

## Transcript of 'Keys to Conforming to His Death'



Hello precious Saints.

I just want to say at the outset that this will be my last message for the year, my last podcast. I am in sore need of a rest and a break. I've released a large number of podcasts this year and it's also been an incredibly brutal year as far as trials and tribulations go. I've spent many, many months visiting different hospitals for various family members, and I'm still dealing with the situation at home with convalescence. So, if you will excuse me, I will not be releasing another message in 2023.

Having said that, in my last message, the Lord alluded to having to descend or to go down and be conformed to His death in order to access the power of resurrection life. I spoke about Solomon going down to the Gihon Spring, to be consecrated and anointed for kingship, and the word 'Jordan' meaning 'to descend'. So, the Lord had been stressing the theme of being conformed to His death, which is connected to Philippians 3, where Paul talks about the fellowship of His sufferings, and being conformed to His death in order to access resurrection life, while still in the body (the Amplified says). So I have, over the past week or so, been meditating and asking the Lord to show me more

about being conformed to His death. And what the Holy Spirit did first was take me to Luke chapter 1.

As you know, this is the chapter that speaks of the birth of both John the Baptist and Jesus. I don't know if you know, but Jesus was conceived at Hanukkah, and then was born during the Fall Feasts the following year. So, when the angel came and said to Mary, "Hail, O highly favoured one, the Lord is with you!" it was during Hanukkah - which is an amazing thing to think about because He was the Light of the world, and Hanukkah is known as the Festival of Lights. What the Holy Spirit pointed out to me is that when we think about being conformed to Jesus' death, we always think about Him being in Gethsemane, where He said, "Not My will, but Yours be done," as He wrestled in prayer and agony, but when you go to Luke 1 and you see the interaction between Mary and the angel Gabriel, you discover that Mary, the forerunner and the bearer of the Son of God to the earth also was conformed to the place of death to self. After she was told that she would bear the Son of God, she said, "I am the handmaiden of the Lord. Let it be done to me according to His Word". That is the same thing as what Jesus said in Gethsemane, "Not My will, but Yours be done".

Now, what is very significant is when Mary said this - let it be done to me according to Your Word or according to Your will, what she was facing was quite a bleak situation. She was an engaged or betrothed woman, not yet married and having had no intimacy with a husband. - and so the prospect of being pregnant out of wedlock or before the marriage bed was something that would bring her shame, disgrace, rejection, misunderstanding, and very likely, the breaking of her betrothal covenant. That is what stood squarely before her as she heard the news that the angel brought. And yet Mary did not hesitate, but said, "I am the handmaiden of the Lord. Be it done to me according to Your Word". What an amazing thing! So, this pattern or standard of 'not my will but Yours be done', this dying to self, began in Galilee with Gabriel and Mary, and continued all the way through Jesus' walk on the earth until Gethsemane, where He said, "Not My will, but Yours be done". There was the standard laid down of what being conformed to death looks like - death to your own will, death to your own plans, death to self.

So, as I've mentioned, the prospect of having a child in a state of betrothal would have brought shunning and rejection. But the angel had said to Mary, "Hail, O HIGHLY

FAVOURED one!” So, beloved, you cannot measure your worth in God's sight by other people's reactions to you. Mary was highly favoured, and yet she faced a future of misunderstanding, people gossiping about her, pointing fingers, rejection and shame. Mary died to self, but life was at work in others. Remember, Paul said later, ‘we die daily that life may be at work in you’, and when Mary hurried straight away to Elizabeth, who was in her sixth month of pregnancy in the hill country in a town of Judah, the baby in Elizabeth's womb leapt for joy. And the Word tells us in Luke 1 that Elizabeth was filled with the Spirit at the moment she heard Mary's voice. When you are conformed to the death of Jesus, when you have died to self, and said, “Be it unto me according to Your word,” the sound you release, as you carry the Son of God within your spiritual womb, causes others to be filled with the Spirit and receive light and understanding. Remember, Elizabeth said, “How am I so honoured that the mother of my Lord would come and visit me?” and she was filled with the Spirit in order to say that, at the sound of Mary's voice. When you have died to self and surrendered and embraced fully the will of God for your life, the sound you release brings life and joy and light to others.

We, as the tip of the spear, have just entered the month of Shevat, which is the month in which the new year for trees takes place. It is the day when the fruit counting, that is reckoned to a tree finishes off for the year on that day. And any fruit born after that day is fruit of the next season. So, the Holy Spirit began to speak to me about the fruit of repentance, and we are entering the last couple of weeks where there is the possibility of bearing the fruit of repentance for this particular year. So, I said, “Lord, what repentance is still required of Your tip of the spear company?” And He put his finger on UNBELIEF. And He said to me that unbelief is the root of fear - and this is something that He wants the tip of the spear to address at this time.

All fear comes from a lack of belief in how much you are loved - unbelief in His character, His faithfulness, His goodness, or His power to deliver or provide for you. Now, of course, fear is something that lurks in the wings and cripples us emotionally, spiritually and mentally without broadcasting its name, but when one grabs a fear by the throat and looks it in the face... if you trace it back, it will always be rooted in some form of unbelief. The fear of the Lord and reverencing and honouring Him will protect your heart from fear. 1 John 4 tells us that perfect love casts out fear, and he who fears has not been made perfect in love. What does that mean – ‘made perfect in love’? It's speaking about having a full and complete revelation of the depth, length, height and

breadth of the love of God for you. When you have that fullness and perfection of the revelation of how loved you are, fear can find no room in your heart.

Now we know the trauma opens the door to fear setting up residence, if something terrible happens and subconsciously one thinks, "If this happened to me, God is not able to protect me and it might happen again...". If you've been attacked, one can have that trauma allow the fear of being attacked again to take up residence in your heart.

So, I wondered why and how this topic of unbelief and fear and the need to repent of these things was connected to Luke 1, and what the Lord had been showing me about death to self and the way Mary responded the same way Jesus responded in Gethsemane. What was the connection? And the Lord was so amazing in the way He unpacked this for me. He showed me there's a difference between the LACK OF UNDERSTANDING and UNBELIEF. Both Zachariah (John the Baptist's father) and Mary were visited by angels and both were told, "Do not be afraid", but Zachariah, when he heard the message the angel brought, asked for a sign to confirm that what the angel had said would definitely happen. You read this in Luke 1:18. Also, when he asked for a sign, he explained the natural facts - that he was far advanced in years and his wife was past childbearing age. So, Zachariah's mental assessment of the situation caused him to walk in unbelief... and unbelief led to a fear that what the angel had said wouldn't happen - and so he asked for a sign.

Mary, in verse 34 of Luke 1, didn't ask for a sign, but was just amazed as she was a virgin. She responded with faith, not fear, in verse 38. When she said, "I am the handmaiden of the Lord," she embraced the declared will of God in faith, even though she did not have the mental understanding or grid for the process that would bring it to pass. So, we see that asking for a sign when you hear God tell you what's going to happen in your life is connected to unbelief. What happened to Zachariah as a result of that unbelief and fear? He was stopped from releasing a sound until the word had been brought to fulfillment. He no longer was able to speak, but was mute. So, unbelief when God speaks to you (and the fear that causes you to ask for a sign that what you've heard will come to pass) makes you no longer a candidate for releasing a sound in the earth - until that word is brought to completion. None of God's words fall to the ground. They accomplish the purpose for which they are sent, but the way we respond when we

are given promises and words either leads us to participate and align and harmonize with the sound God released, or to be silenced until it is completed and manifested.

Now fear is a normal human emotion and reaction, but when you told, "Do not be afraid", does your heart respond in faith, embracing His decree? Or do you ask for a sign that what you've been told is true? In Hebrews 3:12, God speaks about His people having a wicked heart of unbelief and therefore being unable to enter His rest. So you can either respond in unbelief or in faith. You can either say, "Give me a sign that this is true", or you can say, "Be it done to me according to Your word", in spite of the fact that the word that has been spoken may bring you shame, disgrace, rejection, and misunderstanding.

The embracing of God's will does not always mean untold blessing in a social and wider circle. The decree that Zechariah heard that his wife would bear a child would remove their shame of barrenness when fulfilled, but Mary's decree would bring shame and rejection and social distancing. She did not know that that God already had that under control. When Mary said, "I am the handmaiden of the Lord, be it done to me according to Your word," she had no clue that an angel would be sent to her betrothed husband, or that Joseph would be obedient to what God told him to do. She didn't say to the angel, "If you tell Joseph to marry me, let Your will be done to me". She just said, "May it be done to me according to Your word". She was really willing to fully embrace all the rejection and loss that may come with her embracing of the will of God - that is death to self.

In Mark 8:11 and 12, Jesus said that an unbelieving generation asks for a sign. There was no outward sign that a child had been conceived in Mary's womb when she went off in haste to the hill country of Judah to visit Elizabeth - but the confirmation came in the leap of the baby in Elizabeth's womb. Mary didn't ask for a sign, but because she died to self and embraced the will and the word of God, she was given that sign. God sends signs and confirmations in response to faith, not in response to unbelief. Mary was full of the Word of God when she greeted Elizabeth. She quoted Hannah's prophecy from 1 Samuel. She also quoted Psalm 103:17 and Micah 7:20. Mary knew her place in the fulfilment of the prophetic word spoken many, many decades and centuries before.

So, let's look a little bit more at the topic of unbelief. Remember I said that God declared that those who had a wicked heart of unbelief would not enter His rest. Let's look at Romans 4:20. This is discussing Abraham, the father of faith's response to the promise of God. Romans 4:20 says, '*no unbelief made him waiver concerning the promise of God. But he grew strong and was empowered by faith as he gave praise and glory to God, fully satisfied and assured that God was able and mighty to keep His word and to do what He had promised*'. So unbelief is NOT fully satisfied that God is able to keep His word and do what He promises. Unbelief asks for signs. Unbelief will rob you of the experience of impossibilities being manifested. Do you remember the father in Mark 9:24 who asked the Lord to heal his son? And he said, "Lord, I believe! Help my unbelief". He recognized that unbelief was a problem to him, and so he triggered his faith and asked God to help him with his unbelief.

Jesus said, all things are possible to him who believes. So, unbelief robs you of experiencing the power of God manifesting in your life. Jesus was not able to do even one work of power in certain places because of people's unbelief. You can read that in Mark 6:5. So being led by your natural eyes, your mind and your carnal understanding and the wisdom of man will make you stumble and fall. Unbelief will make you waver. Abraham had NO UNBELIEF concerning the promise of God. If you have unbelief, you render faith powerless, because out of faith comes the power and the strength to endure till the manifestation of the promise.

Do you remember in Romans 11, it speaks about the natural branches being cut off because of unbelief, but Romans 11:23 says that if they don't persist in clinging to their unbelief, God has the power to knit those branches back into His eternal purposes. So, unbelief is not a fatal problem if you have suffered from unbelief and fear, IF you don't persist in clinging to it. God is able to knit you back into His eternal purposes for you if you repent of it and thrust it from you. Romans 4:20 concerning Abraham '*no unbelief made him waiver concerning the promise of God, but he grew strong and was empowered by faith*'. In fact, verse 18 says, '*human reason for hope being gone, he hoped on in faith*'. So, unbelief in your heart makes you weak and wavering and tossed by every wind of doctrine, but faith makes you FULLY SATISFIED AND ASSURED that God is able and mighty to keep His word and do what He's promised. Can you see how Zechariah, when he heard the angel's announcement, did not operate in faith, but in

unbelief, because he was not fully satisfied that God was able and mighty to keep His word and do what he had promised? He wanted another sign.

Hebrews 3:15 tells us that unbelief hardens your heart, so that His Word cannot take root there and cause your faith to bring forth fruit. Verse 12 of Hebrews 3 teaches us that a wicked, unbelieving heart will lead us to turn away and desert God - and we know that Jesus said, in the end times there would be a great falling away. This is connected to unbelief in people's hearts. It leads you to turn away and to desert God. The word 'unbelief' is G570 'apostia' in the Greek, and it actually means 'faithlessness'.

Hebrews 10:35 says that we must not fling away our fearless confidence in God's promises. It speaks about living by faith, and in verse 38 says, those who draw back and shrink in fear cause the Lord to have no pleasure in them. And I don't know about you, but I want God to have pleasure in me! The shrinking back in fear is connected to unbelief entering your heart, that you're not fully persuaded and assured that God is able and mighty to keep His word and do what He has promised.

Now let's read some scriptures about not fearing. Isaiah 41:10, God says, *'Fear not, for I am with you. Do not look around in terror and be dismayed. I am your God. I will strengthen you and harden you to difficulties. I will help you. I will hold you up and retain you with My right hand of rightness and justice. Behold, all they who are enraged and inflamed against you shall be put to shame and confounded. Those who strive against you shall be as nothing and perish.'* I mean, those are amazing words of promise from God. They could almost have been spoken to Mary. I wonder if she remembered that scripture. I wonder if those words helped her to say, "I am the handmaiden of the Lord, be it done to me according to Your word".

In John 14:27, Jesus was talking to his disciples, and He said, *'Peace I leave with you. My peace I give to you, not as the world gives. Do not let your heart be troubled, neither let them be afraid.'* So, Jesus himself says to His disciples, "don't let your heart be troubled. Don't be afraid. Don't let any unbelief into your heart". Remember, I spoke about crossing the Jordan into the promised land of inheritance, about how there's a descending and a dying to self? Just before Moses died and Joshua was going to take over and lead them across the Jordan, Moses said to Joshua, *'Be strong and courageous. It is the Lord who goes before you. He will march with you. He will not fail*

*you or let you go or forsake you. Fear not. Neither be dismayed'*. So, if someone says to you, "Fear not", it means that there's a possibility to be afraid at what you're going to face... But there is a reassurance that God goes before you and He is with you.

Do you remember the angel said to Mary, "Hail, O highly favoured one, the Lord is with you!" and then he tells her something that is going to put her into a social situation where she's completely rejected and possibly abandoned by her fiancé.... And yet, "Don't be afraid". Don't be afraid. The Lord is with you. Don't be afraid. Hebrews 13, the second half of verse 5 says, *'He himself has said, I will not in any way fail you, nor give you up, nor leave you without support. I will not, I will not, I will not in any degree leave you helpless, nor forsake or relax my hold on you.'* Verse 6 says, *'so we take comfort and are encouraged and confidently and boldly say, the Lord is my helper. I will not be seized with alarm. What can man do to me?'* So beloved, we are facing times of persecution ahead. I would suggest you learn Hebrews 13:5b & 6. Plant those words in your heart, so that when man comes against you, you can say, "the Lord is my helper, I will not be seized with alarm".

David in Psalm 27 said, *'The Lord is my light and my salvation. Whom shall I fear? The Lord is the refuge and stronghold of my life. Of whom shall I be afraid? When the wicked, even my enemies, came upon me to eat up my flesh, they stumbled and fell. Though a host encamp against me, MY HEART SHALL NOT FEAR.'* These are the words that need to be deeply planted in our hearts. David was fully persuaded that God was able and mighty to keep His word to protect and deliver him, and that God was with him, that the Lord really was the refuge and the stronghold of his life.

You know, Isaiah 11 tells us about the seven Spirits of God and speaking about Jesus, it says *'his delight was in the fear of the Lord'*. There is no room for any other fear in your heart if the fear of the Lord fills it. We have to come to a place of having full confidence in who we are to God and who He is to us. We are the beloved of the Lord!

You know, don't feel condemned if you've struggled with fear. Jesus wrestled with fear in Gethsemane. He knew what he was facing. And Mark 14:33 tells us that he agonized, and he was tormented by this fear of what He was facing - but the answer was submission to God's will. "Not my will, but Yours be done", and then an angel came and strengthened Him in spirit, it tells us in Luke 22:43. Do you remember He kept going

back to his disciples who had fallen asleep and said to them, "Pray that you don't enter into temptation". Temptation to do what? Temptation to fear. And, you know, because they slept rather than praying and reminding themselves who God was to them and how precious they were to God; because there were not on their knees praying and saying, "God, let Your perfect will be done in our lives", they entered into the temptation to fear. Mark 14:50 tells us that they all fled when Jesus was arrested. Fear got a hold of them. And how did it get a hold of them? Because of their unbelief. And we know also that Peter denied Jesus because of fear of what would happen to him if he acknowledged Him.

So, beloved, we need to watch and pray. We need to repent of unbelief that has allowed fear to gain entrance to our hearts. We need to embrace His will and grow in the fear of the Lord. He has left His peace, His shalom for you. And there is a blueprint, like a DNA code running from Mary in Galilee to Jesus in Gethsemane, showing you what a life looks like that has been laid down, that has said, "Not my will, but Yours be done", what a life conformed to His death looks like. When Mary embraced God's will and decree, she faced potentially what Isaiah 53:3 described (the prophetic word about Jesus), *'Despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, one from whom men turn their faces, and they considered him of no worth'*. Mary was facing all those things when she said, "Be it done to me according to Your word". She was willing to share in the sufferings of the son who would be gifted to the world in order for the will of God to be manifested in the earth.

Simeon also told her, when Jesus was presented at the temple as a baby, that a sword would pierce her own heart. And yet the angel said to her in Luke 1:28, "hail, O favoured one, the Lord is with you". Being favoured by God does not mean everything is going to go smoothly! When the Lord is with you, it does not mean that people are with you. Jesus said, "If they hated Me, they will hate you", and yet He said, "Here am I. I delight to do Your will". That is death to self. When you can say that, that is being conformed to His death! No matter the pain ahead, no matter the suffering, no matter the rejection and the abandonment, not my will, but Yours be done - that is the path to resurrection power. The Jordan must be crossed to enter the Promised Land of inheritance.

A king in waiting must descend to Gihon and receive the anointing poured from the horn of a faithful prophet to be consecrated to kingship. It's significant that Jesus was

anointed on the head for burial before he rode that donkey into Jerusalem. A king called by God and anointed by God rides a donkey. A horse is connected to the pride of man, but a humble bondservant who comes to do the will of the Father at the expense of his own life, rides a donkey. Those who are truly of Christ descend and are conformed to His death, before crossing and accessing resurrection power.

From Galilee to Gethsemane -The pattern has been demonstrated. We are the bondservants of the Lord. May it be done to us according to His Word. Fear has no power over a dead man or woman. May the power of the Spirit, of the Fear of the Lord be your portion, as you delight to do His will. Amen.