



Message **Transcript**

Make It Personal

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Of Jesus. Amen. Amen. Well, I'm sure that many of you kids, parents, grandparents, remember the big colorful picture book called where's Waldo? You used to open it up to a big drawing of all of these people and figures and shapes and colors, and it was very complex.

And the whole goal was to find this guy Waldo in every page. Now, that would have been impossible except for the fact that they showed us what Waldo looks like on the cover of every book. We saw that he's a skinny guy in a striped sweater with a stocking cap on and round glasses. So because we knew what Waldo looked like, we could carefully study all of these complex, busy pages, and we ultimately would find Waldo on every page. You know, when you and I want to find Jesus in the Old Testament, in the midst of all of the busyness and complexities of the Old Testament, with all of the foreshadowing and prophecies and typology and covenants and priests and prophets and kings, because we were born on this side of the cross and we have the new testament, we know what Jesus looks like.

We know what the life and redemptive ministry of Jesus looks like. So now you and I can go back into the Old Testament, and we can carefully study all of the typology and peoples and figures and prophecies and priests, prophets and kings. And

if we know where to look, we find Jesus all through the Old Testament. Think about Genesis 22, the account of a father, Abraham, and his son Isaac. And in this account, we see Isaac is climbing a hill in order to be sacrificed.

Now, on the surface of it, that is an amazing, encouraging story about Abraham's faith in God. And it's encouraging about Abraham's obedience to God, no matter what God asked of him. And all of that is true. But because you and I know what Jesus looks like and what his redemptive ministry looks like, we look at Genesis 22 and we look at Isaac and say, Isaac is a foreshadow of Jesus. In fact, this whole scene in Genesis 22 is the foreshadow of the crucifixion of Jesus Christ for your sins and mine.

I mean, think about it. In Genesis 22, we have a son who is climbing a hill to be crucified out of love and obedience to his father. And on the back of Isaac is the very wood upon which he will be crucified. Because you and I know what Jesus looks like, we see him all through the Old Testament. Think about the Old Testament book that Pastor Jeff is teaching through right now.

It's the book of Nehemiah. Well, because you and I know what Waldo looks like.

We know what Jesus, his life and ministry looks like. We study the book of Nehemiah, and it becomes very clear to us, Nehemiah is the foreshadow of the coming messiah.

Think about it.

God called Nehemiah to go to God's people and fulfill a calling that only he was uniquely qualified to fulfill. We see Nehemiah weeping over the sins and rebellion of God's people. And we know that Nehemiah was a cupbearer. Fast forward to the New Testament, and we see that Jesus, God the son, was sent by God the father to God's people to fulfill a calling that only he was uniquely qualified to fulfill. We see Jesus weeping over Jerusalem and their sins and their rebelliousness.

And we know from Luke 22 that Jesus was a cupbearer. He bore the full cup of God's wrath against your sins and mind. Because we know what Jesus looks like, we can find him all over the Old Testament. Well, in Genesis chapter three, we're going to see a powerful portrait, a powerful foreshadow of the ministry of Jesus Christ. And it's connected to the very first recorded killing in the Bible.

Now, if you grew up in church and someone says the very first recorded killing in

the Bible, many of us are thinking Cain killing his brother Abel, but there was actually a killing before that. God kills an animal, and it is a foreshadow of our new identity in Christ. Let's take a look at it. Are you in Genesis chapter three? Let's set up the historical context of what's unfolding in this chapter.

God has created the first man, and he's created the first woman in his image. And Adam and Eve are living in perfect harmony and fellowship and communion with God, and they are living in perfect harmony and fellowship and communion with each other. They are thoroughly enjoying God and they are thoroughly enjoying each other, until that day when Satan snaked his way into the garden and he tempts Adam and Eve with the sin of pride. Tragically, they chose the way of sin, which always leads to death, instead of choosing the way of God, which always leads to life. And because God is holy and righteous and just, he pronounces a judgment on everyone who's involved.

But because God is also kind and merciful and gracious and loving, he provides a covering for Adam and Eve to cover their sin and their shame and their nakedness. Let's pick this up. In verse 14, the Lord God said to the serpent, because you have done this. Cursed are you, more than all cattle, more than every beast of the field. On

your belly you will go, and dust you will eat all the days of your life, and I will put enmity between you and the woman and between your seed and her seed.

He shall bruise you on the head, and you shall bruise him on the heel. That right there is the first gospel proclamation ever. A messiah is coming. He'll be born of a woman, and he will crush the head of Satan. Merry Christmas.

I always joke about that because not only is that the first gospel proclamation, I feel like that's the first Christmas card ever written from God to Satan. Christmas is coming. Christmas is coming. The messiah is coming, and he's going to crush your head. Merry Christmas.

Okay. Verse 16. To the woman, he said, I will greatly multiply your pain and childbirth. In pain, you will bring forth children, yet your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you. Then to Adam he said, because if you have listened to the voice of your wife and have eaten from the tree about which I commanded you, saying, you shall not eat from it, cursed is the ground because of you.

In toil you will eat of it all the days of your life, both thorns and thistles, it shall grow for you. And you will eat the plants of the field by the sweat of your face. You will eat bread till you return to the ground, because from it you are taken, for you are dust, and to dust you shall return. Now, the man called his wife's name Eve because she was mother of all the living. The Lord God made garments of skin for Adam and his wife and clothed them.

That's it right there in verse 21. The Lord God made garments of skin for Adam and his wife, and he clothed them. This animal that was just killed by God to cover Adam and Eve's sin and shame is a foreshadow that one day the lamb of God is coming. He too will be slain. But his blood will not just cover sin, it will cleanse sin once and for all.

And anyone who repents of their sin and receives the lamb of God will not be covered in animal skin, but clothed in the righteousness Christ. Now, when the New Testament is describing our new identity in Christ 160 times, the Holy Spirit uses the phrase you are in Christ to describe our new identity. He wanted you and I to make sure that once we come to Christ, we are completely clothed in his perfection, holiness

and righteousness that makes us acceptable to the father. So when the father looks at us, he sees the complete righteousness of his son. One of the most famous verses about our new identity is two Corinthians 5:17.

It's very familiar. Many of you probably have it memorized. So, saints, here's the warning. When we look at a very familiar verse or passage, we cannot let familiarity breed indifference. Like, yeah, I've heard this a million times.

I can memorize it, I can say it, I can recite it without even thinking. And we got the supernatural power of the scriptures. Look at two Corinthians 5:17. Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he's a new creation. The old things passed away.

Behold, the new things have come. How many of you believe that that scripture is 100% true? I believe you believe that, at least propositionally. If believers really believe that that is true, how come we have so many born again christians who are saved yet defeated, saved yet miserable, saved yet still in bondage? How could therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he's a new creation?

The old things passed away. I like that phrase, passed away. We use that when we're talking about people who have died. They passed away. So the Holy Spirit is saying, your old life has passed away.

Behold, the new things have come. Why do we have so many believers who struggle, appropriating, enjoying their new identity in Christ? I think two of the main reasons are, number one, when Satan has lost you for eternity through your repentance and faith in Christ, when Satan, who used to be your spiritual father, when he has lost you for eternity, then he goes for your identity because he knows a Christian who understands their new identity in Christ with all of its power, all of its promises and all of its privileges, gives God so much glory and has a major impact for the fulfillment of the great commission. That's the first reason is Satan is warring against your new identity. He doesn't care how you live.

He just doesn't want you to understand, experience and appropriate that you are born again, blood bought, spirit filled demon slayer. That's what the Bible says. Luke 10:19, Jesus said, behold, I have given you authority to trample on serpents and scorpions and over all the power of the enemy and nothing will harm you. The second

main reason I think that we have so many believers who are not walking in the victory and the power of their new identity is they have received it propositionally right here. That's where it starts.

But they've never allowed the Holy Spirit to take that truth into personal and practical truth in their life. And you and I live in the real world. Amen. We know we're facing spiritual battles every day, I don't need just propositional truth. That's a good place for it to start.

But it must transfer into a personal, practical truth for me if I am going to begin enjoying everything that I am in Christ. So over the next few minutes, I want to give you personal, practical action steps that you can carry home and actually walk out to begin enjoying your whole new identity in Christ. Here's the first one. The first personal, practical action step is, number one, daily decide to walk in the Spirit. Now, even though you and I are redeemed, we're not robots.

Every day we have a decision of the will to make. We can grieve the Spirit, we can resist the Spirit, we can quench the spirit. That's why the Holy Spirit told us in

Galatians 5:16, but I say, walk in the Spirit and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh. For the flesh sets its desire against the spirit and the spirit against the flesh. For these are in opposition to one another, so that you may not do the things that you please.

Here's the apostle Paul telling us, born again believer, every day that you and I wake up, we have a choice. We can either choose to walk in the Spirit, our new identity, or we can choose to walk in the flesh, our old identity. So how do we actually do that? How do I practically every morning choose to walk in the power of the Spirit? I'm going to give you three very practical kingdom ways to do that every morning.

Here's the first one. We must choose daily to cooperate and surrender with the Holy Spirit's sanctifying work in our lives. That's a choice of the will that you and I need to make every morning that we are choosing to cooperate and surrender with the Holy Spirit sanctifying work in our life that day. Now you know our salvation was done by only one person. One person did all of the work for our salvation, and that's the Lord Jesus Christ through his perfect life, death and resurrection.

That's why Romans 6:23 says, your salvation is a free gift. Jesus does it all. But in our sanctification, there are two parties involved. First, the Holy Spirit, who initiates it, and he empowers it. I mean, he does all the heavy lifting.

But the other party that's involved with our sanctification is you and me. On a daily basis, we must choose to cooperate with his sanctifying work. We must choose to surrender daily to his sanctifying work. We can choose to resist it, we can choose to grieve him, we can choose to quench it. But you and the Holy Spirit are both involved in your sanctifying work.

So we must choose daily to cooperate and surrender with the Holy Spirit's sanctifying work. Here's a super practical way that I've been practicing almost every day over the last couple of years, and listen, I'm late to the party. I've been walking with Christ for 53 years, but it was just the last couple of years. And studying God's word. The Holy Spirit showed me this, that one of the first things I do when I get up in the morning, sometimes before I even get out of bed, because the world comes at you fast with the tyranny of the urgent, with temptations.

Amen. Don't leave the pastor hanging up here. Yes, thank you. So one of the first things I do is I pray to the Holy Spirit and I say, Holy Spirit, I am making a choice of the will today to cooperate and to surrender to your beautiful sanctifying work in my life today. The Holy Spirit honors that kind of prayer.

And later on in the day, when I'm at a fork in the road and I really, really want to jump back into a sin of my old life, the Holy Spirit is like, what? John, did you not pray this morning to me and commit that you were going to cooperate and surrender to my sanctifying work? Yes, I did. And so he is able to rescue me from that sin and temptation. So that's the first thing, is pray in the morning with the Holy Spirit.

Tell him I'm going to cooperate and surrender with your work. Secondly, ask our heavenly Father for a fresh filling of the Holy Spirit every morning. Jesus is the one who offered this. In Luke 11:13, he said, if you, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask? Now, Pastor Jeff has done a wonderful job teaching you and I the biblical truth that when we repent and receive Christ at the very moment, excuse me, we receive all of the Holy Spirit we're ever going to need and that we're ever going to get, because the very person of the Holy Spirit of God comes to indwell us 24/7 never

leaving us or forsaking us.

And yet Jesus just told us that we can ask the Father for the Holy Spirit. Ephesians 5:18 says, do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Holy Spirit. And that Greek verb there really means be being filled continuously. So how should I view that in my morning prayer, Father, give me a fresh filling of the Holy Spirit.

Well, we shouldn't view it as a glass of water where we're getting more water poured in. You and I should view it as an inflated balloon. And when we ask for a fresh filling, the balloon inflates even more that we are asking the Holy Spirit, who's already in us, to move into every part of our thought, life, our motives, our secret places. It's really a John 3:30 prayer. Less of me controlling my life, Holy Spirit, and more of you and more of your power in my life.

You know, I like the practice that I learned from the founder of Campus Crusade for Christ, which is now Cru, the late doctor Bill Bright. When he was discipling college students, he was trying to put a handle on this so that they would not forget to

ask for a fresh filling of the Holy Spirit every morning. So he came up with the analogy, spiritual breathing. He said, when you get up first, exhale, confess every known sin to God. That's biblical.

That's right out of the Lord's prayer. So exhale by confessing any known sins, and inhale by asking for a fresh filling of the Holy Spirit. That is super practical. And I will tell you, the last few years that I have been doing this consistently. I'm experiencing much more victory in my life.

Okay, there's a third part to this. Renew your mind daily with the word of God. If we want to walk in the spirit, we need to renew our minds with the book that the Holy Spirit wrote, the Bible. That's why Jesus said in Matthew four, man cannot live on bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God. What a great word.

Picture Jesus. Thank you. You're the perfect teacher, just like you and I need physical food so we don't starve to death and shrivel up and get weak. He's saying, that's not enough. You need to feed your inner man, your new identity, with the word of

God by renewing it daily.

Listen to romans twelve two. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect. The apostle Paul is telling us, because we live in a foreign land, this is not our home. Our citizenship has already been sent ahead to heaven. Philippians two.

But because we live in a battlefield in a spiritual army, you cannot remain neutral in your spiritual walk any day. You cannot just maintain the level you're at. He said, you will either be transformed daily by renewing your mind with the power of God's word, or you will be conformed to the environment and the fallen world and the lies of the world that you and I are in every day. Now, one thing the Holy Spirit showed me as I started practicing these practical action steps about renewing my mind. It doesn't have to be five chapters of the Bible in the morning.

It doesn't even have to be five verses. Sometimes I will read one verse and the Holy Spirit will say, that's it. That's enough for you to chew on today, to feed your inner

man. Because it is so supernatural, it is so powerful, it is so deep. Sometimes it's just three words.

When I was going through the psalms, one psalm a day, there was one day that I got to the psalm with a plan to do the whole psalm. And I read the first three words out loud. The Lord reigns. And the Holy Spirit said, that's it. We're camping out right now.

I'm going to feed your man. I'm going to renew your spirit. Because the Lord reigns. John, do you believe that? Well, yeah, he reigns over the universe, seen and unseen.

And the spirit said, yeah, but does he reign over your thought life? Does he reign over the leadership of your family? Does he reign over your finances? Sometimes it's just three words because it's all the word of God. Amen.

So don't let the enemy discourage you that you have to go through this biblical reading pattern and you have to check the box every time. Start reading as the

psalmist said in psalm 119, Holy Spirit, open up my heart to the wondrous things of your word. Sometimes it's three words. So to walk in the spirit every morning, I make a choice of the will to cooperate and surrender with the Holy Spirit. I make that a prayer.

I pray it out loud because I want to hear that. Second of all, I ask the father for a fresh filling of the Holy Spirit. And third, I make sure I'm renewing my mind so it will be transformed and not conformed to the world with the word of God. Okay, here's the second way that you can take propositional truths that you would raise your hand to, but they might not be personal and practical in your everyday life. Number two, acknowledge that comparisons kill.

Acknowledge to yourself to God, that comparisons kill. They kill your joy, they kill your contentment in Christ, and they kill your calling in Christ. Now, we all have to be honest that we were born into a fallen world marred by sin and we were spiritually dead. So we did what was natural, was we viewed everything horizontally, that we got all of our self worth, self identity, we got all of it horizontally, responding and reacting to the people of around us, how they viewed us, didn't view us, how they accepted us, how they didn't accept us. And we found out that that is a treadmill that just keeps

going and you never arrive, and there's never true contentment, but that's what the world does.

That's very natural. The horizontal way to see about yourself, the supernatural. Well, in fact, I wanted to share this. Sociologists call this the looking glass theory. Listen to the definition and see if this is familiar to you.

The looking glass theory describes how one's self worth and self identity and social identity is dependent on one's appearance to others. The reactions of others to ourselves provide us with feedback about ourselves of the most direct sort. People imagine how others are judging them based on appearance, and how they present themselves so naturally. Much of a person's self worth, self identity and social identity is shaped by how they imagine others feel about them, and by comparing their lives to the lives of others. With the advent of social media, all of these comparisons we make with the lives of others are now multiplied by at least 1000 per day.

That's very horizontal, that's very fallen world. That's very natural, because you and I desire self identity and you and I desire self worth. But then came Jesus into our

life, and he came vertically. He brought us a salvation, that is from heaven alone. He brought a new identity that comes from him.

He said, you're a new creation in me. Now, forget about looking glass theory. I want you to look to me, the author and perfecter of your faith, for all of your self worth and all of your self identity. Tell me if this sounds vertical. Jesus says, you are totally and eternally loved by God.

You are totally and eternally accepted by God. You've been bought with a price, Christ's blood and body. You are now seated with Christ in the heavenly realms. You are free from all condemnation, and nothing can ever separate you from the love and presence of God, ever. You're a chosen people, royal priesthood, holy nation.

You are co heirs with Christ, and you will be judging angels. Christ has placed a specific calling and destiny on your life, and he will see it through to completion. God is working all things out for good in your life. You are more than conquerors, and you have been given authority over all the power of the enemy. God rejoices over you, sings over you, and collects all of your tears in a bottle.

Christ is preparing a home in heaven for you. Right now. You are God's workmanship, a temple of the Holy Spirit. And now that you're in Christ, your identity and self worth comes from him and him alone. Amen.

That's vertical. That's vertical. We used to do it all horizontal, and that's why we were all insecure. Sadly, we have many born again believers who are saved, yet insecure, saved yet full of worry and anxiety, because they're constantly comparing their lives horizontally to others. They're seeking self worth out of how someone accepts me and rejects me.

They're looking for their self identity horizontally, through a fallen world full of lies. And Jesus says, it's all vertical. Now, how do we practically do this? Colossians two six eight. The Holy Spirit set up the vertical versus horizontal.

Look at this passage. Therefore, as you have received Christ Jesus, the Lord shall walk in him, having been firmly rooted, and now being built up in him and

established in your faith, just as you were instructed and overflowing with gratitude. That's the vertical as you came to Christ vertically. So walk in him vertically, you're rooted in him and you are growing up in him. It's all vertical.

Then the Holy Spirit compares it to the life that's horizontal. Verse eight. See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deception. Horizontal according to the tradition of men, horizontal according to the elementary principles of the world, horizontal rather than according to Christ. When we don't realize as born again believers, that comparisons kill and there's no reason for them, they're sinful, they're horizontal, they're demonic.

That comparisons kill my joy, kill my contentment in Christ, kill my calling in Christ. We need an action step. Here is the one action step to break out of the horizontal as a born again believer and start going vertical in your self worth, your self identity in all things. Here's how you do it. First of all, you have to realize that the most influential voice, the most powerful voice you will ever hear in your life is not a pastor, it's not a podcast.

It's your own voice reciting back to God the truth of his word. Who Christ is and who you are in Christ, that is the most influential voice you will ever have in your life. Because you do know that we listen to ourselves more than anyone else. I mean, all the Instagram coaches are half right, that we have an inner voice, and most of the time, it's discouraging, it's lying, all of those things. But they don't have the second half right that what we need to do is just not self will and self will power.

It's go vertical. And I am going to recite back to God who Christ is and who I am in Christ. That can break a believer out of being saved yet insecure, saved yet miserable. That I pray back to God in my own voice. God, I thank you that I have been bought with a price.

Christ's body and blood. I must be very important to you. God, I thank you that I am now seated with Christ in heavenly realms. God, I thank you that no matter what my circumstances say horizontally, you promise that you're working all things out for my good and your glory. That is such a powerful supernatural weapon against comparisons and going horizontally to find my security in other people.

Now I always say that we need to pray those out loud. You need to declare those out loud for two reasons. First of all, Satan cannot read your minds. Only the creator of God is omniscient and can read our thoughts. Psalm 139.

Satan can try to plant thoughts, but he cannot read your thoughts. So when I proclaim out loud vertically who Christ is and who I am in Christ, Satan must flee. And I proclaim it out loud because I need to preach to myself. I need to be the preacher that I hear most often. Though we love Pastor Jeff, I need to be the preacher that I hear most often.

So I need to hear and preach those things over my life. Now a third action step to make propositional truth personal and practical in my life. Number three. Daily commit to God's way of escape. Daily commit to God's way of escape.

Because the Bible says that we are in a spiritual battle. The Bible says that sin is always crouching right outside our door. The Bible says that we have an enemy, Satan, and he prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. That's our day to day reality. But the Bible also says that we are more than conquerors in Jesus

Christ.

And the Bible says that we're not fighting for victory, we're fighting from a position of victory. So being in this battlefield, having all these enemies against me, how do I walk in victory in the midst of this day to day battle? Commit daily to take God's way of escape. First, corinthians 10:13. Here it is.

No temptation has overtaken you, but such as is common to man, God is faithful. He will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will provide the way of escape also, so that you will be able to endure it. Our heavenly Father is so good. He loves us so much. He does not want us to be ambushed.

He is not playing mind games with us because the first thing he says, there is believer, no temptation has overtaken you. But such is common to man. You know, Satan wants us to believe the exact opposite. When you and I start falling back into a sin of our old life, and it even starts to become a habitual sin pattern, Satan tells us, you can't share that with anybody. Are you kidding me?

That is so despicable. That is so carnal. That is so gross. If you shared that struggle with anybody at brave church, they will excommunicate you so fast your head will spin. That's what Satan is lying.

That the sin that I am struggling with, I'm the only one. I'm the only one. God loves us so much. He said, listen, no temptation has overtaken you, but such as is common to man. So no matter what I'm struggling with right now, no matter what I have fallen back into, it might even become habitual in my life.

There's five other people at least who are walking through the same sin and temptation, or they did walk through it and they gained victory. But Satan does not want you to talk to those people, because we know there's supernatural power when we confess our sins one to another, do you know what that practically does? Satan can only traffic in one place in the universe, darkness. That's it. So when you and I keep hidden sins from everybody, and I'm not even willing to share with a brother in Christ who has earned the right to be heard in my life, I'm keeping that sin in the darkness.

And Satan can really harass me. He could really oppress me. But as soon as I do what the book of James tells me to, and to a trusted brother, I say, you got to pray for me. I don't know how this happened, but I thought I had this beat. But I have fallen back into the sin of this.

All of a sudden, it's brought to the surface, and the healing light of Christ can shine on it. No temptation seized you except what is common to man. God is faithful. He will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will provide the way of escape so that you are able to endure it. The last time I was on a mega roller coaster was at the greatest roller coaster park in the world, cedar Point amusement park in Sandusky, Ohio.

Hello, Ohio. Thank you for that best kept secret in the nation. And they always have the biggest, fastest they're always building, building. Last time I was there, I got in line for their latest, greatest mega coaster, I think it was called. I can't even remember what it's called, but I get in line.

It's the long line. And we make our way through the maze and it takes forever. And we're making through our maze, we make the. And you know, as you get closer to the mega coaster, it's a lot bigger than you thought when you were way back there. You're feeling the ground rumble, you're hearing the screams.

And some people start having real fear and trepidation as they're getting closer to being loaded on one of those cars. So what cedar point did on this, the Magnum, that's what it was. What they did with the Magnum is you can go all the way through the maze and the bars. It might take you 2 hours. And right before you go to get in a car, they have a thing called the chicken gate.

There's no bars on it. It's a wide open doorway to get you out of that ride, to get you out of that maze and to put you into the park. For people who realize I am in way over my head, that's what the holy spirit does for you. And I always provides a way out of every temptation. It is a chicken gate.

Because I'm chicken. And I cannot defeat temptation in my own willpower. Amen. I need to take the chicken gate. And if you are honest, you know that as you are being

tempted by a sin of the past or current sin, and that temptation is drawing you in, and you're thinking, I just want to get close.

I'm not going to go in both feet. I'm not going to do it. And you get sucked in a little bit more, you know, at the last second. Never fails. God's promise.

The Holy Spirit will speak to you. John, don't do it. Here's your way out. The battle is mine. I'm your 24/7 bodyguard.

Take the way out. Sometimes I don't take the way out because I'm redeemed. But I'm not a robot. I can quench the spirit, resist the spirit, grieve the spirit. So sometimes I'm getting drawn into a very strong temptation.

But I have every desire and I have every plan that I'm not going to get sucked into it. But I get closer. I get closer. The Holy Spirit speaks as he said he would. He opens the chicken gate, he goes, I will rescue you right now.

Sometimes I domesticate the Holy Spirit and I say, stay like he's a dog. Mm. Sit. I know what I'm doing. I'm going.

I want this. I'm going into this. Does that ever happen to you? Don't leave the pastor hanging up here, please. Thank you for your honesty.

But you will testify the Holy Spirit always provides a way of escape. So in the morning, what I do is I pray to the Holy Spirit, and I say, holy spirit, I know I'm going to face all kinds of spiritual battle temptation today. Thank you. That you will always provide a way of escape from me, and I fully intend by your power to take that escape every time. Today, what happens is you start having more victories than defeats.

Sometimes it's three steps forward and two steps back. But if you make that a personal, practical action step that I'm recognizing that first thing in the morning, I pray to the Holy Spirit, you will start experiencing a life that is born again and victorious. Now, I've given you a lot of life giving practices to take these things from positional

truth of your new identity to personal and practical. And at this point, you may be saying, Pastor John, that seems like a lot of prep work in the morning. You don't understand my schedule.

Sometimes I can barely grab a pop tart heading out the door. I mean, that seems like a lot of prep work. Is there another way? Well, think about a soldier during wartime. He knows when he steps out of the barracks, he's gonna be on the battlefield.

It's gonna happen. He's living with it. It's his reality. You and I do not live in a playground. We live in a battleground.

Amen. So the soldier knows I'm gonna step right into a battlefield as soon as I wake up this morning. So one thing he makes sure to do before he leaves the barracks is he makes sure he has all his body armor on. He does that. He wouldn't forget that then.

Secondly, he would not leave the barracks without his weapon cleaned and loaded. So he takes time to do that, and then he's not going to go out blindly. He wants to know where is the enemy? How is the enemy scheming? Where is the enemy planning to attack you?

And I would never say, why is a soldier wasting time prepping in the morning for that? Because he's in a war. He's in a spiritual battle. You and I are in a war. We're in a spiritual battle to take a few minutes in the morning.

Sometimes I do it driving north on 25 to come here. But I do it because I have seen the supernatural power in appropriating your new identity. If you're tired of being saved, yet miserable, saved yet defeated, saved, yet still in bondage, I believe the Holy Spirit has given you and me these practical daily kingdom steps so we can walk with a holy boldness and a humble certainty in our full identity in Jesus Christ. Father God, thank you for answering our prayer from 45 minutes ago, that your Holy Spirit would speak to each one of us, that you would feed us the meat of scripture to build up our spiritual muscle. Holy Spirit, thank you for revealing to us such profound simplicity that we would cooperate and declare it through prayer every morning with you, Holy

Spirit, and your sanctifying work, that we would ask you, Father, for a fresh filling of the Holy Spirit every day in our life.

That we would take time to renew our mind with the truth of your word. Father, we realize there's three voices out there that are always lying to us. Satan. The systems of the world in our own flesh. We need to be transformed by your word of truth every day.

Father, I pray for those who you brought here who are saved, yet suffering great insecurity because they are still going horizontal to find their self worth, to find their self identity. Holy Spirit, I pray you've convinced them to go vertical. They're like Lazarus coming out of the grave. In John eleven, he was fully alive, but he smelled like death. And Jesus ordered the grave clothes to be removed from him so everyone could see that miracle that Jesus did.

I pray for those of us who need those grave clothes removed from horizontal living. That, Holy Spirit, you will do that today. We give you all the praise, all the honor, all the glory. In Jesus name, amen.

