

The Great Outpouring

by Steve Gallagher

Steve Gallagher's sermon discusses the transformative power of the Holy Spirit and the anticipation of a great outpouring in the church today.

Duration: 42:57

Scripture: Acts 2:43

Topics: "Revival"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker reflects on the atmosphere in the early church as described in Acts 2. He highlights the sense of awe and the signs and wonders that were taking place through the apostles. The believers in the early church were united and shared everything they had, even selling their possessions to meet the needs of others. The speaker also shares a personal story about a man named Jeff who fearlessly shared his faith with a group of construction workers, leading to a powerful encounter with God. The sermon emphasizes the importance of being filled with the Holy Spirit and the love of God, and challenges the listeners to believe for a greater outpouring of God's power in their lives.

Transcript

The following message is provided by Eternal Weight of Glory. For other sermons, teachings, and articles, please visit EternalWeight.com. When Kathy and I were going to the faith homes in the early 90s, I began to realize how dim my vision was spiritually, and how tiny my faith was, how little my sight of God was, how little my expectations of Him were. And I saw people that were experiencing Him, and loving Him at a level I had just never seen before, and it was being manifested in the way they lived their lives.

And we started hearing some of these things, and it just made my heart hungry to have God in a greater way. And over time, not because anyone expected it of me or demanded it of me, but just out of what was happening inside me, the conviction of the truth of these things settled deep in my soul. And I don't have a great mental understanding of it.

But what I have is a heartfelt belief that these things are so, and that the greatest days of the church are ahead of us. As I was kind of thinking about this talk, what came to me, let me put it this way. In the Old Testament times, the entire Jewish religion all revolved around the temple, right? You know, you had the ritual system, the sacrificial system, everything.

The temple was the center of everything. And after Calvary, all of that changed. The dynamic changed.

And in fact, Paul said in 1 Corinthians 3.16, he said, don't you know? He's saying it to the Corinthians. They were a little bit out of it anyway. But he said, don't you know that you're a temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? Now, let me just back up a little bit.

In the Old Testament times, what was the pinnacle moment in the entire Old Testament dispensation? It was when Solomon opened up the temple and the Holy Spirit came in. Do you remember that story? You don't remember it? Anybody read the Old Testament? It's that big part in the front. 2 Chronicles 7 says, Now when Solomon had finished praying, fire came down from heaven and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices, and the glory of the Lord filled the house.

The priests could not enter into the house of the Lord because the glory of the Lord filled the Lord's house. That has to have been the greatest moment in all of Old Testament history. I know the bringing of the law was a huge part of God's dispensations and so on.

But that moment, when God came to His people in a manifest way like that, it was tremendous. How did they get to that point? Well, it began with a young woman, a burden to have a baby, and going to God constantly pleading, Please God, please, I want to have a baby. And finally she gets to the point, If you'll give me a baby boy, I will consecrate him to you.

I will give him to your service. And that's what the Lord was waiting for. So this little boy Samuel was born and was brought into the tabernacle there with the priest Eli.

And he was raised up and became a man filled with the Lord and filled with the Holy Spirit. And he lived however many years. And he ended up with a young mentor named David.

And David caught sight of what Samuel had in the Lord and it made him hungry for more. And he was a great seeker after God. So over a period of years, there was a momentum being built spiritually by first by Samuel, then by David.

And then Solomon comes in to it. He's the son. And he comes in to it.

When he was a young man, he was sincere. He wanted the Lord and he had the right mindset and so on. And it all reached its pinnacle that day when God's glory fell on his temple.

And then we know what happened. Solomon, after that had been accomplished, something started going wrong in his life. And of course, he started multiplying wives.

And it wasn't just that, but he started giving over to a carnal mindset and so on. And so within however many years, within 30 years or whatever it was, he was so completely backslidden that he was worshipping demons. And he had led the people of God into apostasy where they, for the most part, stayed for the next 900 years until Calvary.

And then the new covenant happens. And we've heard a little bit about Acts 2. I was actually going to talk a little bit about that. But Paul comes along and he says, don't you understand that you are the temple of the Lord? Now how many have had an experience where the glory of God filled your temple to the point like was described there? No, I don't think anybody here.

We've had taste, little touches here and there. I've had some wonderful, powerful experiences, but nothing I would begin to compare to that. But God is coming to fill his temple.

And his temple is not a building that's going to be resurrected over on the Temple Mount or something. That's the carnal, academic mindset that thinks those ways. It's something God coming and filling his people in a way that we have not seen before.

When I was thinking about this talk, I don't know, a month or two ago, I came across this verse in 2 Timothy. If you want to open up there, that's where I'm going to be. 2 Timothy 1. And it just kind of hit me that day.

I thought, you know, this is it. This describes it. 2 Timothy 1.7. I'm going to read it in the amplified version, not because I want it to say what I want it to say, but just because it brings the flavor out a little bit more.

2 Timothy 1.7. For God did not give us a spirit of timidity, of cowardice, of craven and cringing and fawning fear, but he has given us a spirit of power and of love and of calm and well-balanced mind and discipline and self-control. That's the spirit the Lord has given us. He hasn't given us a fearful spirit.

And the word here is really the same word that's used for cowardice. You'll find it in the end of Revelation. The word is used for cowardice.

In other words, God did not call you to be all sucked up into yourself and go through life with the main focus of your life to protect your interest and to just live for self and live this small little world where you are huge. That is not what God saved you for. He has not given you a spirit.

The Holy Spirit will never lead you into that kind of a life. But he has given you the Holy Spirit and to the measure of the Holy Spirit that you have is going to determine the power, the love, and the soundness of your mind. Now that's a truth that's true in all ages.

It just is. You could be a godly person 100 years ago and come into that to some degree. But what's it going to be like when the Lord comes to you and fills you to overflowing and you live your life full of the Holy Spirit in the full complete dimension of that? What would that be like? I wish someone would get excited.

Well, I'm excited. So let's just look at these real briefly here. I don't want to spend a lot of time because I do believe what Jeff said that the Lord wants to do something here.

Turn to Acts 2. I want to take a look at the spirit of power. The Holy Spirit was poured out on that upper room, Acts 2. We already heard about it, Acts 2.2. And suddenly there's that wonderful eschatological word, sudden. You know when they're saying peace and safety? Suddenly.

And so they're waiting. Man, day after day, and they're praying. Man, golly, how long do we have to wait for this thing? Oh Lord, come, won't you come? And then you get tired and worn out.

And man, another day. I don't know how long it went, but all of a sudden, in an instant there came from heaven a noise like a violent rushing wind. In other words, it wasn't a little smattering of religion that you could control.

And it filled the whole house where they were sitting, and there appeared to them tongues of fire distributing themselves and resting on each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit. Let's say that.

They were all filled with the Holy Spirit. That was pathetic. You don't believe it, do you? Do you believe that? That that happened? Say it again.

They were all filled with the Holy Spirit. Now I know certain theologians want that to all just be in a nice, neat little box back then. God doesn't do anything like that these days.

I'm sorry, I just don't believe that. I have seen the power of God. This ministry has been built upon the power of God.

Heaven help me if I ever try to get into something where I have to control God and tell Him what He's allowed to do. I am never going there. But anyway, so we see this outpouring of God, and as Dave mentioned, this fearful Peter that ran for his life and lied through his teeth and all of that stuff.

He gets up and preaches to this multitude, and 3,000 people are saved. And in verse 17 there, it's interesting, but he quotes Joel. He says, It shall be in the last days that I will pour forth of My Spirit on all mankind, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams.

He's referring to supernatural living. Supernatural living. And this was just a foretaste of it, what happened there in Acts 2. But let's see what came out of that.

Verses 43 to 47. Everyone, and let me ask you, when's the last time this has been the atmosphere in your church? Everyone kept feeling a sense of awe, and many wonders and signs were taking place through the apostles. And those who had believed were together and had all things in common.

And they began selling their property and possessions and were sharing them with all. Meeting needs. Just giving stuff away.

Just crazy actions. And then in chapter 4, Peter and John are arrested. And again, as Dave mentioned, look at verse 8, Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, he confronts the entire Sanhedrin.

Just stands up and confronts them. You know? I mean, this is the guy that was a coward two months before. How could you do that? How do you go from being a coward, full of the spirit of cowardice, and just, you know, in less than two months, now you're going in, it'd be like me standing in front of, you know, the vast array of all the greatest evangelicals of the day, and somehow they're all at the national religious conference, and I step up and I just start telling them what for, you know? I mean... You can see that.

Let me at them. And look at what he says in verse 20. You know, they're threatening them, we'll beat you, and we'll, you know, and look at what he says.

We cannot stop speaking about what we have seen and heard. You can't shut my mouth. You can't shut my mouth, because I've been filled with the Holy Ghost and fire.

And then in chapter 5, this pair, Ananias and Sapphira, and I tell you, if the presence of God was a little stronger at Pure Life Ministries, you'd be seeing people drop dead out there on that ridge. The lies that people tell us to our face. It's just amazing to me.

You better pray that God doesn't come down any bigger than He is, you guys. You hear me? And then in verse 40 and 41, they've been beaten, you know, flogged like Jesus was. Think of the Passion.

You remember that scene in the Passion where blood is splattered everywhere? That happened to them. And look at what their response was. Verse 41, they went on their way from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they had been considered worthy to suffer shame for His name.

You guys get ticked off because someone cuts in front of you out there on the freeway, you know. I mean, I say you. I've had that moment too.

I immediately move into the prophetic and share with them my concerns about their driving. What's it going to be like, dear ones, when we're filled with the Holy Ghost and fire? Why can't we believe for this? Tell me where the rule is that says that. I do believe.

I believe that we have not seen our greatest days. I'm sorry. I just don't buy into this thing that, you know, a bunch of people are going to be whisked away and then the others are going to get machine guns and figure out computers and take over, you know, the Antichrist that way or something or other.

Come on. Give me a break. Hollywood's thinking.

Number two, He has given us the spirit of love. One translation said, God did not give us a spirit of fearfulness but of power and of a divine and self-sacrificial love. I don't know if you've ever experienced this.

I've experienced it in ways at times. My love is usually the strong type. But there's been times that I have felt the love of God just overwhelm me for someone, you know, and whatever that compels me to do.

But I don't want to talk about myself, so I'm going to pick on Jeff here. Back in 97, we were going to a revival place, which there was a lot of shenanigans there. That's what happens when man's flesh gets involved with the moving of the spirit of God, you know.

But, you know, unfortunately, other people who want to not believe that God can do anything like that today latch on to the carnality and lump it all into that junk pile. But just, listen, the devil is the counterfeit of God. And the devil is the corrupter of everything good.

Just because God is doing something good and the devil comes in and tries to corrupt it and taint it and everything doesn't mean that God wasn't doing something good. I'm telling you, I used to watch what God did in that place. And it was powerful at times.

And, yeah, there was superficial people that were in the flesh and all that stuff. Yeah, there was the junk. There was.

But I saw the power of God. I felt the power of God. And I remember one time, Jeff and Rose came down for a visit there to Pensacola and Jeff got touched and he came back up here to northern Kentucky.

To me, this is a picture of what happens when the Holy Ghost gets a hold of you. He went into a pizza place and... Well, that's not what the Holy Spirit makes you do. That was total Cuban flesh there.

But anyway, he went into this pizza place and he had just gotten home from Pensacola and there was this gang of construction workers sitting around a booth and stuff and they're carrying on. Now, you know, please understand, we are in northern Kentucky and this was 12 years ago and it was even more of an issue then and it's become less of an issue. God bless you two and Brad and some of the other people of color who have come and lived in a white community where people stare at you because you're not the

same color.

But anyway, the Lord came over Jeff and he walked fearlessly up to that group of construction guys and he just started pouring his heart out to them with tears coming down his eyes. And I mean, in just an instant, this atmosphere of carnality and frivolity that they were in, in an instant, they were arrested. And didn't one guy bow his head and started crying right on the spot? You don't do that kind of thing because you've had some emotional experience.

It's only when the power of God comes on you, the love of God comes on you. And I've done things that were just normally, there's no way I would do them, but when the love of God overwhelms you, what can you do but give your life away? It's not a matter of, you know, you're not sitting there weighing out, well, you know, they may say this and just kind of working through, is it really worth, you know, kind of putting myself out there? You're just overwhelmed with their need. It's like a young mother, you know, and they see something, a snake coming up to their baby or something, and heaven help that snake, you know.

That woman is fearless. And that's what happens. There's that aspect of love, but there's another.

And I ran across this little story, which is actually 100 years old, but I just want to read this little story because to me, it's such a picture of the love of God and what happens when you become filled with the love of God. The guy is describing this lady who had come into some kind of disease, and, well, let me just read it. For 20 years, through some disease, this saintly sister was confined to a sort of crib.

Never once could she change her position for all that time. 20 years. Man, 20 years in this crib thing.

And yet, I never saw a more perfect instance of the power of love and of a sound mind. Intense love, almost to the annihilation of selfishness. A daily martyrdom for 20 years, during which she adhered to her early formed resolution of never talking about herself.

Thoughtful about the pins and ribbons of my wife's dress and about the making of a doll's cap for a child, but of herself, wholly thoughtless. Utterly free from every cloud of impaired reason which might mar the beauty of Christ's glorious work. When God comes to fill his people, listen, we're not doing this to try to get you on board with some new theological teaching.

I don't care what you believe. I really don't, in that sense. I am concerned about what Dave said, that your heart is right for the Lord.

That's all. We're just trying to create an atmosphere of anticipation to make you hungry to see Him. Hungry to see Him.

And when He fills you with the Holy Spirit, I mean, fills you, seals your mind to where it's easier to do godly deeds. Easier. I mean, it's the natural thing.

Where, you know, the way it's been, it's the natural thing to look out for number one. It's the natural thing to be prideful. It's the natural thing to be carnal.

It's the natural thing to be critical. It's the natural thing to be lustful. To be bitter.

To all those kinds of nasty spirits we just naturally give over to. But what's it going to be like when it's the natural thing for you to think about others before yourself? Can you understand how that would impact the entire world around you? If you lived your life in that kind of spirit, why can't you believe for that? Are you

satisfied where you're at? I'm not satisfied where you're at either. And I'm always going to be the guy to tell you that, you know? I've got the anointing for that.

Hey, you know, that's what God called me to. What can I tell you? I've paid a price for it, trust me. All right, number three.

Sound mind. Sound mind. You know, dear ones, we have all brought so much baggage with us into our Christian experience.

Now, when I'm talking about baggage, I'm not talking about sin issues. You know, yeah, there's all that. I'm talking about the residual effects of having spent years with your thinking being warped by this fallen nature.

Years! Years, you know? And, I mean, if we could see, like C.S. Lewis calls, well, I guess he called Satan the bent one, but, you know, if we could see how warped and twisted our perspectives are, the false notions of life that have formed inside of us over the years, irrational fears. You know, I almost wish that we could just, we don't have time, but I almost wish I could have about 20 people stand up and share some just insane, weird fear that just kind of hangs on in your life. I've got them, but I'm too afraid of man to tell you what they are.

I'm telling you, some of the insane fears that are still in my mind after all these years, you know, it's like, wow, Lord, I long for the day that you set me free. Totally free. Some of the weird ideas we have about life and stuff, you know? I've said before, when I hear, have heard that someone's being critical of me, you know, and in the early years of Pure Life when Kathy and I lived there on the ranch and we were 24-7 with the men and we would hear some guy was, you know, kind of being critical and so, you know, immediately the first thing I'm doing is looking at the things I know that are wrong with me, you know, and I start examining my heart.

Man, what are they seeing, Lord? And then I go and find out what it is that they've been critical about and it's just some weird thing. The way I park the car or something. It's just insane the way we think.

The knowledge of evil. You know, God has tremendously set me free. He has brought an innocence into me that I can't explain.

But I still know things that I wish I did not know. How many of you know what I'm talking about? Just stuff I wish I never would have went down that path to learn about it and I'm still paying the price for it to this day. But the day is coming.

Religious traditions. Just, you know, weird ways of seeing Christianity and stuff. All these perspectives have been twisted by sin and by looking at life through the lens of self and then have become fortified and entrenched over the years, you know, year after year after year.

Some of these irrational fears like I have one loved one that has become so full of fear that she can't even leave her house. You know, it started off being afraid to go certain places and then pretty soon her world became so full of self and so tiny that she was afraid to even go out the front door. I mean, that's the kind of baggage that we face.

I wrote a commentary some time back. Lost baggage do not return. Somewhere along life's journey, I lost some luggage.

If you happen across it, leave it be. I won't be needing it. There was a time when my sole purpose in life was to have everything I wanted.

TV, movies, sports, sexual experiences, whatever. Interestingly, the more I got what I desired, the more miserable I became. The more I gave the beast of self what it demanded, the greater it became within me.

My life eventually came to the point where it was one black mass of self. There was no room for anyone else. Self demanded and received nearly everything it wanted.

What I didn't realize was that self came with baggage. Where it was given reign, a Samsonite full of pride tagged along, compelling me to be seen as better than others. Then there was the American tourist packed full of fear and paranoia.

Anything that could possibly harm self became seen as a dreaded enemy. A duffle bag full of sexual lust drove me into all kinds of trouble. Assorted other bags further added to the burden of my soul.

I'm not going to read the rest of it. I'll just talk about how the Lord has helped set me free of so much of that baggage by what? By teaching me to deny self. By putting self to death in me.

But, you know, that is a long-term process. And we should be throwing ourselves into that process with everything else. We just should.

I mean, that is the sanctification process the Scripture talks about. Normally, that's the way things go. It takes a long time for the natural mind to line itself up with the mind of Christ.

But what would it be like if in an instant the Holy Spirit filled you with the mind of Christ? What would that be like? To see things, to see people, to see yourself. To see God, to see life. The way that Jesus sees it.

It's coming. It's coming. But it's not for everyone.

Because frankly, not everyone is interested. Dave mentioned the sealing of God's people in the end times. After the breaking of the sixth seal.

And there's a whole teaching. You know, at first I thought about trying to go through a bunch of verses and stuff and trying to lay it out. The arguments and all.

I thought, no, that's not it. I just want to share with you a sense about something. How to go through.

Here it is for you, Dave. Standing firm through chaotic times. Now listen, are you listening? I'm going to teach you how to do it, okay? Take notes.

We wait with longing, anticipation for the coming of Christ. I just want to... Well, let me read this. This comes out of 1 John 3. Beloved, now we are children of God.

But it hasn't appeared as yet what we shall be. We know that when He appears, we will be like Him. Because we will see Him just as He is.

In other words, as Dave was talking about, the revealing, the unveiling of Christ, the revelation of Jesus Christ. Do a study on it. It's right there in the Bible.

The revelation of Jesus Christ. When He is revealed, you will be like Him. When He's revealed, you'll be just like Him.

Now here's the catch. Everyone who has this hope fixed on him purifies himself just as He is pure. There's something about the process of battling through, like I was mentioning, the day in, day out struggle for godliness.

Or the day in and day out struggle to live in the presence of God. Where's Jason at? Jason? Where are you at? Get up here. Quit hiding back there.

Jason is going to come up. I'm going to just use him as an illustration to wrap up here. But I want to share one thing, another illustration first.

In the old days, when we first came out here from California, come on up, Jason. I've always done prayer walks. I do prayer walks no matter where I'm at.

And so I would go walking in the woods and that's how I would spend my time with the Lord. And I started calling God Jehovah who rests in the treetops. Because every time when I would go out and go for a prayer walk, I would feel His presence just like He was up in the treetops.

It was just the way I was experiencing it. Well, was God up in the treetops? Was He up in the treetops? No. Because if He was up in the treetops, then when I walked away, He'd still be back over there, right? No, He was in my inside world.

You see? You take your inside world, your consciousness, your heart, your inner being, who you are, you take that everywhere you go. Well, when I was spending time focused on Him, He would fill my inside world with Himself. Now, it was partially because I was a young, immature Christian and I needed that touch.

We were starting the ministry and all that stuff and I needed more back in those days. And I don't have to have it. Whatever.

I don't need to be nurtured in the same way nowadays. But I called the Lord that. And one day it occurred to me.

I was at the faith homes in the 90s and I was thinking about this thing. Now, how is Jesus going to reveal Himself? You know, it's just like, how is this going to happen? That He's going to reveal Himself? Is He going to, like, His face going to appear up in the sky? Or like some preachers, He's going to show up and they'll get it on camera, you know? CNN will cover it worldwide. Is that the way it's going to be? And one day it occurred to me.

You know what? One day He's just going to completely break through in my inside world. And there He's going to be. Why? Because I'm hungering.

I'm thirsting. I'm purifying myself. It's my lifestyle.

It's my daily life to seek Him and to want to be like Him. And one day He's going to come. Now, I have Jason here, my buddy.

Jason just graduated from the intern program. And I talked to Jason about this before we came in. I asked him if it would be okay to be forthright.

And I can relate to this. You know, I'm 30 years into this or whatever it's been. But when I first started, I had so much baggage.

Just so much fear and paranoia and all kinds of stuff and dealing with Jason, it's been that way for him. He's had to really struggle with a lot of fears and stuff and just get all bottled up and fearful and so on. You know, we've helped him in some ways.

Jeff has and some of the others. And he's been growing and coming out of it, right? You're getting increasingly more free. But he's still kind of bottled up a little bit.

And last week we were in a meeting. I think it was Thursday night. And all of a sudden, Jason jumps up.

I mean, just totally uncharacteristic. You know, he's the guy that wants to hide in the back of the room like he just was doing. And all of a sudden, he jumps up.

I can't even remember exactly what you said. Do you remember? Something about the need of the Lord. It was something about I had seen my need but I couldn't go on without Him.

But it was like an eruption that just burst forth out of him. You know what it was? He caught a sight of the Lord in a small way there in our meeting. And you couldn't shut his mouth.

All of a sudden, his mouth was just spouting forth the glory of God. It was awesome. You know, when you're on that path and you're struggling through and you feel like, man, what is going on? I feel like I'm not growing.

I feel like nothing's changing. But you're battling. You're doing the hard thing.

You're up in the morning with the Lord and fighting against your flesh and going through all these things. Beloved, I'm telling you, the day is coming. And that is not going to be experienced by apostate Christians.

Because they have what? Denied the Holy Spirit. They have denied access. But when you have become in the habit of allowing the Holy Spirit to have access to your inner world, to deal with you, to help you, to change your warped thinking, to give you His love, to give you His power, and so on.

When you have allowed that to become a natural way of life, one day, you know, we wonder, I can't imagine going through the tribulation period. I am not afraid of the tribulation. I'm afraid of it if I don't have the Holy Spirit.

I am afraid of that. But it ain't going to be like that. When you're full of the Lord, you'll be like Jeff that went up fearlessly to that group of construction workers.

You'll be like that. You'll be fearless. You'll be bold.

And it won't be something you have to work up and try to get your nerve up and all that kind of... It will be effortless. You'll be overwhelmed with the presence of God. You'll be so filled with His love and with His compassion on souls.

You'll have the power of God flowing through your life. And people will be touched and healed and set free and filled with the Holy Ghost and saved radically and powerfully. What would be so wrong to hope for that? And to plead and believe God for it.

What would be so bad about that? Well, I'm believing for it. I know. I know, I know.

It's not some doctrinal opinion in my head or something or other. I know. Everything in my being knows that Jesus is coming back to His people to fill His people with His glory.

And we are going to finish this church age in a blaze. Not slinking off carnal worldly self-centered getting whisked out of here so we don't have to suffer or anything. No.

We are going through in a blaze of glory. And the fire of God is going to be around us. And it's going to powerfully impact the world around us.

And yes, we will be hated like never before. But it won't matter. Because we'll be full of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

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