. No person with AIDS can go to Hell because of AIDS. But, a person with anger can go

to Hell according to the words of Jesus.

That's another word that's not preached much today. I remember a middle-aged man coming up to me and saying to me, Brother Zach, he's been a believer for years. He said, I never knew till I came and heard you that getting angry was a sin.

How in the world? Which church was he? Was he going to a mosque or a temple or something? How in the world could he sit in a Christian church all his life and never hear that which is written in Matthew chapter 5? I mean, even if you go to the New Testament and you read a chapter on a day, on the 5th day, you'll reach it. You don't have to be a believer for a long time to know that anger is a sin. People just don't think about it.

Now, how do you know that AIDS is such a terrible disease? You know how I know it? Because it's all in the papers. It's in the magazines. There's so much publicity given to it.

They put posters up about AIDS and AIDS and AIDS. Otherwise, I wouldn't have known it. And you wouldn't have known it either.

But we don't have so many posters and articles and magazines on anger. If we did, we'd be a little more careful. To repent of everything.

I mean, if you're serious about repentance, if you're serious about following Jesus and being a disciple, I would say to you, take some time to read through Matthew chapter 5, 6 and 7 and say, Lord, my baptism in water testifies that I've finished with my old life, the sins described in these chapters, and I'm going to live a new life the way it's described in these chapters. I mean, that's the beginning. I would recommend it to you.

I've done it myself. I would never preach what I have not done myself. And I want to say to you, if you want to really stand on your water baptism, as the first baptism Jesus said you must take, then take this seriously.

Now I want to go to the second baptism. And that is in Acts chapter 1. Jesus spoke about his second baptism in Acts chapter 1 verse 5, which is also essential. The first one deals with our past.

It's a testimony to the past. I've finished with the past way of life, living for myself, living for the world, and spending all my time with my worldly friends. My friends are now God's people.

That's a mark of a man who's baptized. He's finished with his old life. The Bible says Noah's flood was a picture of baptism in 1 Peter 3. When Noah came out of that flood, do you know all his old friends had gone? It was new friends.

And it was his family to begin with. And I believe that that's what happens in baptism. When we come out of the... It's a flood when you get into baptism.

You come out, your old friends are gone. Mine were gone. I got new friends.

I got a new family. I hope you have. Acts chapter 1 and verse 5, Jesus said, Not many days from now you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.

See, baptism, the word baptism just means immersion. You can be immersed by being... There are two ways to get immersed. One is to be dipped under water, and the other is to stand under a waterfall.

If you stand under a mighty waterfall, you just get as drenched as if you're dipped in water. That's the other way to get immersed. So what Jesus meant was you're going to be immersed with the Holy Spirit.

And Jesus pictured that in John chapter 7 like a river. The Holy Spirit's pictured in the Bible like a river. Like a river of water, even in the Old Testament.

When the rock was smitten, the waters began to flow like a river. It was a river that flowed from the rock because there were two million people waiting to drink. It wasn't just a little trickle.

I believe it was many rivers that flowed out of that rock that Moses smote. And it is a picture of Christ being smitten and the Holy Spirit being flowing out from Christ. And even in Revelation chapter 22, we read about this river flowing from the throne of God.

A picture of the Holy Spirit. So, think of this. How high heaven is and from the throne of God, a river flowing down to earth.

What a mighty waterfall that is. Boy, I'd like to get underneath that and be immersed, drenched, baptized, and live there all my life. Because it's always flowing.

You don't have to pray, Lord, send the river. Oh, it's already started flowing from the day of Pentecost onwards. It's been flowing, flowing from heaven to the earth.

Mighty power of the Holy Spirit. And, you know, there was such an important work that Jesus wanted his apostles to do. Because the whole world, 95% of the world, hadn't heard that Christ died for their sins.

Christ rose from the dead to the two most amazing facts in human history. Christ died for the sins of the world and Christ rose from the dead. Nobody's ever done these two things in any religion in anywhere in the world.

I always say Christianity does not teach be good and all that type of stuff. That's a superstructure. Christianity rests on two foundations which are unique and make it different from all the other religions in the world.

That Christ died for the sins of the world, Christ rose up from the dead. But 95% of the world didn't know it. And Jesus commissioned 11 people and said, you fellas have got to go and preach to the whole world this wonderful truth and tell them to turn from their sin and receive the Holy Spirit.

And they, and with this very important message where people were dying every day to receive, Jesus then tells his disciples, but don't go yet. Because if you go in your present condition, even though you're very sincere, even though you've given up your jobs, and I know you're very wholehearted, you will never succeed. You will be an absolute failure because you can't do this job in your own strength.

You need to be immersed with the Holy Spirit's power. Otherwise, you'll get tired. One of the best illustrations today of the Holy Spirit's power is electricity.

Imagine if I had to keep turning this fan with my hand. Boy, I'd get tired. You can do it for a little while, but you get tired.

You give up. Then you try the other hand. Then both hands get tired.

Then what do you do? This is a picture of living, trying to live the Christian life without the power of the Holy Spirit. Trying to serve God without the power of the Holy Spirit. Yeah, you can try it.

Try turning this fan. Let's see how long you can go. That's about how long you can go in your Christian life.

But once the electricity comes, you don't have to turn it. It just flows in and you can have it running 24 hours, 2 days, 3 days, 4 days. It just goes on and on and on.

What a difference that is to be baptized and immersed in the Holy Spirit. It makes such a tremendous difference in your life. And I'm absolutely convinced, absolutely, that just like most Christians haven't understood repentance, most Christians have not had a genuine, mighty experience of the fullness and the baptism in the Holy Spirit.

Because their life wouldn't be like this. It's impossible. Now, what do you say if in your house the 100 watt bulb suddenly becomes like a 0 watt bulb? Have you seen that sometimes? In Bangalore, such miracles happen? How does that happen? Nothing wrong with the bulb.

You say, I mean, even a dumb school student will say, well, the voltage has gone down. It's not 220 volts right now. That's it.

And when I see some Christians who, when they look at their lives and they're supposed to be 10,000 watts and they're like a 0 watt bulb coming along to the meeting, most of the time grumpy and sour and can't get along with somebody and no desire to witness for Christ, just to live for the world, I'd say something is wrong. This light is on its way out. In a little while, it'll really be 0. Well, it's not meant to be like that.

Think of the 220 volts of power coming in, the light burning all the time. It's amazing. And that's how our Christian life should be.

I know my Christian life was not like that when I first got converted. For 16 years of my life, my life was up and down. Like you read in physics about the sine wave, you know, up and down and up and down and up and down and up and down forever.

That's the experience of lots of Christians. That was my experience too. Till I understood what it is to be filled with the Holy Spirit, not just once, but all the time.

And I said, Lord, I never want to be in a bad mood any time of the day or night. 365 days of the year. I always want to be a happy person.

Because God is my Father, the Spirit's my Helper, Jesus my Savior. My past sins are all blotted out and it's never going to be mentioned again. Satan's been defeated on the cross and he's crushed under my feet.

And everything that happens in the world is working for my good. Why shouldn't I be happy? Why should I be miserable? I can't think of a single reason. I mean, you can give 10,000 reasons.

I can't even think of a single one that should make me miserable. Everything just makes me happy. But that could only be true.

I mean, you can hear these things and it won't change you till the Holy Spirit makes it reality. You know, I can explain all the theory of electricity on a blackboard here and give you a thick book on electricity and you still may not have electricity in your house. You can understand all that.

You can explain it. You can be a teacher in electricity and not have electricity in your house. That's the condition of a lot of Christians.

They understand so much and particularly you come to a church like this where there's so much teaching. Boy, your head can become big and big and big like these small children with big heads. It's actually hydrocephalus.

There's a lot of water. That's all. They don't live long.

And that's how a lot of Christians are. So much knowledge. The body this size and the head so big.

That's not God's will. We don't need more knowledge. I believe we got plenty of it already.

What we need is power. The mighty power of the Holy Spirit. So Jesus told these apostles, don't even try to go out and do what I'm telling you to do.

Wait. Wait till you're filled with the Holy Spirit and I tell you, you won't be the same again. Peter, you won't be scared of servant women after that.

You'll be standing up before high priests, not afraid to tell them the truth. And you won't be any more quarreling as to who's the greatest. Once you're filled with the Holy Spirit, you'll want to be a servant of everybody.

That's it. And you won't be defeated by all these wretched things in your inner life. You'll be an overcomer.

You'll be able to live the life I described in Matthew 5, 6 and 7. If you're filled with the Holy Spirit. And I believe that's the greatest need. And I'm not surprised that because it is the greatest need, the devil has made sure that this is an area where you have maximum confusion today.

First of all, you have all these wild extremes of people who think that being filled with the Holy Spirit is falling down or barking or laughing or getting a tickle down your spine or all types of things, you know, or shivering or bouncing on your knees or praise and worship. You know, when we say, when we have a wonderful time of praise and worship, we say, boy, that's the Holy Spirit. I wish it were.

I'd like to see how it is this afternoon in your relationships with other people and tomorrow and the next day. Then we'll know if it was the Holy Spirit or just emotion. Emotion.

There's tremendous amount of deception today. Don't be fooled by all this emotion. If it is really the Holy Spirit, it's lasting.

If it's emotion, it's temporary. It's not a permanent cure. It's like, you know, I often think that a lot of people who go to church and have a wonderful time for two hours are exactly like the man who goes to a drinking bar because he's got so many problems and so many sorrows.

He sits there with his friends and drinks for two hours and how do you think he feels? He feels on top of the world. He doesn't have a problem in the world. You see him walking outside the bar after he's drunk.

You'd think he's the happiest man in the world. It's true. I was in a charismatic meeting about 30 years ago in Bombay and I'll never get tired of telling this story.

They made me sit on the platform. I don't usually like that, but anyway. You have some advantages.

You see people from there. And I saw everybody. We were standing up and praising the Lord.

There was one man to my left who was just clapping and smiling better than anybody else. I said, boy, that's a spiritual man. I didn't have much discernment those days.

I said, I must meet this fellow after the meeting. He was an elderly man. And I went near him.

Within five feet I could smell the alcohol. He was happy, all right. He wasn't even converted.

But, boy, nobody was more Pentecostal that day or more charismatic than that man. That's why it says, don't be drunk with wine, but be filled with the Holy Spirit. In other words, get the right spirit inside you, not the wrong one.

That's what it means there. Because, you know, that's why in the, you know, it says in Acts chapter 2 when they were filled with the Holy Spirit, people said, hey, these fellows are drunk with your wine. You can imitate that.

You know, if it's only clapping, raising hands, looking happy, whiskey will do it. I'll tell you. I haven't tried it, but I know it'll do it.

I've seen other people who have tried it. But if it's in addition to that, if you want to be patient with your wife and your husband and be a very joyous Christian who is eager to witness for Christ, whiskey won't do that. For that, you need the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit will also make you praise and worship and not just for two hours. That's the difference. Whiskey makes you do it only for a little while.

The Holy Spirit will make you happy 24 hours a day. Like this new phrase now we have, 24-7. Great.

I like that phrase. 24-7. 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Rejoice in the Lord. I mean, if Paul were writing in today's language, he would say Philippians 4-4. Rejoice in the Lord 24-7.

That's exactly what it means. That's the way. In everything, give thanks.

Give thanks 24-7. That's not possible without the Holy Spirit. You can do it for a little while.

Like I said, you can turn the fan for a little while with your hands. That's why Jesus said you must be filled with the Holy Spirit. That's why the Apostle Paul, you know, once when he went to Ephesus, Acts chapter 19, you read there that he went to some people who claimed to be disciples of Jesus Christ.

And I think he went to one of their meetings. There were 12 people in that church. And he sat around in the meeting.

It was boring like most Christian meetings are. And heavy. And the prayers were all sleepy.

And maybe they shed the word and it was all dead. And after the meeting, Paul said, hey fellas, I want to ask you guys a question. Did you people ever get filled with the Holy Spirit? Is it Holy Spirit? We've never heard it.

Ah. I said, I'm not surprised. That's the problem.

There's something missing here. And then they were filled with the Holy Spirit. And what a difference it made.

And I want to say to all of you who've been struggling to turn the fan, there's a better way. Ask for a power connection. And don't give up.

Like you go to the electricity office and say, where's my power connection? And you go the next day and say, where's my power connection? Why not go to God and say, Lord, where's my power connection? I didn't get it. I didn't get it. Lord, you know why God waits? I mean, the electricity people wait for a bribe, but God's not waiting for a bribe.

He's waiting to see whether you're desperate. Whether you really value. You know, God does not give His gifts to people who don't value them.

And that's what He's testing when He waits. Do you really value that? Let me see. And God sees the next day, you're not bothered.

You prayed for it once, nothing happened. You say, okay, I've got other things to do. Go ahead, do the other things.

God sees you're not serious about it. Have you seen people who when the doctors say your child is dying and there's a particular injection you need and it's, I don't know, in some place in Bangalore, it may be available. Can you see how the father goes from medical shop to medical shop to medical shop to medical shop? And he finished the whole day, didn't find it.

Next day he starts, he makes a list of all the medical shops. He's determined to get that injection because he wants to save his child's life. What do you think of a father who goes to one medical shop and comes back, tells his wife, no, I tried, couldn't find it.

He's not serious about his child living. And I don't think any of you fathers would be like that. And I tell you one thing.

You seek God for the power of the Holy Spirit like that father goes around the medical shops in Bangalore to get one injection for his child. I tell you before the week is out, before next Sunday, you'll be filled with the Holy Spirit. I can guarantee it.

But if you're not eager about it, there's a law in Scripture. It's written in Jeremiah 29, verse 13. Jeremiah 29, verse 13.

You will seek me and find me when you search for me with all your heart. Otherwise you won't find me. And that's why those disciples waited, waited, waited, waited, waited.

And I saw a cartoon once. Cartoons sometimes have a very powerful message. It's all these 120 people waiting on the day of Pentecost.

I mean, waiting in the upper room. You know, they had to wait for 10 days before the Holy Spirit came and on the ninth day is the cartoon. One man gets up and says, oh, I've had enough of waiting.

Nothing's gonna happen. Let me go home. And he goes home.

And next morning, all of Jerusalem is in uproar because something happened in that upper room. And he goes back and he says, hey, what happened? Yeah. Spirit of God fell.

So, I wish I'd waited another day. Sometimes we can be so close to an answer and we get tired. Either we don't believe that God will ever give it to us.

Do you know who the Holy Spirit's for? The Holy Spirit's for sinners who are unable to live a holy life. Do you qualify? I qualify. Sinners unable to live a holy life.

I say, Lord, I qualify. Do you qualify? Are you a sinner unable to live a holy life? Holy Spirit's for you, brother, sister. That's the good news.

You can have the power of the Holy Spirit. First of all, God cleanses out your heart from sin with the blood of Jesus Christ. You know, it's like if my little boy came to me with a mug full of muck and rubbish and stones and said, Dad, give me some milk.

What do I do? Pour the milk into that? No. I first clean out the cup. Clean out that mug.

Then what do I do? I don't give him a clean mug. I put something into it. So when we come to Jesus with a dirty heart full of all the rubbish we've accumulated through the years and says, Lord, give me your life.

The first thing he's got to do is clean it out. That's what the blood of Jesus Christ does. And then after that, there must be something more.

There is. He fills it with the Holy Spirit. But that's where God waits to see whether you're serious.

And I feel that I'm absolutely amazed how so many believers are so defeated and defeated and don't seem to be desperate. Have you ever considered fasting for one day? Just three meals. You've eaten thousands of meals.

Have you ever tried skipping two or three meals just to seek God for the power of His Holy Spirit? Because you say, Lord, I'm desperate about this. I want this in my life. That's the thing that prepares us for the present.

If baptism deals with the past, the power of the Holy Spirit is for the present. To make me a witness for Christ. I'll tell you, I've been serving the Lord now for 40 years nearly.

And I'll tell you the thing that's made a difference in my ministry is one thing. The baptism in the Holy Spirit. I would never, never, never be able to preach as I do if it were not for one thing.

The baptism in the Holy Spirit. The Bible says, seek earnestly for the gifts of the Holy Spirit. And I started seeking for the gifts of the Holy Spirit 40 years ago.

How many of you are seeking for the gifts of the Holy Spirit? That God should exercise a gift of the Holy Spirit through you. Maybe not my gift. It won't be my gift.

You'll have your own gift. Whatever it is. But if you're sluggish and lazy and lethargic about seeking for the gifts of the Holy Spirit, I guarantee you, I can give it to you in writing, you'll never get anything.

You'll live on earth, wasting your life and you'll go to heaven and discover that God wanted to use you as a mighty instrument in His hand but you never sought Him earnestly. You were more interested in 101 things in the world. One of the wonderful things I found in my life when I decided more than 40 years ago to seek God's kingdom only first in my life.

What do you think happened to all the other earthly needs of mine? Don't you think I had earthly needs? Sure. I want to tell you God supplied my earthly needs when I spent my life seeking God's kingdom. I could have spent my life pursuing something on earth.

I had something very good on earth going 45 years ago but I decided to check it and put God first. I'll tell you this. You don't have to be afraid that you'll starve or you'll be out in the streets or your children will suffer.

Impossible. Be a living testimony to the world around that you're a man a woman who decides to honor God and God's honored you. That you seek God's kingdom first and all the other earthly things are added to you.

That's God's will. And that your life and your ministry are an expression of the radiance and the beauty of Jesus Christ. That's only possible through the power of the Holy Spirit.

That's what you need. Then thirdly, Jesus spoke about a third baptism which is not known very much by many people and not even spoken about. I never in 45 years of my Christian life I never heard one sermon on this third baptism.

I heard a lot of sermons on the other two. And this is found in Mark's gospel and chapter 10. It's the baptism of suffering.

You want a complete Christian experience? You need to be baptized in water under repentance and faith. You need to be baptized in the Holy Spirit and you need to experience this baptism of suffering. The baptism in water relates to my past life the baptism in faith the baptism in the Holy Spirit relates to my present being a witness for Christ and the baptism in suffering is the preparation to reign with Christ in the future.

So there you have all three tenses. Past, present and future. Mark 10 verse 35 James and John two sons of Zebedee came to Jesus and said can you please do for us whatever we ask and he said what do you want? Jesus was not foolish to say yes.

He said what do you want? Tell me that first. And they said grant that we may sit on your right and on your left in your glory. That means we want to reign with you in eternity.

That's a good desire. We say Lord we don't want to reign on this earth. We want to be servants on the earth.

But we want to reign with you in eternity. Jesus said in Revelation 3 21 he who overcomes will sit with me on my throne. That's a reward.

It's a good thing to seek for. Lord I don't want any throne on earth. I just want a bucket of water and a towel on earth to wash people's feet all my life but I want to reign with you forever.

And that was a good desire. But Jesus said you don't know what you're asking. You want to get there to the throne? I'll tell you the route to the throne and you don't know how difficult it is.

Are you able to drink the cup that I drink or to be baptized with the baptism with which I am baptized. He wasn't talking about water baptism. That's easy.

He wasn't talking about baptism of the Holy Spirit. A lot of people seek that. He was talking about a third baptism which most Christians do not seek for.

They want to get to the throne just like James and John but they don't know the route to the throne. Do you know the route to the throne? I'll show you. In Hebrews in chapter 12 it says let us run this race the same race that Jesus ran because he is the author and perfecter of our faith.

How did he get to the right hand of the throne of God? Hebrews 12 verse 1 and 2. Listen to the route that our forerunner went. This is the route. The marathon route goes through this way.

If you don't get this way you won't reach the finishing line. That is who endured the cross despising the shame that is a shame in being a wholehearted disciple of Jesus Christ. That is a shame in your office if you stand up for Christ you may lose your increment.

You may lose your promotion because some people may not like that you're a Christian. I've seen a lot of government offices banks etc. where some Hindu man will hang up a calendar or a picture there of an idol.

I wish there were more Christians who worked in offices and banks who would hang up a calendar with the word of God. I used to do that when I was working in the Navy and I were in an office. I'd have a calendar with God's word.

I'd have a Bible on my table. I'd have tracts on my table. I wouldn't distribute it to anybody.

I'm doing my official work. If somebody sees it and says can I have one? I say sure. Nobody can stop me from having that.

But there's a shame. You know, I know my commanding officer once called me and said you're a very unsociable person. Unsociable person.

The translation of that is you don't come and drink with all the others. You don't play cards with all the others. You don't gamble like all the others.

Just sitting in your room reading the Bible the whole time? Well that's why I'm standing here today. If I had spent my time doing other things with all my friends just to be popular I wouldn't be here today. I would have wasted my life.

And I think a lot of you are wasting your life. You're missing something. Because you're not willing to suffer shame for the name of Jesus Christ.

You know, you really people, I, I, what all names people call me because I stood up for Christ. In my ship. I used to always think, Lord Jesus you were not ashamed to hang almost naked on a cross just because of

me.

I will never be ashamed. For the sake of a promotion, I couldn't care less for it. For the sake of a little extra money in an increment, I couldn't care less for it.

I will not be ashamed to let everyone in my office know, I'm not trying to convert them, but they'll all know that I'm a Christian. And they all know that I'm a disciple of Jesus Christ and not the usual run-of-the-mill, third-rate, good-for-nothing type of Christian. No.

A different type who will not cheat or tell lies or will acknowledge a mistake. If I broke something in the office, I won't try to hide it. I'll say, yeah, I'm sorry, I broke it.

I'll pay for it. If you want to check me out of the job, check me out of the job. But I'm not going to tell a lie to keep my job.

I won't write a false account and I will not sign a false statement to get a little more money. Yeah. It was upright.

We must have a testimony. I remember once when I went to my income tax auditor to file my return and I went back to him and I said, hey, you left out something. I'm supposed to pay a little more tax.

He said, well, it doesn't matter. I said, no, I've got to pay. You know, that is what proved to him that I was a Christian.

Not my name or what I try to convince people about. It's your life and you can be a witness by your life and your words and they'll make fun of you. Maybe you don't get a promotion.

It doesn't matter. I remember the time in my life when I became a real Christian and I had all this gold to go right up to the top of the Navy and I had to make a decision at that time. Am I going to follow that goal or be a disciple of Jesus Christ? And I didn't even have to think twice.

I said, Lord, you died for me. There's no question of having any other goal in life but living for you. My brothers and sisters, be willing to suffer shame.

He suffered shame and reached the right hand to the throne of God and he took the cross. He suffered. He knew before he came from heaven to earth, he's going to suffer, be ill-treated.

Right from childhood he was ill-treated. They all called him the illegitimate son of Mary. We don't know who his father is.

Maybe some Roman soldier. They say that even today 2,000 years later. A lot of Jewish people say that.

Jesus, ah. Mary had an affair with some Roman soldier and they called him son of God. Well, he suffered that from childhood.

People said that about him. Imagine if somebody turned and called you an illegitimate child when you were not. Okay, you're grown up.

You can handle it. Could you handle it when you're 5 years old? When you go to school? And say, hey, who's your father? Nobody knows who your father is. And you're just 6, 7 years old.

Can you imagine how your child will face it if your child faces that in school? You've got children 6, 7 years old. Imagine if they had to be harassed by all the other students. Hey, we heard that nobody knows who your father is.

And he grows up like that in the next class, next class, next class. He took it. You know why he took it? Because he loved you and me.

And he wanted to save us from hell. I said, Lord, how much you love me. What all you're willing to go through.

I want to follow in your footsteps. I'm willing to suffer anything to save other people from hell. Do you want to save other people from hell if you're saved from hell yourself? How much are you willing to suffer for that? You want to keep quiet? Nobody in my office should know that I'm a Christian.

They all go to hell around you. I tell you, nobody who worked with me in the Navy will ever be able to point a finger to me and say, Zach, you never told us about the way. You worked with us for so many years.

You never told us about the way to heaven. You knew we were going to hell. And you never told us because you were interested in promotion, increment.

And nobody will be able to say that to me. Because I say, I couldn't care less about increment or promotion. I'm going to be a witness for Christ.

I don't waste office time. I don't go witnessing to people who should be working. No.

But I make it clear by my life and what I stand for, I'm a Christian. In the lunch time, all you got to do is pick up a Bible and start reading it instead of criticize the boss and gossip like all the other people in the office do. And they'll know pretty soon that you're different.

You don't have to go wearing a badge and going around shouting, I'm a Christian. No. Just be different.

Just be different that you don't speak evil. You don't laugh at their dirty jokes. And you comfort those who are discouraged.

And you make friends with those who are despised and marginalized in your school or college or office. They'll know pretty soon you're different. And they'll ignore you.

They'll taunt you. They'll make fun of you. And in some cases, in some places in India, they kill you for being a Christian.

But that's the way to the throne. The way of suffering. It says in Romans chapter 8 that if we suffer with Him, verse 17, if we suffer with Him, verse 17, we'll be glorified with Him.

And I tell you, He says in verse 18, the sufferings of this present time are nothing compared to the glory that's going to be revealed. If you want to be a disciple of Jesus, you must be willing to choose this immersion, baptism of suffering. It was not true in the Old Testament.

The Old Testament was a gospel of prosperity. And there are a lot of Christians who are trying to preach that Old Testament gospel today. And of course, they've got to go to Deuteronomy 28 to get it.

The New Testament gospel is here, Romans 8, verse 17 and 18. If we suffer with Him, we'll be glorified with Him there. The blessing in the Old Testament was prosperity.

The blessing in the New Testament is adversity or suffering. People don't understand that. And that's why you have this third-rate, shallow Christians who say they've got cars and houses and lands and don't have victory over anger or lusting with the eyes or they're not free from the love of money and they seek the honor of men and they're living for themselves and they say we're following Jesus.

The whole thing's ridiculous. It's because they're not willing to suffer. If I'm willing to suffer for Christ's sake, I can be a wholehearted Christian pretty quickly.

So my dear brothers and sisters, let's choose this. Lord, I choose to go the way of the cross of denying myself. Jesus said that if anyone wants to follow me in any century, you've got to deny yourself.

Take up the cross. You've got to say no to yourself. I got a little light the other day on fasting.

Fasting is a form of suffering. I said, Lord, what's the advantage of going without food? And the Lord said, you know, when you have such a tremendous desire, you say you decide to fast for one day and you're just taking liquids and there's something very tasty there and you want to eat it and you say no. I'm going to fast today because I decided to do that before God and you battle it.

Something happens within you. Your will gets a little strengthened by the Holy Spirit. The result is, next time when you're tempted to lust after a woman, this strength which you got by denying some other desire in your body, helps you there to overcome that.

Same principle. Your will gets strengthened. Why is it so many young people are defeated in the area of lust? Because they don't overcome in the easier areas of food or sleep.

They sleep and sleep and sleep and have no time to read the Bible. May God help us. Let's pray.

While our heads are bowed in prayer, I want to invite you to respond to what the Lord has spoken to your heart. God loves you. Everything He offers you to finish with your past life, to be empowered for the present, to suffer, to reign with Christ, is for your good.

Suffering is the best possible thing that will prepare us for the future and make us strong Christians now. Choose it, my brothers and sisters. Seek God with all your heart.

May your life be changed from today onwards. You're going to take repentance, the power of the Holy Spirit and the way of suffering seriously. Lord, do a deep work in the lives of many of us here.

It will change us forever. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

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