

## **Baptism in the Holy Spirit (and a Whole World of Temptation)**

Matthew 3:11- 4:11

#3 in our series, "Jesus Stories."

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### **Prayer**

So Lord God: "Your grace is sufficient for me and your power is made perfect in weakness." So Lord God, would you take our weakness now and make your power perfect in it? Would you help us to preach your Word? Would you preach your Word in us and through us? We say that in Jesus' name and we mean it. Amen.

### **Message**

We're preaching a little series titled "Jesus Stories," remembering that Jesus' story has become our story by the grace of God.

In Matthew 3:13, John the Baptist preaches to scribes and Pharisees at the river Jordan.

*I baptize you with (I immerse you in) water for repentance, but he who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire (or "the Holy Spirit that is fire" or "the fiery Holy Spirit"). His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor and gather his wheat into the barn, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire."*

Yikes! So, who is chaff, and what is chaff?

Well, chaff is the inedible and outer husk of wheat.

You can't grow wheat without chaff. Every kernel of wheat forms in a vessel of chaff.

So in Jesus' day, a farmer would use a winnowing fork to thresh the wheat, separating the wheat from the chaff. The wind would blow away the chaff and the chaff would fall on the threshing floor.

Isaiah 27:12

*In that day from the river Euphrates to the Brook of Egypt, the LORD will thresh out the grain, and you will be gleaned one by one, O people of Israel.*

"One by one..." See? I don't think this means that some are wheat and others are chaff but that each "one" is wheat and chaff. In Mark 9 Jesus says, "Everyone will be salted with fire." For some, that may feel like hell, and for some it may feel like heaven.

In Luke 12:49 Jesus says,

*I came to cast fire on the earth, and (how I wish) that it were already kindled! I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how great is my distress until it is accomplished ("until it is finished")!*

The second half of the gospel of Luke is the book of Acts. In Acts chapter 2:1, after Jesus is crucified and cries out: "It is finished," Luke writes:

*When the day of Pentecost arrived, they were all together in one place and suddenly there came from heaven a sound like a mighty rushing and it filled the entire house where they were sitting and divided tongues, as of fire, appeared to them and rested on each one of them, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit."*

See? They've baptized in the Holy Spirit and fire. Ask yourself: "Have I been baptized in the Holy Spirit...and if I have, how could I know?"

Well, like we were saying: In Matthew chapter three, John the Baptist says, "*He's coming with his winnowing fork in his hand and he will baptize you in Holy Spirit and fire.*"

Next verse, Matthew 3:13-17 "*Then Jesus came.*" Literally it reads, "*Then Jesus comes*" as if this is still happening. In Luke's account, Luke inserts Christ's genealogy at this juncture, pointing out that Jesus is Son of Adam, and Adam is Son of God, and Jesus is the Son of God...like Jesus is Adam. It's like Paul writes, "*Jesus is the Eschatos Adam.*"

Matthew 4:13

*Then "Jesus comes" from Galilee to the Jordan to John, to be baptized by him. John would have prevented him, saying, "I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?" But Jesus answered him, "Let it be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness." "Then he consents." (Present tense)*

See? Jesus is baptized to fulfill all righteousness...but who needed their righteousness fulfilled? Not Jesus; not the perfect Adam...but all of us imperfect Adams.

*And when Jesus was baptized, immediately he went up from the water, and behold, the heavens were opened to him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming to rest on him; and behold, a voice from heaven said, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased."*

This is the Son.

He hears the voice of the Father.

And the Spirit descends:

Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

At the end of Matthew,

Jesus tells his disciples to baptize...

In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Some people argue that there are two baptisms: Baptism at salvation and a baptism of the Holy Spirit.

Paul makes it clear in Ephesians 4: "*There is one body and one Spirit, one Lord, one faith, one baptism. One God and Father of us all.*"

One baptism...but perhaps it's experienced in different ways at different times.

Jesus was baptized at least twice, once *here* in water and spirit. And yet, He still has "*a baptism to be baptized with.*" (That's what He said in Luke 12:49) Well, Jesus doesn't die for your sins over, and over, and over. But I think you can be immersed in His Spirit over, and over, and over.<sup>1</sup>

On a list of bulletin bloopers, I read this announcement: "This afternoon there will be meetings in the north and south ends of the church. Children will be baptized at both ends."

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<sup>1</sup> Maybe you can get baptized in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit over, and over, and over. It's not like Jesus has to die for you over, and over, and over, but you can be baptized as an infant, and be baptized as an adult. And you should be filled, immersed, even baptized in the Holy Spirit and fire over, and over, and over. So if someone says, "Would you like to be baptized in the Holy Spirit?" Don't say, "Been there, done that," but: ""Yes, I'd like all the Holy Spirit I can get."

I actually think that's an acceptable practice, so I was baptized as an infant in 1961; I spoke in tongues at my friend Ricky's house by the power of the Holy Spirit in the early 1970s; I was baptized in Deer Creek by my dad in 1980 because I wanted to witness my own baptism; In 1995, I was literally floored by the Holy Spirit who coursed through my body like fire at a conference in Toronto Canada; Then, I was baptized, in the river Jordan in Israel, by an Arab Christian named George Housney, in 2007, because I thought that was just too cool to pass up.

So in case you were wondering, I've been baptized at both ends. Have you?

Have you been baptized in the Holy Spirit, and if you were, how would you know?

Do you remember what happened in Acts two? The Holy Spirit and fire falls on this poor intimidated and weak group of disciples and they're transformed. They begin speaking in tongues, and yet, Paul indicates that not all will speak in tongues. He also calls it the least of the gifts.

So, how do you know if you're baptized in the Spirit. Well, you may remember that in Acts two, they sold all their goods, and shared everything in common, and everyone had enough bread. Socially, they became very relevant. And yet, not everyone that forms a commune is necessarily filled with the Spirit.

Well, filled with the Spirit, everyone had bread, and they performed miracles: *"daily attending the temple,"* so all could see. Yet, it's *"an evil and adulterous generation that seeks a sign."*

Well, they were relevant, spectacular, and third, powerful. I mean Peter preached, and people from every nation joined their ranks. They grew like crazy...yet, cancer grows like crazy, and the devil controls all the nations.

So, how do you know that you've been baptized in the Holy Spirit or even *have* the Holy Spirit? Tom Long was teaching a confirmation class. He told the children about Pentecost. He said, "Pentecost was when the church was sitting in a group, and the Holy Spirit landed on them like tongues of fire, and they spoke the gospel in all the languages of the world. One little girl looked especially astonished and finally said, "Gosh Reverend Long, we must have been absent that Sunday!"

Maybe you feel like you were absent that Sunday. Maybe you're thinking: "Gosh! I was baptized in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and I've asked the Father to give me His Spirit. (Jesus said He'll give the Spirit if we ask.) You think: "I asked, but I don't speak in tongues; I'm not loaded with bread; I don't perform miracles; and I sure don't have much power and authority! Instead of blessing, health, and prosperity, I feel like I'm alone in a desert. Instead of signs and wonders, I see endless wasteland. Instead of walking in power and great authority, I feel like I'm gonna pass out from hunger. What's wrong with me? Is God pleased with me? Am I even His son or daughter? Do I have His Spirit?"

Matthew 3:16

*And when Jesus was baptized, immediately he went up from the water, and behold, the heavens were opened to him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming to rest on him, and behold, a voice from heaven said, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased."*

The very next verse...Matthew 4:1

*Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil.*

That's strange... Mark writes, *"Immediately, he was driven (not "led..." driven) by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil.*

I guess, *"Lead us not into temptation,"* is not the same prayer as *"never allow us to be tempted."* God doesn't tempt us with evil, yet He arranges for us to be tempted by evil. God doesn't do evil, yet He arranges for us to encounter evil. God is not the "absence of God" (That is evil) Yet, maybe God wills that we would encounter the "absence of God," that we would one day choose God in freedom.

Matthew 4:1

*Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. And after fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry.*

You know...

Some people think the sign of the baptism of the Holy Spirit is speaking in tongues.

Some people think it's prosperity.

Some think it's shaking.

Some think it's preaching without notes.

But if Jesus is "the pioneer of our faith," it might look a bit more like a man driven alone into the desert, desperately poor, and battling evil voices in the dark.

Don't get me wrong. The Holy Spirit odes all that other cool stuff. But this is Jesus, and He is our head. So, His story is also our story. This is archetypical.

Jesus is "Son of God," and "Son of Man"—Adam.

The first Adam was tempted by the devil and failed.

Jesus is the *Eschatos* Adam.

Jesus carries us through judgment, just like the ark carried Noah and his family when the earth was flooded of forty days and nights, until Noah saw the dove descending and the dry land appeared.

One day the earth will be flooded with fire.

And Jesus is "King of the Jews"—He is Joshua.

Remember that, according to scripture (1 Corinthians 10) Israel was "baptized" at the Red Sea and then led by a pillar of fire into the wilderness for 40 years, until all of those that had fallen to temptation perished in the wilderness, including Moses and Joshua, which is Hebrew for Jesus, meaning "God is salvation."

Joshua (which is Hebrew for Jesus), along with the Ark of the Covenant led Israel across the Jordan River and into the Promised Land. Jesus is Joshua. Jesus is the Ark, and Jesus is the Last Adam. Jesus is a pillar of fire—the Way—The Whole Way<sup>2</sup>

In Deuteronomy 8, Moses says to Israel,

*And you shall remember the whole way that the Lord your God has led you these forty years in the wilderness, that he might humble you, testing you to know what was in your heart, whether*

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<sup>2</sup> In Deuteronomy 6, at the end of the 40 years in the wilderness, Moses says, *"You shall worship the Lord your God and Him only you shall serve,"* and *"You shall not put the Lord your God to the test."*

*you would keep his commandments or not. And he humbled you and let you hunger and fed you with manna ("The bread that comes down from heaven...is my flesh," said Jesus,...manna which you did not know, nor did your fathers know, that he might make you know that man does not live by bread alone, but man lives by every word that comes from the mouth of the Lord.*

So Jesus is baptized and then led into the wilderness forty days and forty nights to be tested. All he has to live on is The Word of the Lord. And what was the last word that Jesus heard or that we know He heard? It's the only word that's heard directly from God the Father in the gospel of Matthew. It was the word Jesus heard at His baptism: *"This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased."*

Jesus told his disciples that He had: *"food of which they did not know."* He must've been feeding on that word in the wilderness, while He was being tempted, and it was enough: *"You are my beloved son and in you, I am delighted."* I think we're all starving for that word.

This is a little clip from the Jenny Jones show back in 2003. It was about a boot camp for pre-teens (about 10 years old), who had been getting into trouble.

[A clip of a drill sergeant type man talking to a young rebellious pre-teen is shown. The drill sergeant very harshly, almost threateningly asks, "You don't want me to be your daddy for the next eight years son, do you?" The boy responds, "Yes sir" The sergeant responds, "You do? Why do you want me to be your daddy?" "I have no daddy." "Well, let me tell you something. Come here and give me a hug." (Applause)]

The biblical word for "daddy" is *"Abba."* That boy said, "I have no *Abba.*" (I bet that's why he'd fallen into so many temptations; he was hungry for a daddy.) He wanted a dad. Such that even if his daddy were a drill sergeant, intent on marching him through the wilderness, just to hear: *"You are my son in whom I am well pleased,"* well that would've been enough. And actually, this boy's life was already a lonely wilderness, and now all he wanted was a daddy. I think most men with a heartbeat would delight in being that boy's daddy.

Well, Moses said, *"God lead you and tested you to know what was in your heart."* But God didn't need to know what was in our hearts; He's all knowing. And maybe God led Jesus into the wilderness because we needed to know what was in His heart.

John 1:18: *"Jesus from the bosom of the Father."*

Well, the Spirit drove him into the wilderness to be tested...or tempted (same word in the Greek). And so, Jesus stumbled through the desert until He saw this:

[Image of beautiful women in from of a sign that says "Welcome to Fabulous LAS VEGASE Nevada"]

This is the great temptation in the desert.

Now, this may be temptation for you, but it's really minor league temptation. For Jesus, the devil pulls out all the stops.

Check out these three temptations.

1. Matthew 4:2

*And after fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. And the tempter came and said to him, 'IF you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread.' But he*

*answered, "It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.'"*

Did you catch that? 1st word: "IF." *"IF you're the Son of God."*

Jesus, how do you explain the hunger and this desert? "If" you're a child of God, how do you explain your wilderness, your terrible finances and the fact that you don't speak in tongues? Ever entertained thoughts like that? And yet, this temptation is far more sinister than just that.

*"If you're the Son of God...(do something)"* Did you notice that when the blessing came from God, Jesus had done nothing?

Up until now, in the gospel of Matthew, Jesus is a baby. It's like the blessing is inviolable, unconditional, and eternal. And Jesus believed that eternal blessing in our temporal and ever-changing space and time. So when the devil said, *"If..."* the "if" was drained of power, for Jesus fed on God's eternal word: *"This IS my beloved son, in whom I am well-pleased,"* "Well-pleased" before Jesus did anything...and then everything Jesus did do must've been empowered by that eternal blessing.

He would go on to feed a multitude, at least twice, with just a few loaves and fish. And of course, He gave His Life as bread for the world...but not because He was trying to earn His Father's blessing, but because He believed His Father's blessing and therefore did what His Father was doing.

He didn't do stuff to receive a blessing, He had received the blessing and so did stuff. That's not like most *religion*. Isn't most religion an effort to earn the Father's blessing and then a challenge to others to earn the Father's blessing? We say: "Hey, if you want to please God, take some knowledge and use it to start a 'bread for the hungry program.' Use it to work some miracles. Use it to win some converts. Use it to create yourself in your Father's image and thereby earn His blessing."

That's the lie of the snake that crucifies the Word of God, traps our souls in hell, and must be devoured by eternal fire. Don't get me wrong! Bread is good, miracles are good, discipling the nations is good. But thinking that you could earn your Father's blessing, thinking that you could merit God's grace...that's the essence of evil and the presence of the void.

Henry Nouwan writes,

Jesus' first temptation was to be relevant: to turn stones into bread, Oh, how often have I wished I could do that!...Where children die of malnutrition and contaminated water, [to turn stones into croissants, coffee cakes, or fresh baked buns]. Jesus' second temptation was precisely the temptation to do something spectacular, something that could win him great applause: *"Throw yourself from the parapet of the temple and let the angels catch you and carry you in their arms."*

## 2. Matthew 4:5 (The second temptation)

*Then the devil took him to the holy city and set him on the pinnacle of the temple and said to him, 'If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down, for it is written, 'He will command his angels concerning you,' and 'On their hands they will bear you up, lest you strike your feet against a stone.'* (The devil quotes scripture...but not in the same spirit.) *Jesus said to him, "Again it is written, 'You shall not put the Lord your God to the test. (That means, "You shall not attempt to PROVE your God.")*

I've seen signs and wonders; I think I've even performed a miracle or two in Jesus' name. I know they happen...and that makes me frustrated, because I think: "God, if you can do this, why don't you do it at the end of every sermon? Then people won't call me a heretic and I won't have to trudge through this wilderness of unbelief, vulnerable to criticism and my own doubts as to whether or not you love me."

Well, I have been praying that God would do signs and wonder in this place, that folks would be miraculously healed in this place, even drop under the power of the Spirit in this place...and I hope that you would pray that too. But...if those prayers are an attempt to earn God's blessing, test God's grace, or prove that we are His children...maybe they're not prayers...but a confession of our faith in the devil.

### 3. Matthew 4:8 (The third temptation)

*Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. And he said to him, "All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me." Then Jesus said to him, "Be gone, Satan! For it is written, 'You shall worship the Lord your God and him only shall you serve.'" Then the devil left him, and behold, angels came and were ministering to him.*

At one time, that became a rather tangible temptation to me. I heard: "You can have all these programs, all these accolades, all of this kingdom...IF ONLY...you renounce this Word, that "God is Salvation, inviolable, unconditional and eternal." Well, the kingdoms of this world are a huge temptation to the children of Adam because they don't require a cross, that is, they are not built by unconditional eternal and sacrificial Love.

In the *Brothers of Karamazov*, Dostoevsky tells a story about Jesus coming to earth during the inquisition in Seville, Spain. He loves people and heals people, and the Grand Inquisitor throws Him in prison. The Grand Inquisitor, the priest, rebukes Christ for neglecting Satan's three temptations. Nouwen calls them "relevance, spectacle, and power." Dostoevsky calls them "miracle, mystery, and authority."

The Grand Inquisitor tells Jesus: "We accepted...what you rejected...all the kingdoms of the earth...We've corrected your work and founded the church on miracle, mystery, and authority." The Church of the Grand Inquisitor gives people bread, signs, and wonders, and tells them what to do. And people want to be told...so they don't have to trust the Bread of Life, have faith in the midst of doubt, or follow the voice of Love in this wilderness world. The Grand Inquisitor tells Jesus that the children of Adam are incapable of freely given and faithful love.

And if we take Scripture seriously he seems to be right:

Israel couldn't do it and didn't do it.

Noah and his family didn't do it.

Adam couldn't do it. And all the children of Adam couldn't do it...

except the last Adam, named Jesus.

Jesus trusts His Father's word above all things and resists an entire world of temptation.

He is literally fueled by the word of His Father: "*This is my beloved son in whom I am well pleased.*"

Jesus trusts His Father and thus obeys His Father. If you trust your Father's Word, you'll obey your Father's Word. Jesus follows His Father's Spirit into the wilderness.

Though all humanity is faithLESS. Jesus is FaithFUL. Jesus has Faith.

Nest verse Matthew 4:11, "*Then the devil left him, and behold, angels came and were ministering to him*"—End of Story.

And that's a problem for us preachers; we want to tell folks to do something, but Matthew just wants us to see something.

I mean, don't you want me to say:

"And this is how to resist temptation: 1) Memorize Scripture. 2) Practice a lot of fasting.

3) Stay away from Las Vegas 4) try harder to be just like Jesus.

Obey these laws and make yourself in His image... Resist temptation..."

But that itself *is* the temptation.

When we give into temptation we feed our flesh, our pride, our ego, our old man. It's like we grow a husk. We grow chaff. We sin. *"But where sin increased, Grace abounded all the more."*

When we see Jesus, something grows inside of us. I think the Bible calls it Faith, by Grace. And it happens by the power of God's Spirit. It is a gift.

If I tell you that you must do something, I think that's called the Law.

But if you see something, maybe that's Grace.

When I see Jesus, I see how I use God to get bread, gain influence, and exercise power.

I see how I don't love God and don't trust the Word of God.

I see the self that I have constructed with fear and pride, all based on a lie.

I see the chaff, and I just don't like the chaff or trust the chaff...

and so, I begin to surrender the chaff to Holy Fire—Jesus Fire.

I confess my sin, because I've seen Grace.

When I see Jesus, chaff is burned and wheat is harvested. I see God's Grace. And Jesus is God's Word. Jesus is the ark of my salvation. Jesus is my bread (bread is wheat)—I feed on Him and He grows in me. Jesus is who I most truly am: I am his body and he is my life. I am hidden in Him.

So when God the Father says, *"This is my son, in whom I am well pleased,"* He's talking about me. And I believe He's talking about me, because His fire burns within me. It's Jesus' Spirit that is believing... within me. I'm filled with His Spirit. I've been baptized in His fiery Holy Spirit.

Some of the early church fathers, described the person of the Holy Spirit as the relationship of Love between God the Father and God the Son. I'm baptized into that—the Love of God!

So when was I baptized?

In 1961 as an infant...

In the early 70's when I spoke in tongues...

In 1980 in Deer Creek...

In 1995 in Toronto Canada...

In 2007 by George Hussney in the River Jordan...

But actually, if I'm entirely Biblical, I was baptized some time around 27 AD by John the Baptist.

For there is *one* baptism, and there is *one* body—and that is *Christ's* body.

So when I was baptized, the Father said, *"This is my beloved son in whom I am well pleased."*

So what is the sign of my Baptism? ...A certificate? Tongues? Prosperity? Miracles? Power?

Romans 8:15

*...you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the spirit of sonship. When we cry, "Abba! Father!" it is the Spirit himself bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God.*



Galatians 4:6 “...because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, “Abba! Father!” (ESV).

Do you cry “Daddy Father?”

It's not you. It's the Spirit in you. It's free. And because it's free, you are free.

Galatians 3:27

*...the law was our custodian until Christ came, that we might be justified by faith. <sup>25</sup> But now that faith has come, (You see? When Christ came, faith came.) ... now that faith has come, we are no longer under a custodian; <sup>26</sup> for in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith. <sup>27</sup> For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.”*

When we see Jesus crucified and risen from the dead, His Glory burns away the chaff and reveals the wheat: the harvest of this earth, sons and daughters of God, filled with Faith in God—the faithfulness of God, the Faith of Jesus.

And where do we see Jesus? Where do we see the pillar of Fire that leads the way?

Well isn't it on this journey through this wilderness of a world where our faith in our selves is stripped away, and in it's place, we learn to trust the word of God, like manna from Heaven? Jesus is the Word of God, in flesh.

In the wilderness we hear the Blessing by the power of the Holy Spirit: “You are my beloved son, my beloved daughter, in whom I am well pleased.”

And in the wilderness we give God the Father the blessing in return. And we give it by the power of the same Holy Spirit. We cry, “Abba Father. I want you Father, more than bread, miracles and power. I trust you Father. And I'll follow you Father, even if you act like a drill sergeant. Because I know you delight in me, and now... I delight in you.”

Graham Cooke is a prophetic ministry leader and He used to tell about a man he saw at a conference he was leading in the north of England. It seemed that God kept having him look at this man. Finally, Graham prayed, “Lord, what about him?” He heard the Lord say, “Gray, he's suicidal. He wants to die. His wife left him, the Christian company for which he worked fired him; he's sick. He hasn't got any money, and all of his friends have deserted him.”

Graham prayed, “Lord, what has he done?” He heard back, “What makes you think he's done anything? ...All these things have happened to him because I baptized him in the Holy Spirit. I want you to give him a message.”

Graham went over and said, “The Lord says He will come to you in the night watch not many days from now, and He will sing a song over you. Not only will it save your life, but it will save the lives of thousands...” The man's name was Joe; I know Joe. Joe claims that God came to his bedroom three nights later and that He sang this song over him, and Joe wrote it down.

The Father sang:

I loved you long before you met me, and then you gave your life for me  
But should one day you turn and walk away, I will always love you...

My love will never cease to hold you, but should I have a change of heart  
It is because my heart has ceased to be. I will always love you...

When all around you seems in darkness, when you have come right to the depths  
Look into so deep, I am deeper still, I will always love you...

And when the day has almost ended, when evening comes and draws you in  
When there is no one else to comfort you, I will always love you...

Here are my arms for you, to hold you. Here are my wounds where you can hide  
Here are the tears that I have cried for you. I will always love you...

My love is constant as the sunrise, as changeless as the stars at night  
My child, as sure as the returning light, I will always love you, I will always love you  
I will always love you, Yes I will, I always will.

Well, I think it sounds like: *"Look, my beloved son, my beloved daughter, in whom I am deeply pleased."*

Some of you feel like you're in the desert and you wonder what's wrong...  
Well maybe it's the Spirit of God that lead you to this desert, because God the Father wants you to know you didn't earn his Love,  
    with your ability to make bread,  
        or with your ability to do spectacular things  
        or with you ability to conquer the nations.

His Blessing is inviolable, unconditional and eternal.  
    You can't earn it, destroy it or change it.  
And when you see it, it burns away the lie that you can.  
    God's Blessing is Jesus Christ, the Word of God, given to you.

So like Paul asks in Romans 8:

*If God is for us, who can be against us? He who... gave him up for us ALL, how will he not also with him, graciously give us ALL things?*

That would include bread, miracle and the nations.

Let me end with one of my favorite stories. I understand it's true.  
It's one of the many documented miracles that occurred at the Shrine in Lourdes France.

In 1957 A French father took his ten-year-old son, blind from birth, to the shrine. At the shrine, the child begged his father to pray for him. His father prayed aloud, "Lord, give my boy his sight." Instantly, the boy could see. He looked around. He saw flowers, trees, green grass, the open sky. Then he looked into his father's face and heard the only voice he had known during the ten long years of darkness, the ten long years of wondering in the wilderness, when he saw his father, this is what he said: "Oh boy! Everybody's here!"

For ten years, he had fed on his father's word in the wilderness, and now he says, "Oh boy! Everybody's here!"

One day, you'll look at your Heavenly Father and say that, for He will be "everything to everyone."  
I Corinthians 15:28, He will be "all in all."

And you will see it and you will delight in Him, as He delights in you.

## Communion

For on the night that Jesus was delivered up, He took bread, broke it and said,

*"This is my body which is for you. Take and eat."*

And in the same manor after supper and having given thanks, He took the cup saying,

*"This cup is the new covenant in my blood poured out for the forgiveness of sins. Drink of it all of you, and do it in remembrance of me."*

When you see this, it burns away the chaff.

And it is the wheat, that's gathered into the Master's barn.

When you ingest this, it is in you; He is in you.

The Father looks at you and says,

*"This is my beloved son (me beloved daughter), in whom I am well pleased."*

## Prayer

Let's pray: "Father please baptize us in your *Holy Spirit*." Now say, "Abba Father. I want you to be my Father." "Daddy be my daddy." He says, *"You are my beloved son (you are my beloved daughter)."* You see, that's your foundation. That's the beginning and the end. Live from that place in Jesus' name, Amen.

Come to the table and worship.

## Benediction

Hopefully you heard the word and were exposed to light, and now maybe you see something that you didn't see before. Maybe one of the things that you see is how you have agreed with the tempter, and how you moved out of that belief and what the tempter said, and how you have done some things. Maybe those things look like Las Vegas, maybe they look like building the nicest church you can imagine. Whatever it is, you did it out of fear and shame, and ego, and a desire to create yourself in the image of God that your Heavenly Father might be pleased with you.

And now you realize that gives the evil one power, let me tell you what that is, it's chaff, and it served a purpose, not the evil one's purpose...but your Father's purpose, He's that powerful. But you don't want it any more. It must be destroyed by consuming fire. Just let it go, let the Holy Wind carry it away...the Holy Wind that turns into a Holy Fire.

You came to the table this morning. Yes, the bread is from the grocery store, but in some amazing way it's more than that, it's eternal seed, that's what scripture calls Jesus. Somehow Jesus is in that and He's in you. The Father looks down at you and says, "Look my beloved son, my beloved daughter in whom I delight. I delight...I just *delight* in you!!" Now live from that place, do everything from that place. You see, that thing is a Seed that grows into a kingdom, and that Kingdom belongs to you and your Father in the name of Jesus, through the power of His Spirit.

Believe the gospel, Amen.

*Disclaimer: This document is a draft and has not been edited by the author. Therefore, there may be discrepancies. Some discrepancies may be minor; some may have to do with theology. When in doubt, please refer to the audio version of the sermon on this website and don't be shy about informing us of errors.*

