

# Filled with the Spirit of the Living God

by Fred Tomlinson

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*This sermon emphasizes the importance of being filled with the Holy Spirit, showcasing the transformation and distinctiveness that comes from surrendering to God and allowing the Spirit to work within. It delves into the continuous experience of being filled with the Spirit, not just as a one-time event, but as a perpetual state of yielding to God's control and guidance. The sermon draws parallels from the life of Stephen, highlighting how being filled with the Spirit results in a life that radiates the glory of God, even in the face of adversity.*

**Scripture:** Acts 5:32, Acts 6:5, Acts 7:55, Ephesians 5:18, 2 Corinthians 3:17, Acts 2:29, Acts 7:60, Acts 5:32

**Topics:** "Being Filled with the Holy Spirit", "Transformation through Surrender"

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## Description

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## Transcript

Well, hello to everybody. I am always grateful for the opportunity to talk to you and I'm grateful for that privilege today and just that God himself will succeed in speaking to many, many hearts, to your heart, whoever you are. And I think when I say I'm going to talk to you, that's really the way it is.

It's not preaching when, you know, what is preaching at the end of the day? But here I am just sitting quietly alone in this room, humanly speaking anyway, and with this unique privilege to talk to you. And I think I'd like to start like this. I've lived long enough, they're my opening words, look at that, in a couple of weeks.

The way I thought about it while I was getting myself ready this morning was if I'd been living my life on a grocery shelf, I'd be thrown away by now because I'm 10 years past the sell-by date, or I will be in a few weeks. I'm trying to catch up to Pete but he keeps rushing ahead of me. But I've lived long enough to have been exposed to a wide range of Christian voices and each voice straining to claim some prominence in the ministry marketplace.

And I've paused long enough with some to assess the value of their message. And sometimes with my Bible open, I've studied their charts of the epochs and dispensations of Scripture. I've watched others using the latest news bulletins to update their interpretations of end-time prophecies.

And this to say nothing of the cacophony of other claims. And as time has passed, I've been so thankful to God. Just time and time again I have thanked the Lord that in my crucial formative days of my life, that he has positioned me in lockstep with a small group of precious souls who wanted only to know him.

Whom to know is life eternal. How many times I have quoted Jesus' words when he said to those around him on that occasion, you search the Scriptures for in them you think you have life, but you won't come to me that you might receive life. That's a slight misquotation of the text.

But how true that is, how easily our human minds become alerted or get involved and we want to think things through and reason things through. And if we accumulate some knowledge and information, we feel that that's been a successful event. When really the only important thing, the really important thing is that we get to know him.

He who is alone the balm in Gilead, he alone who can heal the sin sick soul and he alone that ultimately brings us home to God. Amen. Amen.

Those last words just ring a particular note in my mind as I quote them, because just a day ago, two days ago, I was just quoting those words to a precious friend. And one or two of you here will know, either know already, but others may have heard. I'm talking about Rose McCleary, who's been a close friend to us and a pianist in our meetings over decades.

And while she went to be with the Lord a couple of nights ago, a couple of mornings, it was actually yesterday morning, forgive me, because it was during the night, she just slipped quietly into the presence of the Lord or into the, as I like to say, into the closer presence of the Lord. Amen. But isn't it wonderful that our greatest joy is this, that God has not left us merely clutching a book, even though that book is our precious Bible, which we believe to be the inspired inerrant Word of God.

But the wonderful thing is that at an unknowable cost, he, the Lord, has made an arrangement or a covenant by which our humanity can be indwelled by the Spirit of the Living God. Isn't that wonderful? Surely there's nothing more astounding, more wonderful, and more a mystery than this great fact that my humanity may be indwelled by the Spirit of the Living God. You need to say those words to yourself a few times, over and over.

It's wonderful. Well, I hope that you'll stay with me for a few minutes as we consider a little more of this transcendent mystery. I'm thinking of the person of the Holy Spirit.

Let's remind ourselves he is not unique to the New Testament. The Holy Spirit is the third person of the eternal Godhead. And so far as our Bibles are concerned and the degree of information that God has chosen to reveal to us, we find the Holy Spirit right at the very opening of the Bible.

In Genesis chapter one and verse two, we read how the Spirit of God was moving on the face of the deep, on the face of the waters. And then as we turn the pages of the Old Testament and work our way through, we discover that the Holy Spirit was there. He was active in various ways and particular issues that are described.

And we find him there in the Old Testament prophetically symbolized in many different passages. However, when we turn over into the New Testament, and there we find him again, but his activity in the earth is entirely new. His activity is utterly distinctive.

It has a sharp focus, which is clearly stated in Scripture. Jesus himself defined that focus very succinctly with those words when he said concerning the Spirit who was going to come, the Spirit of God, he said, he shall take the things of mine and show them unto you. The fact of the matter is when the Holy Spirit was given as he was given on the day of Pentecost, he had a new mission and a new purpose to fulfill in the earth.

And we could think of it in these terms that Jesus, the second person of the Trinity, came into this world to do the will of his Father, the first person of the Trinity. He came and Jesus on the cross performed a legal work. It wasn't a physical battle that he had with evil.

No doubt at all that he encountered the worst that the evil one could throw upon him and attack him with. But the fact is his essential work on the cross was a legal work and he accomplished that perfectly. He fulfilled it to the detail and satisfied his Father with the completeness of that finished work as we refer to his finished redeeming work.

Now the Holy Spirit is currently engaged in the practical application of that finished work of Christ upon the cross. This could be put in many different ways but I could say that he, the Holy Spirit today, is waking or awaking men and women and he is calling them out unto himself. He's calling them out and he is preparing a holy bride for the Holy Son of the Holy Father.

Amen. And this is the essence of what's happening and what's going on. There are all kinds of things that we can talk about, so many things that I've indicated already we can find based in the Bible and the teachings of the Bible.

But I want to encourage you to do what I suggested at the outset that I was privileged to be unable to do and that is to discover what the first primary issue is that has been eternally in the heart of God and that he is currently working out. We may learn and talk about and teach many other ancillary or associated things but the most important thing of all is that we discover the reality of God during the journey of this life and the Holy Spirit is given to perform this miracle and bring guilty, violent, helpless sinners such as me and such as you and to bring us into the benefit of that redemptive work of Calvary and recreate us, to give us a new birth and a new life that we may be new creatures in Christ and that we may know the unspeakable, indescribable mystery of the holy life of this living God dwelling within our own hearts in the here and now while we continue to abide. Praying for that dear sister I mentioned moments ago, it was wonderful to thank God for her life and for her ministry and blessing and friendship to us all but then ultimately to say farewell and hand her over to the Spirit of God to take her and catch her away peacefully into that closer place of fellowship, that closer experience of God's presence.

What a wonderful thing, this is the Gospel, this is the most important aspect of the Gospel and it blesses my heart even as I've been reminding myself again this morning and as I'm talking to you now and I pray that the Spirit of God will just quicken it all freshly to your heart also. There are many different ways in which I could proceed with this same theme. The way I have felt to do it, this is the way the word came to me originally, was with my heart focused on a truly wonderful man that we find in the Bible and his experience of this very thing I'm talking about is so succinctly presented to us in Scripture.

It's presented succinctly because we only knew him for a fleeting moment. His name was Stephen. He was one of the seven men that were chosen.

You remember, as we read in the sixth chapter of the book of the Acts of the Apostles, the twelve apostles, as they're referred to in the second verse, they said it's not reason that we should leave the word of God and serve tables and so they wanted to appoint some men who would take over that very practical responsibility. We won't stop to think about what that was in particular but it's fascinating that one of those men, perhaps we'll speak about another of them on another occasion, but one of those men was Stephen and as I've mentioned we see him just for a fleeting moment. Perhaps in a particular way we find him in the seventh chapter.

We can't stop to think about all these wonderful details but I think it was correct when someone suggested that maybe he was one of the most amazing preachers of the apostles and you would base that statement really on what you find and the way you find it in the seventh chapter of the book of Acts as he presents the truth of God in a masterly fashion but we discover that he has an excellent spirit and so he is I think a worthy example for us as we try to understand somewhat more of the ministry of the Holy Spirit. In the fifth verse of Acts chapter five I read, let me start in verse, let me back up, forgive me I'm going to verse three of chapter six, I misled you there. Wherefore brethren look you out among you seven men of honest report full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom whom we may appoint over this business but we will give ourselves continually to prayer and the ministry of the word and the saying pleased the whole multitude and they chose Stephen a man full of faith and full of the Holy Ghost and Philip and so it goes to the other names of the others that were chosen.

So when we find Stephen in our focus we're told right at the outset this man was an outstanding man. If you try to imagine as I have done the enormous crowd now of those that have responded to this fresh presentation of the gospel as it all bloomed in chapter two of this book. So we've got this enormous crowd, people who are sold out to God as they're described in the earlier chapter and chapters and so you choose out seven, seven out of this great crowd and Stephen's the first one mentioned and we're told that he was a man full of the Holy Ghost or full of the Holy Spirit or full of this Spirit of the Living God as we've termed it earlier and scripture turns it that way on other occasions.

Amen and I don't know how to express to you the sense of wonder and amazement of this seemingly simple statement and I could attempt to do it in different ways but you know it's something that you have to experience yourself in the final analysis. We can be taught about these things and there's a place for teaching about them. I trust that's what God will enable me to do a little more this morning but in the final analysis you only really know anything about this as you open your own life up to God and experience this in your heart but to think of the fact that I can be indwelt by the Spirit of God is just an awesome, awesome, awesome thought and I don't much like the word awesome because it's kind of, it's never been part of my earlier upbringing, it's in vogue today.

We don't want to just throw words around because we don't know how else to say something but what else do we say about this amazing, amazing grace of God that he would design such a thing that I can be filled with him, that you can be filled with him. This really prompts a question, what are we to understand or putting in a different way, how are we to understand the concept of being filled with the Spirit of God? You know, there's a very common snare that we run into with the scriptures and it's this. You see, as you will have read through the scriptures perhaps many, many times already, you quickly become aware that the Bible is packed with symbolism where God has had symbols incorporated into the text to help us to

understand things.

He takes features from the natural world in which we live and uses them to illustrate other masses, whatever they happen to be. This is certainly true of the person of the Holy Spirit. I mean, for example, we know that as we read through the Holy Spirit he's symbolised by fire, he's symbolised by wind, he's symbolised by water, he's symbolised by wine, he's symbolised by a cloud.

Now, the Bible is not saying that the Holy Spirit is any of these things, of course not, but these are features from the natural world that in their own particular ways portray something of the character or the activities or the ministry of the Holy Spirit of God. And that's very wonderful and we're grateful for that. The snare that I refer to is, or the trap that we can fall into if we're not careful, is that we make more of that symbol than we ought because all symbols and all types of these spiritual realities will all fall short at some point.

Not one of them fits perfectly. And so when the Spirit of God has inspired that these symbols appear in the text of our scriptures, we must take them for what they are and take from them what we can, but never ever daring to imagine that they fit perfectly, that which they are typifying or symbolising or whatever the case may be. And so this is true when we find statements concerning the experience of the Holy Spirit as being filled with the Holy Spirit.

Jesus can preach to the group on an occasion and say, if anyone's thirsty, come to me and drink, remember? John chapter 7. And then having completed those statements, then the Apostle John adds a parenthesis in the chapter and he says that when Jesus was saying this, he was talking about the Holy Spirit. So the idea of drinking, Jesus used this as an example, something that we're all familiar with, something that we're even trained to do before we leave our mother's womb, we're told, as we learn to suck in our mother's womb. Jesus is talking about something that's absolutely basic to everyone.

We all know how to drink and there's a wonderful feature right here for us and that is that you don't have to chew to drink, you just open your mouth and let it flow in. It's the simplest, easiest thing in the world and I think this is what Jesus is saying. If you're really spiritually thirsty, he's saying, come to me.

He's the fountain of living waters and drink, just receive it, just receive it into you and so on. That's very, very wonderful. But we mustn't come away with the idea, well when we receive the Holy Spirit, he sort of fills up all the various cavities in my body or something of the sort.

That would be a natural kind of way to think about it but that wouldn't be the way we're supposed to think about it. What does it really mean? This token of being filled with the Holy Spirit is not in that sense exactly what occurs. So what does happen? Well the actual word that is used, filled with, can be accurately translated controlled by.

Now that adds a new element. Now that element of course is not included in the symbolism of the Holy Spirit as water, of drinking. But nevertheless, this is a core issue that lies at the heart of receiving and experiencing the Holy Spirit.

It's the idea that each of us individually respond to him as he speaks to us and he woos us and he draws us and we surrender our entire beings to his control. I think the very phrase itself, to be controlled by, it implies totality and this is what God's after with each and every one of us. It's not a surrendering an hour on a Sunday morning to go to church.

That's sort of our duty fulfilled. Of course not. God is looking for men and women who will lay their entire lives down and yield our entire selves to him and so on.

This idea is sort of highlighted when we think of the word filled in some of the references. I mean, for example, we don't have to go very far in chapter five right here and the third verse, Peter asks the question, I won't go into the story, of Ananias and he said, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Ghost and keep back part and so on and so on. Now, it wasn't that Satan was filling his being, but he had allowed, Ananias had allowed himself to come under the control, the complete control of Satan and the rest is history.

Or we could read in a different way, the fact in the 17th verse, a different kind of situation has developed and I read in the second part of the 17th verse that the sect of the Sadducees were filled with indignation. They allowed indignation to control them. Or we could look in chapter 13 and verse 45, we won't go there, but that the people were filled with envy or in verse 45 of that chapter, they were filled with joy.

Do you see these various features were permitted to control their lives and the challenge for you and for me is that we willingly and totally and consistently surrender our entire beings to God that he may become my everything, my life. Amen. You know, following this, we draw conclusions and distinctions in Scripture.

For example, with respect to the new birth, tremendous subject, tremendously important subject to think about. But we understand that the experience of the new birth is a sovereign act of God, the Holy Spirit that takes place at a point in time. There's been a prompting by the Spirit of God, there's been an awakening that takes place.

And Charles Wesley says, I woke, the dungeon flamed with light, my chains fell off, my heart was free, my rose went forth and followed thee. And we understand this, that this act, this is like the initiation into the human Christian experience. And it doesn't matter whether a person has been the worst sinner that ever existed.

We've been thinking about the activities of Saul of Tarsus in one of the earlier sessions. Or on the other hand, to have come from a wonderful Christian home, we've been blessed with Christian parents and Christian teaching and example and so forth, which of course is a wonderful, wonderful privilege. But having looked at these two extremes and everything that's sort of on the spectrum in between, the bottom line is each and every individual has to come alone and respond personally to the working of the Holy Spirit that brings us into that new life of God.

That's the only way we become truly Christian, isn't it? And we look back on that occasion for many of us and we say, I know that that happened. Some people have some difficulty in pinpointing it precisely, but we know that God intervened in our lives and we became new creatures by His power and by His grace. But when we're considering the issue that's before us this morning, the fullness of the Holy Spirit, there's a distinction to be made because, and it's a crucial distinction, that we need to understand that the filling of the Holy Spirit is not merely a one-off experience that we have.

There has to be an initiation, of course, there has to be an initial experience of this, and I think I've been just talking about that in these last few moments. But this is something that has to be maintained, there has to be a continuation to it. What we're talking about is something that is, again, so incredibly wonderful.

To say it's life-transforming must be an understatement. And yet at the same time, we're conscious that we're surrounded by people, let's face it, who are calling themselves Christians and their experiences are like a roller coaster. It's up and down, up and down, and then we incorporate into our vocabulary and into our conversations phrases like, for example, oh, you mean Joe? Well, he's a spirit-filled man, or Jane, she's a spirit-filled woman.

But we're wrong to do that, because, you know, just because someone's had a, it may be, this is not true in every case, of course, I'm just trying to illustrate something. It may be, well, they speak in tongues, so they're spirit-filled, as though it happened as a moment in history, and it's always the case, it's sort of the label, the sticker. You know, you've had your injection, they slap a sticker on you, and that's you done, kind of thing.

But that's not the way this works, and if we think of it in this way, we're wrong, we're misled, and we'll miss what God really has for us. And we need to, you know, as we look around and see things like this happening, or we see the rollercoaster, or it may have been one's own experience all too often, you know, up and down, up and down, depending on one or a dozen other factors or a hundred other factors. But as I've said many times over these years, and I think I, if I'm not mistaken, I heard Watchman Nee say it first, I can't be sure on that, but that may be average, but it's not the normal Christian experience.

And we want to know what the normal experience is, according to the Bible, according to the teaching of the Word of God. We don't want to just sort of lean back casually and say, well, this is, you know, whether you say it or not, whether you really think it this way through or not, it's really not important, but we can sort of take on this sort of idea, this posture, well, this, you know, this is the way Christians live. But it's not.

And we need the Spirit of God to break through the shell of that kind of thinking and really alert us and wake us up to spiritual realities. And that's what I trust God is doing, even as we talk together in this particular way. We're talking about a perpetual infilling of the Holy Spirit.

I'm thinking of Ephesians chapter 5 and verse 16, where the Apostle Paul says, be filled with the Spirit. And the Greek text carries through the tense of it being a present and continuing experience. And so sometimes more literal translations put it this way, be being filled with the Holy Spirit, be continually being filled with the Holy Spirit.

One translation, which I think is quite literal as far as I can understand it, he says, all of you keep on letting yourselves be being filled with the Holy Spirit. I think my, you know, I'm not a Greek scholar, I know at least one person listening to me right now is. But in my translation, excuse me for being so presumptuous, I think what I'm to take from that statement in that portion of Ephesians 5 and 18 is this, be continually, consciously maintaining your life in a posture of yieldedness to the Holy Spirit's leading and nudging and allow his peace to stand guard in your heart always.

No, because I think that's about what it is. And I think and believe that's the normal Christian experience of the fullness of the Spirit. You know, in just turning over the pages here, I read about Stephen here.

And it says, just wondering how much to read, but let me just read one verse. He's speaking to the crowd here. And that is the crowd of the council that is before.

And verse 15, last verse of chapter six, it says, and all that sat in the council looking steadfastly on him saw his face as it had been the face of an angel. Amen. You know, I believe that the filling of the Holy

Spirit, being filled with the Spirit of the living God, being continually filled with the Spirit of the living God implies also that that individual is conspicuously filled with the Holy Spirit.

Stephen, this man who we're told several times is filled with the Spirit, is standing in front of the council answering for himself as it were. And those that are looking at him, they can see they saw something, they saw his face as it had been the face of an angel. Amen.

Remember that statement concerning Jesus on one occasion, he entered into a certain house and the text says, and he could not be hid. And I believe that to be a principle with the life of Jesus, with the life of Christ, with the infilling of the Spirit, if he's there, he cannot be hid. There will be a revelation, he will be perceived, he'll be seen, he'll be recognized, not by all, but he'll be recognized as being filled with something that is distinctive and unique.

In other words, when a man or a woman is filled with the Spirit of the living God, it will show. Do you believe that? It will show. It's a life that shows.

Jesus in Acts chapter 1, talking to his disciples there, he's telling them about the Holy Spirit and he says, and you shall be witnesses, you shall be. God is not just educating our minds with more information, he says, and you shall be. He's doing something that's real within us, that shows that in one of a hundred ways it's visible.

It's the distinctive hallmark. Jesus said, didn't he, they'll know that you're my disciples by your love, and all of that takes on a whole new significance as we move from the Old Testament or Old Covenant in which Jesus was standing and ministering, although he was the embodiment of the New Covenant, but he inaugurated it by his blood at the cross, of course, and the day of Pentecost, the love of God was shed abroad in the hearts of those who received him. By this you shall know, they saw in Stephen.

Glory to God. You know, one thing's for sure, this life of which we are thinking cannot be imitated. We know that the world has got a lot of really, really decent people in it who don't know anything about the Gospel, but they're just decent people, they're nice people, they're kind people, many of them, not all of them, you know that to be true, but that's great, and we're always glad when there's good people out there in our society or in our government or whatever it is, and we need more of them, God knows that.

But the fact is that the true Christian life, which is in fact the Spirit-filled life, will always have a distinctiveness about it that sets it apart, which is inimitable, it can't be copied. Any attempt to try and put on something that we perceive to be a feature of Christ-likeness will end up coming over as real phony, and this happens over and over again because, as we've said before, quoting someone else, many learn the words but few learn the song, and we can learn the words of Christianity, we know how we're supposed to behave and what we're supposed to say, and if I wanted to be foolish I could quote a number of things that I've heard people say, or I do hear people say, and trying to create an impression that we are what we are not is to be a hypocrite, it's phony, it's like a clanging cymbal and a noisy bonging sound, it's wrong, it's not right. You know it even comes through, dare I say it, it even comes through in preaching.

What we want to hear, what we must hear, what you must insist on hearing is that certain sound of the shepherd's voice speaking, listen for it, you make the decision, I must make the decision, and I have made that decision and I likely will continue as long as God enables me to continue. You're listening, you're always listening, you're watching, we can see the people, they're dressed appropriately, they hold the office, you know, that seems to be the proper place for a Christian minister or whatever and so on, but

you're always watching, you're always listening, we're not critical, we're not being critiqued, we're not critiquing, but the fact is there's a certain sound that I know, and when I hear it I know I'm hearing it, when I see it I know I'm seeing it, and may God stir our hearts, not that we just want to not be phonies, we want to be what God wants us to be and what he's able to make us to become. And so here's young Stephen, this young man, and he's in the midst of a completely hostile community and a hostile council, and he stands there, and in my mind's eye I see him standing there, and he's filled with the Spirit of the Living God, and his life is somehow brimming over with the life of Jesus.

It's like, you know, a break in the black, dark, stormy clouds, and there's a break, and just for a moment there we see the flash of the sun shining through. Amen. The fact is that Stephen, we could go elsewhere to find our texts, I should just do it from, since we're so close to it, I'll do it from here.

See Stephen's going to be stoned, you know that very well. They cast him out of the city, this is the end of chapter seven, they cast him out of the city, and they stoned him, and the witnesses laid down their clothes at a young man's feet, whose name was Saul, one young man looking at another young man. And they stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and he's saying, Lord, receive my spirit.

And he knelt down and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, he fell asleep. Amen.

You know, the fact is, he'd said just moments earlier, they'd been saying some things that cut them to the heart, they'd gnash on him with their teeth, but he being full of the Holy Ghost, verse 55, looked up steadfastly into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God. You know, Paul says in 2 Corinthians chapter three, he says in verse 17, now the Lord is that spirit, and where the spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. But we all with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the spirit of the Lord.

Amen. Amen. Stephen here, this young man with a heart filled with the spirit of God, his face is shining in spite of the evil that surrounded him and was attacking him.

But the text says he was looking up into heaven, he was looking and he said, I see Jesus. It's as though we can say he was looking into the face of Jesus, thinking of what Paul's just said, and as he's looking into the face of Jesus, his own countenance was transformed. He was changed into his image by the spirit of the Lord.

Hallelujah. You know, this is true of those who are the citizens of heaven. You know, you make your own judgment.

But I think to myself, if I'm being honest, I think the kind of hallmark that I'm looking at here is rare. It's a rare hallmark. And yes, there's a sense in which this that we're talking about is the very essence of of the new covenant, the new covenant life, the Christian life.

This is what it is. We're at the core, we're at the heart of it. If we haven't got this and we've just got words and words and more words, what have we got? Jesus would raise the very same question as we saw earlier.

But in Stephen, we see a man who is, he's not just filled with the spirit of the living God, but he was filled conspicuously with the spirit of the living God. And I can say in the spread of these couple of chapters, he was continually or continuously filled with the spirit of God to the end. You know, the glory never faded.

Amen. Saying that, I'm thinking of a man, I've quoted this before years ago. Some of you have listened to so many of my messages, you've heard so much that I have to say.

But I remember as a young man, I was married with one, two children at this point in time, and an older man, his name was Alf Bathurst. We travelled as a little family, 60 miles across the Pennines in the UK to Bradford to spend a weekend with them. And I remember Alf Bathurst saying to me on one occasion, he said, I'd like to take you somewhere next time you come.

And he did this. And he drove me further north and east from Bradford. And he said, there's someone I want you to see.

And he took me into a hospital type setting. And he showed me a man who was totally paralysed. And the reason Alf Bathurst took me there was to impress this great truth upon my heart, apart from just seeing this individual.

But I saw a man who was completely paralysed, but his face was radiant. His heart and love for Jesus was so real then. And you can imagine Alf Bathurst sort of teaching me and helping me to understand just what I'd seen.

You've seen a man who in spite of all of the human limitations and restrictions, he had the glow and the glory of God that had not faded. Amen. And this great experience that I've been talking about, you know, it's unconditionally available Acts chapter 2 and 29, you'll hear Peter telling us that.

It's available. It's for all. But it is conditionally experienced.

Do you get that? It's unconditionally available, but it's conditionally experienced. In Acts chapter 5, we need to look at this. In Acts chapter 5, in chapter 5, verse 32, and we are his witnesses of these things.

And so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God has given to them that obey him. Do you see that? We were there a few minutes ago, weren't we? He gives the Holy Spirit to those who obey him. That's the condition.

Are you willing to surrender, to capitulate, to give yourself wholly to God? That's the only way that we have any hope of the grace of God imparting this Holy Spirit into our hearts. I must surrender myself to a covenant union of obedience to God. You know, Sidlow Baxter, a Christian man of yesteryear, he once said this.

He said, Christianity is based on a book, because that's where we learn about it. He said, it's based on a book, it centres upon a person, capital P, and it expresses itself in a message. And then he went on to say, and it authenticates itself in an experience.

Can I just repeat that again, because it's so important. Yes, Christianity is based on a book. Yes, Christianity is centred on a person, the person of the Lord Jesus Christ.

It expresses itself in a message, the Gospel of God, and it authenticates itself in experience. Hereby we know that we know, not because it's here, but because it's here. Amen.

Do you love that song? Spirits of the living God, fall afresh on me. Spirits of the living God, fall afresh on me, we sing. Break me, melt me, mould me, fill me.

Spirits of the living God, fall afresh on me. May that be your prayer, my beloved. Amen.

Before I go, if you're watching this on my YouTube channel, Turn to the Scriptures with Fred Tomlinson, do click the subscribe button. This is purely to assure us that there are those out there who are identifying with us and praying for us. You will not be contacted unless you should request it.

But God bless each and every one of you, in Jesus' name. Amen.

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Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/rlpUjNuTt3E.mp4>

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