

The Spirit Filled Life

by Oswald J. Smith

The Spirit-Filled Life is a message about the importance of being completely controlled and empowered by the Holy Spirit, leading to a life of victory over sin and service to God.

Duration: 1:19:28

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, John 14:26, Acts 1:8, Romans 8:13, Galatians 5:16, Ephesians 5:18, 1 John 1:9

Topics: "Spirit Filled Life"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of living a Spirit-filled life for Christian workers, ministers, and missionaries. The command to 'be filled with the Spirit' is the focus, with the speaker desiring power over sin and power in service. The speaker then outlines five conditions for being filled with the Spirit: confession, renunciation, surrender, obedience, and faith. The sermon includes personal anecdotes and examples to illustrate the importance of these conditions in experiencing a Spirit-filled life.

Transcript

This morning I want to commence a brand new message, new for this series, the Spirit-Filled Life. I know of no subject more important for Christian workers, for ministers, for missionaries, than the subject, the Spirit-Filled Life. And I'm going to base what I have to say on Ephesians, the 5th chapter and the 18th verse.

Five words. Be filled with the Spirit. Be filled with the Spirit.

Before I get into the message, let me make three or four observations. First of all, I want to draw your attention to the fact that this is a command. It is not something that you and I can take or leave.

It's a very definite command. Now, I know the Ten Commandments are important. To a great many people, they are very important.

But I dare to say that this commandment is far more important than any one of the Ten Commandments ever given by God to Moses. Be filled with the Spirit. I know that the commandment to be baptized is important, especially to Baptists and to other groups.

But I dare to say that this commandment, be filled with the Spirit, is infinitely more important than the commandment to be baptized. I know that the Great Commission is important, the command to go into all the world and preach the gospel. But I dare to say that this commandment is even more important than the

commandment to evangelize the world.

Be filled with the Spirit. Because, you see, if you observe this commandment, if you obey this commandment, you will automatically obey every other commandment in the Word of God. This commandment includes all the others.

If you are filled with the Spirit, then you will want to do everything that you are commanded to do in the Word of God. And so I look upon this commandment as the most important commandment to be found in God's Word. Be filled with the Spirit.

The second observation I want to make is this. This commandment was not given to a carnal church. That's the most amazing thing.

It was given to a spiritual church. Now, if it had been given to the Corinthian church, you and I could have understood it. Because the Corinthian Christians were very, very carnal.

And if any church needed to be filled with the Spirit, certainly the members of the Corinthian church needed the Spirit's fullness. A carnal, a worldly church. But this commandment was not given to that church.

This commandment was given to one of the most spiritual of all the churches of the New Testament era. It was given to the Ephesian church. Now, if it was important for them, how much more important is it for you and for me? In this our day and generation, I wonder how many churches, I wonder how many, of how many churches it could be said, they're filled with the Spirit.

In every church I've visited the world over, I have found some who have never been filled with the fullness of the Holy Spirit. And that's true of any church anywhere in the world. And therefore, I consider this commandment the most important of all the commandments of God's Word.

It was not given to a carnal church. It was given to a spiritual church. And if it was necessary for the Ephesian church, one of the most spiritual of all the churches, how much more necessary is it for the churches of our day and our generation? How much more important is it for you and for me? You and I are commanded to be filled with the Spirit.

But I know what you're saying. You're saying, I have the Spirit. I received the Holy Spirit when I was converted.

And I've had the Holy Spirit ever since. Yes, but that's not the question. The question is, are you filled with the Spirit? Am I filled with the Spirit? I know you have the Spirit.

I know that when you were saved, the Holy Spirit came. And I know that at that time, He came into your life and into your heart and into my life and into my heart. And ever since you and I were converted, ever since you and I were saved, we've had the Holy Spirit.

If you do not have the Holy Spirit, you're not saved. If any man has not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His. That's a very definite statement.

And it refers to the Holy Spirit. If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His. The word Spirit spells with a capital S, indicating that a person is meant.

And therefore, if you and I do not have the Holy Spirit, we're not even saved. We haven't even been born again. For in order to be born again, you must have the Holy Spirit.

But the question is not, do I have the Holy Spirit? The question is, am I filled with the Holy Spirit? And am I living a Spirit-filled life? I have a glass of water here. The one who placed it here was a little bit stingy this morning. It's not very well filled.

Now, no one would look at that glass of water and say it's filled. The glass is filled with water. But everyone would say the glass contains water.

The glass has water. You can plainly see that there is water in the glass. But you can also see that the glass is not filled with water.

It's only partially filled. And so it is with a Christian. He may be filled and filled to the brim, or he may be only partially filled.

He may simply have the Holy Spirit and not be filled with the Holy Spirit. It would not be correct for me to say the glass is filled with water unless I had it filled right up to the brim, right up to the top. And you can see that there's a space in the glass that is not filled.

It's only partially filled. And you know that's the experience of the average Christian. The average Christian is only partially filled.

He has the Holy Spirit, but he is not filled with the Holy Spirit. And that's why God cannot use him the way he wants to use him. The command is, be filled with the Spirit.

Now I ask the question, why? Why is it necessary? Why must you and I be filled with the fullness of the Spirit of God? Why must we as Christians be Spirit-filled? There are two reasons, and I'm going to give them just as briefly as I possibly can. First, power over sin. Power over sin.

And second, power in service. Power in service. In one word, I can answer the question, why? And that word is power.

You and I must be filled with the Holy Spirit in order that we may have power. But first, power over sin. And unless you as a Christian have power over sin, you cannot honestly say that you are filled with the Holy Spirit.

Because when you are filled with the Holy Spirit, you are a victor over sin. I do not say that the sin nature has been eradicated. I do not say that you will not be conscious of failure and conscious of sin.

But I do say that you will have a power that you have never had before, a power over sin, and that you will be a victorious Christian. But unless you are filled with the fullness of the Holy Spirit, even though he may indwell, you will not have power over sin. Do you realize, as I do, that the average Christian has one besetting sin in his life? Most Christians overcome most of their sins.

Most Christians have turned away from most of their sins. But there is not a single Christian anywhere in the world but who has a besetting sin, one sin that at times has dominated and controlled his life. He has not been delivered from that one besetting sin.

He may be delivered for months, and then suddenly he may yield again. He may be victorious for weeks, and then suddenly he may collapse before that sin once more because he does not have the power of the Holy Spirit in his life to enable him to overcome even his besetting sin. And while you and I may conquer most of our sins, and that is true of all Christians, we overcome most of our sins, we conquer most of our sins, we turn away from most of our sins, but I dare to say that if you are honest, you will have to admit that there is one besetting sin in your life, and you are still having a battle with that one besetting sin.

Now, there is no remedy, there is no cure, there is no deliverance until you are filled with the fullness of the Spirit of God. Only then will that one besetting sin be conquered in your life. Now you say, Dr. Smith, is there any verse of Scripture that you can base what you have said on? And I turn to Galatians, the fifth chapter, and the sixteenth verse, and I read these words.

Listen now. Walk in the Spirit. Live in the Spirit.

Dwell in the Spirit. Abide in the Spirit. Be filled with the Spirit.

What's the result? And ye shall not, ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. And there's the only remedy I know anything about. If you and I want to overcome, if you and I want to be victorious, if you and I want to conquer, if you and I want to get rid of that one besetting sin, the only remedy, the only way you can ever accomplish it will be by walking, living, dwelling, abiding in the fullness of the Holy Spirit.

I know of no other remedy. I know of no other solution. I know that as I live in the fullness of the Spirit, sin is conquered.

Sin is overcome. I'm not saying it's eradicated. I'm not saying that I get rid of it and get rid of it forever.

We are delivered from the penalty of sin when we're saved. We are delivered from the power of sin when we're filled with the Spirit. We are delivered from the presence of sin when we meet the Lord Jesus Christ face to face.

And not until then will we see the last of sin. Not until then will we get rid of the presence of sin. Sin surrounds us.

Sin is on every side. We see it wherever we go. We meet it every time we look at the billboards in our cities.

We're confronted with it constantly. Sin is ever around us. Sin is ever confronting us and ever will until we're raptured and we see the Lord Jesus Christ face to face.

But God saves us from the penalty of sin when we're born again. He saves us from the power of sin when we're filled with the Holy Spirit. He saves us from the presence of sin when we meet the Lord Jesus Christ face to face.

Have you been delivered from the penalty of sin? If you have been saved, then you have. Have you been delivered from the power of sin? If you have never been filled with the Holy Spirit, then you have never been delivered from the power of that one besetting sin in your life. But when you are filled with the fullness of the Holy Spirit, then you are delivered from the power of sin.

And sin no longer dominates. And sin no longer controls. And sin no longer conquers.

You're a victorious Christian living a victorious life because the Holy Spirit indwells in power. And then in the second place, we must be filled with the Holy Spirit in order that we may have power in service. How long have you endeavored to serve the Lord? How often have you been disappointed? How frequently have you failed? Why is it that God does not use you? Why is it you cannot win souls to the Lord Jesus Christ? Why is it that there's a lack in your life when it comes to service? Are you going to serve God in the energy of the flesh or in the power of the Spirit? There are two ways that you can serve.

You can serve in the energy of the flesh and you'll not accomplish very much. Or you can serve in the power of the Spirit. And if you serve in the power of the Spirit, you can accomplish more in a single year than you can accomplish in a lifetime serving in the energy of the flesh.

And you've got to decide whether you're going to serve God in the energy of the flesh or whether you're going to serve God in the power of the Spirit. And only as you are filled with the Spirit will you be able to serve in the power of the Spirit. Therefore, it's of paramount importance that you and I as Christians should not only have the Spirit, but it's of paramount importance that we should be filled with the Spirit.

And how few of us are filled with the Spirit. How many of our church members have the Spirit but have never been filled with the Spirit? How many of our church officials know nothing whatever about being filled with the Spirit? How many of us as ministers of the gospel of Jesus Christ serve God a whole lifetime in the energy of the flesh? We run here and we run there. We work hard.

We labor. We toil. We're busy.

We're occupied. But it's all in the energy of the flesh. We see very few results.

Very little ever happens in our ministry because we're not laboring in the fullness of the Spirit. That's why we love to read the lives of men who have lived Spirit-filled lives and who have accomplished great things for God. Not because of them, not because of their gifts, not because of their talents, not because of their education, but because they have been filled with the Spirit and they're living in the fullness of the Holy Spirit.

And God uses them for his glory and for his honor. If you have the Spirit and you're not filled with the Spirit, you speak to a man who does not know Jesus Christ and little or nothing happens. If you're filled with the Holy Spirit, you speak to that same man.

Conviction settles upon him. Something happens in his life. A change takes place because a Spirit-filled man has dealt with him.

And if you want your life as a missionary or as a minister or as a Christian worker, if you want your life to count for God, you should see to it that you're filled with the fullness of the Holy Spirit. There isn't anything fanatical about what I'm saying. I'm talking about the normal life of a Christian, the kind of a life God wants every Christian to live, a Spirit-filled life.

So, first of all, we need the Holy Spirit's fullness in order that we may have power, power over sin. And second, power in service. That's what I look for all the time.

That's what I'm interested in constantly, power over sin, power in service. I want to live a life honoring to God. I want to be an overcomer.

I want to conquer. I want to be a victorious Christian. At the same time, I want power in service.

I want God to use me. I want to be of some value in his service. I want him to use me for his glory and for his honor.

Now I come to the heart of the message. How? How may I be filled? That's the question you're asking. That's the question everyone asks.

Who has been convicted of his need? How may I be filled? There are five conditions. And I'm going to deal with these five conditions one by one. And I want you to face them.

I use them by mentioning five words. The first word is the word confession. The second word is the word renunciation.

The third word is the word surrender. The fourth word is the word obey or obedience. The fifth word is the word faith or believe.

I want you to look with me at these five words for a few moments. Confession. Renunciation.

Surrender. Obedience. Faith.

First the word confession. That's where we start. And I'm talking to Christians now.

I'm talking to men and women who have been born again. And I say to you as I say to myself, the first word is the word confession. That's where we must start.

You realize that the sinner is never told to confess his sins. Have you ever realized that? You go through the New Testament Scriptures, if you will, and you'll discover that the sinner is never told to confess his sins. Never.

Do you remember the publican? Do you remember how he fell down before God in the presence of the other man? And do you remember how he cried out, God! God! Be merciful! Be merciful to me, a sinner. How many sins did he confess? Not one. Never even mentioned one.

Never confessed a single sin. Never mentioned a single sin. He confessed that he was a sinner.

He admitted that he was a sinner. He did not mention his sins. He did not confess his sins one by one.

He fell down stricken before God as he cried out, God! Be merciful! God! Be merciful to me, a sinner. He knew he was a sinner. No need to confess the individual sins.

Now, why didn't he confess his sins? Why is it not necessary for a sinner to confess his sins? Well, if I were to deal with a sinner, if I were to say to him, Now, kneel down. The first thing I want you to do is to confess your sins. Start to work now.

Work hard. Labor just as hard as you possibly can. Get busy.

Go to work and confess your sins. What would I be telling that sinner? I would be telling him that salvation is of works and that he is to work at the work of confession and work hard and that he is to labor and toil confessing his sins until the job has been done and he has confessed them all. What would I be doing? I would be asking him to do the impossible.

Have you ever met a sinner in your whole life who could even remember his sins? I haven't. Oh, he'll remember the big ones. If he murdered a few people, he'll remember them.

If he stole large sums of money, he'll remember those sins. If he blasphemed and swore and cursed, he'll remember those sins. But there will be hundreds upon hundreds of individual sins that he'll never remember.

He'll never recall them. And if he forgets one and the basis of salvation is the confession of sins, he might as well confess none. Because if he's got to confess his sins in order to be saved, he's got to confess them all.

And if he's going to confess them all, he's got to remember them all. And there isn't a sinner on the face of the earth who can remember all the sins that he has committed. It's absolutely impossible.

Therefore, I would be telling that sinner to do the impossible, to do something that he could not possibly do. Now, if it'll give him any peace or any joy or any comfort, I have no objection if he wants to mention a few of the big sins that have bothered him that he can remember without any difficulty. But I am not going to tell him that the basis of salvation is the confession of his individual sins.

I'm going to tell him to confess that he's a sinner. And when he confesses and recognizes the fact that he is a sinner, then he is coming before God the way God wants him to come before him, as a hell-deserving sinner. And he can pour out his heart in confession.

And he can confess, as the publican did, the fact that he's a sinner. He can cry out, God, be merciful to me, a sinner. But if I ask him to confess his individual sins, I'm going to base salvation on works.

And I'm going to say to him on this, you can remember and confess your sins and confess all of them and work hard at confessing, you'll never be saved. All I'm going to tell him to do is to confess that he's a sinner in the sight of God. And when he's ready to confess that he's a sinner in God's sight, God will immediately have mercy upon him, and God will forgive him every sin.

The ones he can remember, the ones he cannot remember, he confesses that he's a sinner in the sight of God. But what about the Christian? It's absolutely different when it comes to the Christian. The Christian must confess his individual sins, because, you see, at some time, he got off the track, he got away from God, he failed God, he lost the victory, he transgressed, and he's got to go back, back to the place where he failed, back to the place where he sinned, back to the sin that he committed when he grieved the Holy Spirit and lost the joy of God's salvation, and to some extent backslid.

The Christian has to confess his sin to God if he's going to be filled with the fullness of the Holy Spirit. Wasn't it so with Christian in Pilgrim's Progress? Didn't Christian have to go back when he lost his scroll? Do you remember it? He got up in the morning after having a night's sleep, he went on his way, but he did not go on his way rejoicing. There was a deadness to his experience.

There was no joy in his walk. It was hard going as Christian continued towards the celestial city. He couldn't understand what was wrong.

He was in misery. He was in torment. And then suddenly he reached his hand into his bosom.

He thought he would get out his scroll and read it and that that might help him. And to his amazement and astonishment and disappointment he found that the scroll was not there. He had lost his scroll.

What did he do? Did he just confess it and say, Lord, I've lost my scroll and go on? No. He was a Christian. He was a pilgrim.

He went back. He turned around. He retraced his steps.

How far back did he go? He went back to the place where he failed. He went back to the place where he lost his scroll. He went back to the place where he had fallen asleep.

And when he got back to that spot, there he saw lying on the ground his scroll. He picked it up. He turned around.

He started again. He went on his way rejoicing. Not because he had confessed that he had lost his scroll, but because he went back to the place where he had lost it and he found it again.

My friends, if you're a Christian and you lose the joy of God's salvation and your walk is not what it ought to be and you're not rejoicing in your experience in Christ, you had better go back. You had better retrace your steps. You had better find the place where you failed God.

You had better seek God and ask Him to show you where you failed and when you failed. And then go back to the place of failure and there confess your sin, confess your failure. Pick up your scroll.

Get right with God again and then go on your way rejoicing. So the Christian has to confess his sin when he fails God, when he goes astray, when he does something that has grieved the Holy Spirit, when he has transgressed he'll never be able to go on his way rejoicing until he retraces his steps to the place where he lost his scroll. Bunyan knew all about it.

John Bunyan understood it and he sent Christian back to the place where the scroll had been lost and you have to go back and I'll have to go back and when you ask God to reveal the place where you failed all you have to do is to go back to that place, recover your scroll and go on your way rejoicing. Now what verse in the Bible, what verse is there for you and for me in such a situation? There's that wonderful verse in 1 John, the first chapter, the ninth verse and I want you to read it like this. If we, not sinners, not the unsaved, John never wrote his epistle to the unsaved.

He wrote his entire epistle to the Christians, every bit of it and he classes himself, he puts himself in the class with those who perchance have failed and he says if we, we Christians confess, confess our sins, the sins committed by the Christians, if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just, faithful because he promised, just because he atoned to forgive us, the Christians, our sins, the sins of the Christians, all the way through that entire verse. Not a word for the sinner. I know there are some Christians who deal with unsaved people and use this verse.

I never do. For this verse is not for the unsaved. This verse is for the children of God.

This verse is for the Christian. John includes himself and he was a Christian. And he says if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

And on the basis of that verse, I say the Christian has to confess his sins. And then there's this last thought. Generally, there will be one besetting sin that will have tripped him up.

And it's that one besetting sin that he'll have to confess if he's going to get right with God. And I've never met a Christian yet but who has one besetting sin. One sin that dogs his footsteps.

One sin that follows him wherever he goes. One sin that perchance he has never overcome or conquered. And when he fails God and commits that one besetting sin, he had better get back to God quickly by confessing that one besetting sin and seeking God's forgiveness and the atoning blood.

And only as he picks up his scroll after admitting that he has dropped it, after confessing that he has lost it, only as he picks up his scroll can he go on his way rejoicing. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. We come now to renunciation.

In the 66th Psalm of the 18th verse you have these striking words, If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me. That verse has spoken to me again and again and again, especially in times of great temptation. If I regard iniquity, if I harbor iniquity in my heart, it doesn't say if I practice sin, if I indulge in sin.

It says if I harbor iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me. He'll not even bend down and listen to what I have to say. And so this second condition that I mention is renunciation, the renunciation of sin.

And no one can be filled with the Holy Spirit until he's ready to renounce every sin in his life, especially that besetting sin of his to which he has been addicted perhaps for years. There must be the renunciation of sin. Would you say to me this morning, Dr. Smith, I'm not willing to renounce my sin.

I love my sin. I love to indulge in it and it doesn't do me much harm and it doesn't affect anybody else. It only affects me personally.

It's between me and God and I love it. I enjoy it and therefore I'm not willing to renounce my sin. That reminds me of the day when the Lord Jesus Christ turned to a crippled man at the pool and said to that man, Wilt thou be made whole? There must be a willingness to be made whole, a willingness to renounce sin, a willingness to depart from iniquity before there can be any victory over sin or any deliverance from sin.

You and I must come to the place of submission. We must be willing to turn away from our sins, even our besetting sins. We must be willing to renounce our sins.

Now this man at the pool was willing. He was perfectly willing. He said, I try again and again but every time I try, somebody gets ahead of me and steps down before me and here I am.

I'm still a cripple. I'm still lying at the pool. I have not yet been made whole and yet I'm willing.

Now he was perfectly willing. He was willing to get to that pool. He was willing to get into the pool.

He wanted to be made whole but he was prevented. Someone stepped down before him and therefore he never made it and Jesus had to touch him and Jesus had to heal him. And so you and I must ask ourselves the question first of all, am I willing? It's a very important question.

Am I willing? Or do I so love my sin, my besetting sin, do I so love it that I'm not even willing to give it up? I'm not willing to depart from it. There must be willingness before there can be deliverance but there's something else. Willingness is not sufficient.

In the second place, there must be determination. Both willingness and determination. It's one thing to be willing to give up your sin.

It's another thing to be determined to give up your sin. Do you remember the prodigal son? He was willing. He was perfectly willing.

He abhorred the life he was living. He despised the hogs he was tending. He wanted to get away from them in the worst way possible.

He was willing. He was anxious. He would have given anything to have gotten away from those hogs but he never got away.

He sat there with the hogs. He fed them day by day. He abhorred the life he was living.

He despised what he was doing. He was perfectly willing but there was one thing he lacked. He was not determined.

There was no determination. His willingness did not become determination. And even though he was willing, he did not get away from the hogs because he was not determined.

He did not mean business. And I want to say that even though you and I may be willing, perfectly willing, to turn away from our sins, even though we may despise our sins, even though we may be glad to get away from them, and anxious to be delivered, unless there is determination, we'll never get away. Willingness must be followed by determination.

And determination must take the place of willingness. And only when you and I are determined will we get away. The Prodigal Son was willing.

But the Prodigal Son was not determined. And therefore, he did not get away. As he sat there looking at those hogs, anxious to get away from them, anxious to be delivered, there came a moment when determination took the place of willingness.

And suddenly he said, I will arise. And with those words he sprang to his feet. I will arise and go.

And he turned his back on the hogs. And he never even looked over his shoulder. He lost all interest in the hogs.

And he headed straight for his father's home. And he never looked back until he found himself in the arms of his father. He was delivered.

Because he was not only willing, but he was also determined. Now the same is true in regard to sin. Willingness must be changed into determination.

And you and I may be willing, perfectly willing, and never get away. But the very moment we become determined, we can turn our back on our sins, we can walk away, and we can be delivered. And you and I have to ask ourselves a question.

First, am I willing? And second, am I determined? And the moment you and I are determined, the moment we mean business with God, willingness will change into determination. And we can get away from those sins of ours, even our besetting sin, and be delivered by the power of the Holy Spirit in our lives. I will rise

and go.

That's renunciation. Now in the third place, surrender. So far we have been talking about the negative side.

Now we're going to speak for a moment about the positive side. Not only must there be confession, not only must there be renunciation, there must also be surrender, the surrender of the life to the Lord Jesus Christ. What does God say? Yield yourselves.

Give yourselves. Surrender yourselves. Submit.

Yield yourselves unto God. And when you and I are ready to surrender completely and for all time to come to the Lord Jesus Christ, not only having confessed our sins, not only having renounced our sins, but having become willing to surrender our lives to the Lord Jesus Christ, to do his will, to serve him, to follow him, to obey him, to live for him, to glorify him, when we are ready to surrender, then we're getting close to the place where we can be filled with the Holy Spirit. And that surrender can become a reality in our lives.

Yield yourselves unto God. You remember Sam Jones? Sam Jones, a great Southern American evangelist. He has been gone now for a number of years.

Sam Jones one day received a letter from the cowboys of Texas, inviting him to come from his home in Philadelphia to Texas to hold an evangelistic campaign in their midst. Sam Jones felt led to accept the invitation. He left Philadelphia, he journeyed to Texas, and for two weeks he preached the gospel of Jesus Christ to the cowboys of Texas.

When it was all over, as they came to the end of the campaign, the cowboys wanted to remunerate Sam Jones. They wanted to give him a love offering. They felt that the laborer was worthy of his hire and that he should receive some compensation for his ministry.

But they had no money, not a single cent in any of their pockets. And they didn't know what to do. They didn't know how they could give him a love offering.

And they allowed Sam Jones to go back to the city of Philadelphia with no remuneration, no love offering of any kind whatever. Sam Jones went back. A number of weeks passed by.

Then suddenly one day he received a telegram. It was from the cowboys of Texas. It read like this.

We are sending you a love offering. We are shipping you a carload of broncos. And Sam Jones looked in amazement at that telegram.

What am I going to do, he said, with a carload of wild horses in the city of Philadelphia? His friend was standing beside him. I said, his friend, it's very easy. Hold an auction sale.

Sell the broncos and you'll get your money. You'll get your love offering. Put it in your pocket.

Sam Jones thought it was a good suggestion. So he held an auction sale. He sold the broncos.

All except one. He kept the finest looking bronco for his son. He wanted to give that bronco to his son as a gift.

And that's what he did. But the son had never, had never in his life been on the back of an unbroken bronco. And Sam Jones wondered what he could do.

He called the cowboy to him who had brought the carload of broncos to Philadelphia. He said, when you take this bronco, will you break him so that my son can ride him? Yes, sir, said the cowboy. I'll be glad to.

How much will you charge? Fifteen dollars, said the cowboy. All right, said Sam. Take him away.

Break him. The cowboy disappeared with the bronco. Two weeks later, he came back.

Is he broken, said Sam. Yes, sir, he's broken. Can my son ride him in perfect safety? Yes, sir.

Your son can ride him in perfect safety. All right. Here's your fifteen dollars.

The father thought that before allowing his son to ride the bronco, he had better mount himself and make sure that the cowboy had broken the bronco. He started toward the bronco. The cowboy came running up, waving his hands in alarm.

Why, said Sam. What's the matter? What's gone wrong? Oh, said the cowboy, he's only broken on one side and you're mounting from the wrong side. Oh, said Sam, that'll never do.

My son might make a mistake and he might mount from the wrong side. How much are you charged to break him on the other side? Fifteen dollars, said the cowboy. All right, said Sam.

Take him away. Break him on the other side. Another two weeks passed by and again the cowboy came back leading the bronco.

Is he broken, said Sam. Yes, sir, he's broken. Both sides? Yes, sir, both sides.

Your son can mount him with perfect safety now from either side. All right, here's your fifteen dollars. Do you know the average Christian is only broken on one side? He'll do this, but he won't do that.

He'll go here, but he won't go there. He'll labor in the foreign field, but he won't do anything in the home field. Or he'll serve in the home field, but he's unwilling to go to the foreign field.

He's like the bronco. He's only broken on one side. And then he wonders why God doesn't use him.

Why the years pass by and he's not used of God. He's been highly educated. He's been well trained.

He's gone to college. He may have gone to seminary. And he sees God using another man who has had very little education, very little training, who has never gone to college, who has never been in a seminary, and yet he's being used mightily of God.

And he can't understand it. Here I am, he says. I've been to college.

I've been to seminary. I've had a magnificent education. God uses this man who has had little or no education, and he doesn't use me.

Why is it? I can't understand it. He doesn't realize that he's only been broken on one side, that God can't trust him. He'll do this, but he won't do that.

He'll go there, but he won't go here. He's only broken on one side, and God cannot rely upon him. God cannot trust him.

The man God uses is the man who has been broken on both sides, the man who has been totally surrendered and totally yielded to the Lord Jesus Christ. That's what I mean by surrender. Unless you and I are broken on both sides and thoroughly surrendered to the Lord Jesus Christ, there isn't any way that God can use us.

Sometimes, very, very seldom, I tell how God broke me. I'm going to take a moment to tell it this morning, if I may. When I was 25 years of age, after having graduated from the Toronto Bible College, where I had spent three years, and having graduated from McCormick Theological Seminary, Chicago, the largest Presbyterian seminary in the world, after having graduated from that seminary, where I had spent another three years, six years in theology, and then having come to Toronto and having attended Knox College here in Toronto, the Presbyterian College of the Presbyterian Church of Canada, after having spent a year in Knox College making seven years of theological studies altogether, after having taken that training to prepare myself to some extent at least for the ministry that day came when at 25 years of age, I was called to Dale Presbyterian Church.

I became pastor at 25 years of age of a church seating 1,800 people. And for three and one-half years, I ministered in that church, preaching to great audiences, Sunday after Sunday. And I was only 25 years of age when I commenced my ministry.

There I labored for the Lord Jesus Christ. At the end of three and a half years, I resigned from Dale Presbyterian Church. I thought that I could easily get another church just as large as Dale, and I scarcely gave it a second consideration.

I started preaching for a call, first of all in some of the larger churches of Toronto and other places. But to my utmost astonishment and amazement, I never received a single call of any kind whatever. After preaching in the larger churches of Canada and not getting a call, then I commenced to preach in some of the smaller Presbyterian churches of Canada.

But you know, even those smaller churches didn't want me, and I never got a call, though I did my best. And then, in humiliation and desperation, I finally turned to churches of other denominations. I even preached in Baptist churches.

But you know, even those Baptist churches were not interested. I preached in independent churches, undenominational churches, and those churches were not concerned. And one day, I received an invitation from a little mission, a rescue mission, seating about 100 people.

Now, listen. I had been pastor of a prominent Presbyterian church seating 1,800 people. I had seen that church packed to the doors, jammed with people listening to the gospel.

God had now brought me so low that I was willing to consider a little mission seating 100 people. And I said to God, if I get the call to this mission, I'll take it. I'll accept it.

I'm perfectly willing. I'll never forget the night I preached in that little mission. It was about half-filled.

There were about 50 people present. I preached one of my best sermons. I did my dead-level best.

I preached my heart out. And when I had finished, the treasurer quietly handed me a \$5 bill and walked away. And from that day to this, I've never heard from that mission.

Even that little bit of a mission didn't want me. I couldn't even get a call to a mission that paid its pastor \$5 per Sunday. And I was facing starvation.

The wolf was approaching the door. I had a wife, and I had a son to support. I had been trying to buy my home.

There were times when we didn't have sufficient on the table to nourish us, when we had to go without. And I was becoming desperate. I didn't know what to do.

I couldn't get a call to any church of any kind, whatever. No denomination wanted me. No church invited me.

Even though I had headed up the work of a great Presbyterian church seating 1,800 people for three and a half years. Suddenly, Paul Rader came to the city of Toronto, bringing his song leader, Arthur W. McKee. He had been pastor of the great Moody Church in Chicago.

He came to our Massey Hall, at that time the largest building we had in the city, seating 3,400 people. He came to hold an evangelistic campaign. I'll never forget it.

And though I was discouraged, and though I was on the bottom rung of the ladder, and though I couldn't find anything to do, and though I didn't know which way to turn, I said to myself, I'll attend the meetings of this campaign. And I did. And just to test God to see whether or not he was ever going to use me again, or whether I was on the shelf for life, I would never again preach the gospel.

Though I spent some seven years preparing, and though I felt I might never proclaim the message again, I went to the head usher, and I said, Will you let me usher in Paul Rader's campaign? Certainly, he said. We'll be glad to have you usher. He gave me the outside aisle of Massey Hall.

He knew there wouldn't be many people coming down that aisle. And he knew that I had never ushered in my life. And I had never taken a course in ushering.

And I didn't know anything about ushering. I had been a Presbyterian minister. How could I usher? Others had done the ushering in my church.

I never had. But I started ushering in that side aisle in Massey Hall. I'll never forget it.

I'd only been ushering a few minutes when I saw the head usher call the assistant usher to him. And they started talking together, and I saw that every few moments they were looking in my direction. I realized they were talking about me.

I realized that my ushering was not satisfactory, that I was not doing a good job. I didn't know how to do it better. Suddenly, I saw the assistant usher leave the head usher, come walking rapidly toward my aisle.

He didn't even tell me that he was going to take over. He just took over and started ushering. I went to the back of Massey Hall.

I sat down in a pew at the very back of the auditorium, placed my face, my head in my hands, let the tears pour down my cheeks and my eyes. I said, Lord, it's quite evident that I'm through for life. I can't even usher, let alone preach the gospel.

It's all up with me. I'll never be able to do anything for thee again. I'm finished.

And for three days I sat there at every service, with my heart broken, wrenched, and torn beyond expression, knowing that my family was facing starvation. At the end of three days, I said to myself, well, perhaps God will use me again. Perhaps if I were to do some personal work, I might be able to accomplish something at least.

I went to the head personal worker. I'll never forget it. I said, will you allow me to do personal work? Certainly, he said.

We'll be glad to have you do personal work. In Paul Reader's campaign, the personal workers all sat in a row on the front seats. They were reserved for the personal workers.

As people came down the aisles to be dealt with in the inquiry room, the head personal worker would point toward one of the personal workers, indicate that he was to follow the seeker to the basement of Massey Hall and deal with him there in the inquiry room. Night after night, men and women walked down those aisles as Paul Reader gave the invitation. The head personal worker pointed to this one and that one until everyone had sooner or later gone down to the basement to deal with souls and lead them to Jesus Christ.

But never once did he point to me. Never once. I never got a chance to go down to the basement.

I never got a chance to lead a single soul to Christ. I was ignored while others were being used. At the end of another three days, I left the front seats of Massey Hall.

Again, I went to the back and sat down in one of those back seats. And for another two or three days, I sat there with the tears in my eyes and with my heart broken beyond expression. I'll never forget it.

I said, Lord, it's all up with me. My training is of no value. I'll never be used again.

There's nothing I can do. But after sitting there for a little while, I saw that the ushers were carrying great armfuls of hymn books up and down the aisles. And while they were ushering the people to their seats, they were selling those hymn books in the aisles of Massey Hall.

And I said, Lord, I'll make one last attempt. Perhaps I'll be allowed to sell hymn books in the aisles. I went back to the man who was in charge of the book stand.

And I said, Will you allow me to sell hymn books in the aisles like the ushers are doing? Certainly, he said. And he piled up a load of hymn books on my arm and sent me out to one of the aisles to sell hymn books. And I started selling hymn books in the aisles.

Those were the days when a cloth-bound hymn book only cost 25 cents. And I sold a great many of them. Suddenly, something happened.

Arthur W. McKee, a man who stood as tall as Paul Rader, 6 feet, a big man, every sense of the word, the song leader, suddenly stepped to the front of the platform. He made an announcement that almost took

my breath away. He said, My friends, we've got a new hymn in this hymn book of ours.

It's entitled, Saved. He said it was written by that young man down there who was selling hymn books in the aisle. And he pointed his finger directly at me where I was busy selling hymn books.

I turned my back on him as quickly as I could. I went on selling hymn books faster than ever. I tried to get to the back of the auditorium.

I was so embarrassed I didn't know which way to look. And then that great audience, 3,400 of them, started singing that hymn of mine, Saved. I'll never forget it to my dying day.

It was the first time the hymn had ever been sung in Massey Hall. It was the first time I'd ever heard it sung by any congregation. I've heard it often sung since.

It's in this hymn book, of course, and it's in many, many, many other hymn books because it very soon became world famous. Saved, saved, saved. My sins are all forgiven.

But that night, I went home walking on air. I said to myself, God is not through with me. My training, seven years, has not been in vain.

God is going to use me again. God is going to open up a work for me somehow, somewhere. And I'm again going to have the opportunity of proclaiming the blessed gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

And I went home that night in the clouds. I haven't time to continue the story except to tell you this. It wasn't very long until I was led of God to build the Great Alliance Tabernacle on Christie Street here in this city, an auditorium seating 1,800 people, the largest church in the Christian Missionary Alliance in the entire world.

And for five and a half years, I had the unspeakable joy of ministering with the Christian Missionary Alliance, preaching to vast crowds of people, seeing as many as 1,000 people turned away, unable to get seats, after 2,000 people had been crowded into the auditorium. And then there came the People's Church, founded when I was 38 years of age, the People's Church in which we are now worshipping. Founded some 46 years ago.

No, some 28 years ago. Founded some 28 years ago. Forty-five.

Forty-five, is it? 1928. 1928, that's right. Founded 1928, some 45 years ago, and still in operation.

And I'm still connected with it. But I had to go through my Gethsemane. I had to be broken.

You see, God could not use me until he broke me. He knew the plan he had for the future. He knew my future ministry.

And then suddenly one day, soon after the experience I've described, there came the call to Spurgeon's Tabernacle in London, England. And I crossed the Atlantic Ocean, and I found myself standing on the very spot behind the world's most famous pulpit, the pulpit of Spurgeon's Tabernacle in London, England. And for a number of weeks, I carried on that great work in London, England, in Spurgeon's Tabernacle, an honor that I never expected ever would have come to me.

And I, too, looked up at those two great galleries, one above the other, and saw that great crowd of people to which Spurgeon had preached in years gone by. And I have the privilege of proclaiming the message of God's salvation in the most famous church on the face of the earth, Spurgeon's Tabernacle, London, England. And listen, from that day to this, for every invitation I've been able to accept throughout the world, I've had to refuse about nine out of ten.

I've been so busy that I've had to constantly refuse invitations. And God has kept me busy all down through the years. From the time he broke me until this present time.

God didn't want me to get a swelled head. God wanted to keep me humble and low so that he could use me in a great spiritual work for him. And now I've had 21 world tours in evangelism.

I've visited 70 different countries throughout the world, and I've been here in the people's church all these years that have passed and gone. All because God got a hold of me and broke me. Because before he could use me, he had to break me.

Has he broken you? Is that why you're not used of God, because you've never been broken? Do you want God to use you? Are you willing to be broken? Then there's obedience. The Bible says he gives the Holy Spirit to those who obey him. And I need not dwell on that.

I need not tell you that unless you're willing to obey, God is not going to fill you with the Holy Spirit and trust you with his fullness. Last of all, there is faith. You'll never have to wait.

You'll never have to beg and plead. You'll never have to entreat God to fill you with the Holy Spirit. The moment you meet the conditions, these four conditions that I've mentioned, you'll be filled with the Holy Spirit.

For God is more anxious to fill you than you are to be filled. And he's waiting for you to meet the conditions. And I ask you this morning, have you confessed? If you haven't, then do it and spend a few hours at it.

And spend a few days at it if necessary. Because the more you confess, the more God will reveal sins that need to be confessed. Start confessing.

Have you renounced? If you haven't, then make up your mind that you're going to renounce everything. Have you surrendered? If not, then take that step and surrender wholly to Jesus Christ. Have you obeyed? Are you an obedient Christian? Then you can look up into the face of God and in simple childlike faith, you can trust him for the fullness of the Holy Spirit.

And then you'll accomplish more in a single year than you can accomplish in a lifetime if you work in the energy of the flesh. There are only two ways to work. One is in the energy of the flesh.

There are thousands of pastors and preachers and ministers who are working in the energy of the flesh, using their own talents and depending upon their own gifts. Or you can work in the power of the Holy Spirit. And you've got to decide whether your ministry is going to be carried on in the energy of the flesh or in the power of the Spirit.

Therefore, I say to you, be filled with the Spirit. Shall we bow together in prayer?

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