

# The Challenge of Pentecost

by Samuel Chadwick

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of the fullness of the Spirit in the Christian life, highlighting its transformative power and the challenges that come with it.*

**Scripture:** John 14:26, Acts 1:8, Acts 2:4, Galatians 5:22, Ephesians 5:18

**Topics:** "Holy Spirit", "Christian Service"

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## Description

Samuel Chadwick preaches on the challenges and importance of Pentecost in the Christian faith, emphasizing the gift of the Spirit as the soul of our faith, the source of Christian experience, and the dynamic of Christian service. The fullness of the Spirit is the blessing of Pentecost, bringing fire, power, courage, and joy through the indwelling Presence. The effects of this fullness are seen in transformed knowledge, character, and power for service, as demonstrated by the apostles on the Day of Pentecost. The sermon challenges believers to measure up to the standard of Pentecostal fullness in assurance of heavenly things, power over sin, separation from the world, and effectiveness in service.

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## Transcript

Pentecost challenges the very citadel of our faith, The gift of the Spirit is the distinguishing feature of the Christian religion. It is the very soul of our faith. In His indwelling Presence. is the secret of all Christian experience, and in the abiding energy of His power is the dynamic of all Christian service. The promises concerning the Spirit challenge us. The record of the day of Pentecost challenges us. The history of the Christian Church challenges us. Do we believe in the Holy Ghost? If we do, what is the practical proof of our faith?

### The Fullness of the Spirit

The blessing of Pentecost is the blessing of fullness. The symbols of wind and fire reveal the mission and quality of the Gift, but the essential truth is that they were all filled with the Holy Ghost. Fire, power, courage, and joy had their source in the fullness of the indwelling Spirit. They overflowed because they were filled to overflowing. They had already received the gift of the Spirit for salvation. In the Upper Room on the first day of the Resurrection the Risen Lord had breathed on them and said: "Receive ye the Holy Ghost." Pentecost was a second gift, which verified and completed the first in an infilling Presence and an overflowing power. It is the fullness that makes the difference. In a memorable passage William Arthur in "The Tongue of Fire" illustrates the difference fullness makes. "A piece of iron is dark and cold; imbued with a certain degree of heat it becomes almost burning, without any change of appearance; imbued with

a still greater degree, its appearance changes to that of solid fire, and it sets fire to whatever it touches. A piece of water without heat is solid and brittle; gently warmed, it flows; further heated, it mounts to the sky. An organ filled with the ordinary degree of air is dumb; the touch of the player can elicit but a clicking of the keys. Throw in not other air, but an unsteady current of the same air, and sweet, but imperfect and uncertain, notes immediately respond to the player's touch; increase the current to a full supply, and every pipe swells with music. Such is the soul without the Holy Ghost; and such are the changes which pass upon it when it receives the Holy Ghost, and when it is filled with the Holy Ghost."

### The Blessing of Fullness of the Spirit

The blessing affects the whole being. The seat of the Indwelling Presence is the innermost recesses of the spiritual being, but it permeates, energizes, and controls every faculty of our nature. It is another incarnation of which the Body is the consecrated believer. The Holy Ghost clothed Himself with the waiting Disciples in the Upper Room, and He still clothes Himself with consecrated believers. He clothes Himself, and they are clothed in Him. In them He finds a Body, and in Him they find the power of spiritual expression and execution. Without confusion, without loss of personal consciousness, without change of inherent qualities, there are mutual appropriation and oneness of operation.

The effects are seen in the apostles on the Day of Pentecost, and in every particular the experience corresponds to the promise. Jesus had said the coming of the Spirit would bring fullness of knowledge. "In that day ye shall know." Things He could not teach them they would know with certainty when the Spirit of Truth had come; and they did. There is nothing more wonderful on the Day of Pentecost than the wisdom and certainty with which they taught. Prophecy shone with new meaning, and the facts of Christ's death and resurrection were interpreted in the light of the eternal purpose of God. The Word of God became new, and the history of Christ's teaching and ministry got a new meaning. They had been dull enough before, but Pentecost changed all their outlook. The Scriptures were made luminous in the light of the Holy Ghost.

The change in their characters was even greater than the change in their knowledge. The Gospels portray these men as proud and contentious, selfish and cowardly; but the first pages of the Acts of the Apostles tell another story. Something had happened between the Judgment Hall and the streets of the city. Resurrection found them all shivering behind closed doors for fear of the Jews, but at Pentecost they were openly preaching Jesus and charging the rulers with His death. Pentecost transformed them. It was the fullness that made the difference between timidity and joyous daring, shivering weakness and exultant power. They were jubilantly fearless and hilariously happy. That is the difference Pentecost always makes.

### The Challenge of Fullness

How does the challenge find us? Do we measure up to the standard of the fullness of Pentecost? Is not the explanation of our confusion in the lack of it? The gift is not for the working of miraculous deeds, for there were men filled with the Holy Ghost who wrought no miracle. There is danger lest we claim more than is promised, but how do the unchallenged tests find us? What about our assurance of heavenly things? There is an end of uncertainty when the fullness of Pentecost is known.

Have we power over sin? The Spirit of Truth is the Spirit of Holiness. He sanctifies in truth. The Day of Pentecost changed carnal thought into spiritual vision, pride into humility, selfishness into love, and cowardice into courage. It changed hearts, and transformed lives. Victory comes by fullness. Have we the joy of conquest over sin? Is the character of the average Christian anywhere near the standard of a

Spirit-filled soul? What about the love of the world? Jesus said He was One "Whom the world cannot receive." They are in irreconcilable antagonism. What has come of the doctrine of separation? If believers were filled with the Spirit, would they haunt the world's gaudy fountains and brackish springs? It is mockery to profess fullness, and go about panting with thirst and gasping with vanity.

What about the power for service? Is our decline due to external difficulties or internal weakness? Think of the host of workers, the vastness and variety of their service, the earnestness and ingenuity of their labors, and the scanty result of it all. What influence has the Church upon the life of the people, and what impression does it make upon the strongholds of iniquity? What about the dearth of conversions? Pentecost brought awakening, conviction, conversions, and baptism; but the ungodly no longer speak of chapels as "converting furnaces." The gift of the Spirit is the gift of power, and the lack of power is due to the absence of His indwelling fullness. Abounding fullness overflowed in gladness, testimony, and sacrifice.

### The Call of Pentecostal Fullness

There is no doubt that the one thing needful for the Church is the blessing of Pentecostal fullness. The flood would sweep away all the rubbish, fill all the dykes, and fertilize all the desert. The work of God cannot be accomplished without the fullness of the Spirit, and everywhere God waits to give His Holy Spirit to them that ask Him. It is His Will that every believer should be filled with the Spirit, overflow in the power of the Spirit, and in all things prevail through the Spirit. What hinders? The blessing is for all, and for all now. The conditions are simple, unalterable, and universal. God waits to fill ordinary people with extraordinary power, and to turn a baffled faith into a rapturous conquest. How? Ask Peter and James and John! They were deeply attached and openly committed to Jesus Christ before Pentecost. They had left all for Christ's sake, but were still without Pentecost. They believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, were witnesses of His death and of His resurrection, but without Pentecost. They were workers: stewards, preachers, evangelists, workers of miracles, without Pentecost. Then they heard the Promise of the Spirit, and set themselves to claim, wait, and pray, and according to the Word the Spirit came, and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost.

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