

Be Filled With the Holy Spirit - Part 1

by Jackie Pullinger

Jackie Pullinger's sermon encourages believers to seek the Holy Spirit's empowerment to effectively share the gospel through actions and faith.

Duration: 44:19

Scripture: Psalm 42:7, Matthew 16:17, Luke 24:30-31, Romans 15:17

Topics: "Filled With The Spirit"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker shares his experiences of preaching the gospel in a challenging environment. He talks about how he spent time with gangsters and criminals, sharing the message of Jesus with them. Despite facing difficult circumstances, he was encouraged when one of the gangsters acknowledged the truth of what he was preaching. The speaker also shares stories of visiting prisons and seeing the power of the Holy Spirit transform lives. Overall, the sermon emphasizes the importance of proclaiming the gospel and the impact it can have on people's lives.

Transcript

So you should ask the interpretation, how you get them. Oh, and then you have to speak it, so we can hear. A couple more prophecies.

Yes, you do call me Master, but I will not again call you My Servant. You are my best friend. My best friend.

I already gave my life to you, for you. And you know that you can be with me now. But remember, please remember, I want you now to start coming to the Feast and to have a part in My Kingdom.

And in the future, you have eternal life and you can enjoy everything with Me. But now, do you see that there is still darkness on the earth and I have people there? There are people in the fire and there are people there calling upon Me. There are people and you don't remember their names and you don't remember their faces.

But you are with Me, together. And My Spirit is with you. We could go together to find those people.

So, would you go with Me? That was Chinese, translated into English. The other one was tongues interpreted, whatever. Anyway, the important thing is that we hear what God is saying.

But I thought some of you might not have heard a message in tongues before. You're not supposed to, by the way, in a gathering like this, speak in tongues without an interpretation. Otherwise, nobody's helped, except the speaker.

Okay, I want to talk about some mysteries tonight. And then give a little, knowing me more than a little, unwrapping, if we can, of some of the mysteries of what we're praying for when we're praying for the Holy Spirit. I hope that might be helpful to some of you.

We've been talking about being known, being loved, loving Him and knowing Him. And the revelation of Jesus, or by Jesus, to us, is a mystery. In Matthew 16, 17, when Simon Peter confesses Jesus is Christ, he says, Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah.

This was not revealed to you by man, but by my Father in heaven. And again, just before the passage that David read this afternoon in Luke 24, there were two disciples wondering on the road to Emmaus what had happened, the one they thought was the Christ. And Jesus appeared and walked with them and opened the Scriptures to them.

Verse 30 and 31. Then their eyes were opened and they recognized Him. In the revelation that came to them that it was He who had been walking with them, the veil was taken from their eyes.

And I want to talk about how Jesus is made known to us, because it's by revelation, and then by our acceptance by faith that that is Him. But this is also how we make Him known to the lost, the hungry and the poor, through our actions, through our character. It's how it works when He comes to us to make Himself known so we may know Him.

And it's how it works when we want to make Him known to the world. And the Holy Spirit does both works. Romans 15, 17.

Therefore, by glory in Christ Jesus in my service to God, I will not venture to speak of anything except what Christ has accomplished through me in leading the Gentiles to obey God by what I have said and done, by the power of signs and miracles, through the power of the Spirit. So from Jerusalem all the way around to Illyricum, I have fully proclaimed the gospel of Christ. And I'd just like to look at some of the ways that Paul said he had fully proclaimed the gospel of Christ.

He says, through what I have said. When I first went to Hong Kong, it was fun. It really was not at all difficult.

I got onto a ship. I have to tell you, this was on a pastor's advice, so it was licensed. And he told me to get on and pray to know where to get off.

We went through eight different countries and I had my injections for them all and arrived in Hong Kong. And I had the equivalent of about 15 of your dollars. And it's a very long story, but anyway, it was a good journey.

And then I looked around Hong Kong to find what I should do. And went to lots of missionaries who said they didn't want me, but I understand that now. And ended up visiting this place called the Wall City.

And I can remember walking around there and saying to Jesus, Dear Lord, it would be worth my whole life if you'd use me to save just one. And by the way, I don't even need to know who. But the problem was I

had learned how to preach the gospel in England and it didn't work in Hong Kong.

Mainly because the method I had learned depended on a booklet. And you had to be able to read the booklet. Well, of course, if people can't read, or if they can't read English, the booklet doesn't work.

And the booklet, by the way, isn't... Well, I think apparently it's helped some people to come to the Lord, so I can't be rude about the booklet. All I can say is it didn't work. Mainly, I think, because it took such a long time to get to the good bit.

You know, we started with man over there, God over there, and this great gulf in between, and man trying all these different ways to get to God, but falling short. But God, in his mercy, sending Jesus. You know, by the time I've got that far, the drug addicts and the man sitting outside the gambling den, they've gone to sleep or they're bored, you know.

We haven't got to the good bit. It's just everything they thought religion would be. A lecture.

And, you know, I used to talk to people in the street, and I'd say, do you believe in Jesus? Really, because I desperately wanted them to live. There was a woman who slept with her feet out of the door, because there wasn't room for all the family to lie down in their six foot by ten foot little room. And then there were the old men who were not very successful criminals and only ever ate the poorest food, but perishing.

And then the little girls, 14 or so, who loved their boyfriends for a while, at least until they understood that the boyfriend was living off them, and they're dying. So what do I say to them? Do you believe in Jesus? And they gave strange answers, like, I don't have time. And that wasn't rude.

They actually meant, I don't have time to go to the building where people called Christians go. And they meant that because they had to work seven days a week, 15 hours a day. So of course you don't.

Other people would say, I'm 60, I can't read. Well of course, you can't be a Christian if you can't read. Because in Chinese, and in much of Asia, religion is equated with learning.

And their worst fears are concerned when we carry around these heavy books. So they know they're not qualified. Other people said, I smoke or I gamble.

Another one said, I only have flip-flops. Because people who go to church dress up. And I realized that none of them knew anything about Jesus.

But they knew something about Christians. They could read, they had books, they didn't wear flip-flops to church. And they didn't apparently smoke or gamble.

And I thought, that's such a pity. I don't think they ever met him. They didn't learn about him.

And I learned that the words about Jesus didn't mean anything to them. And I heard about David Wilkerson, how he'd gone up to a gangster and said, Jesus loves you, and his heart clapped. So I learned how to say, Jesus loves you in Chinese.

And I chose my victim. He sat outside a gambling den. And he wasn't a very good watcher.

He was supposed to watch for undercover police and other gangs. And I went up to him and I said in my best Chinese, Jesus loves you. And he turned to me and he said, What does that have to do with me?

Please choose another victim.

You're ruining my business. Oh, well his heart didn't crack. So I found a little prostitute.

So sad, those ladies. They're so sad. I mean, they haven't saved money.

And they haven't got pensions. And they've got needle marks in the back of their hands. And this little one, she couldn't read.

She didn't even have a radio. She just spent her life squatting over a sewer. And she had to pull the men in.

I mean, pull them in. And so I thought I'd touch her and I said, Jesus loves you. And she was so frightened.

She nearly fell into the sewer. And she said to me, dear, you've made a mistake. You don't know who I am.

You don't know what I do. And I know Christians don't touch people like me. Well, the words didn't seem to be working.

And so I tried to do the next thing, which is what Paul said he did, by what I have said and by what I have done. Now, what I have done, I call this basic gospel. Or what we did this morning, acts of kindness, little things.

Done means if somebody says, will you walk a mile with me, you will walk too. If you call a street sleeper to meet you at 10 o'clock and he doesn't come, you wait till 12. Otherwise, how would he know what Jesus is like? And if you have a bowl of rice, you can give him half.

That's basic gospel. Basic, basic. This is basic gospel.

This is ordinary. This is being kind. This is, everyone can do this.

This is not hard. And so I spent a bit of time, a year or two or three doing that. After a few years, one of the guys who was, he was only a little gangster, but he was one of six brothers.

Five out of six were drug addicts. And to go to his home, you had to go up a stone flight of stairs, which was always slippery because the men from the gambling den used it as a toilet because there weren't any toilets in the city. And he called me up there one day and he said, we've been talking about you all last night and we've come to one of two conclusions.

Either you're a spy sent by the British government or what you say about Jesus is true because nobody would spend their life with us here unless they had to. I was so happy. I said, oh good, oh good.

I mean, I had a room which they used to come in and play ping pong with these gangsters. And you know, they didn't believe in Jesus, but they didn't reject him either. They accepted me in his name and I thought that was pretty good.

But not really enough. Not really enough. I mean, good that they accepted me in his name and there was kind of vicarious belief, but I knew they would still die without him.

And I didn't want them to believe in my Jesus. I wanted them to be changed and to know him. So I began to pray for the next bit, which is by what I have said and done by the power of signs and miracles and through the power of the Spirit.

I don't really know, though, what I was praying for. I'm really not at all sure what I was praying for. But I went into a little chapel one night on the edge of the wall city and there was a young couple there and they were not very educated.

They looked very simple, but they looked very shiny. And I thought when I saw them, ah, they've got it, whatever it is. And I'm pretty sure that this couple would pray for a sick man.

I give him the address of a doctor. This is very early times, you know. This is when people weren't talking about this stuff.

So after the meeting they came and they said, you haven't got the Holy Spirit. And I thought, how rude. And I said, I have.

And they said, no, you haven't. And I said, I have. And they said, no, you haven't.

And I said, I have. And I knew I was right. I was.

I was. But you know, while we were having this argument in which I was right, of course. I mean, I was.

How else could I believe in Jesus unless I had the Holy Spirit? Of course I had the Holy Spirit. I was thinking, yes, but they're shiny. And they've got something that you want because you know that whatever they have is something that helps you to make Jesus real to people.

I didn't know what that was. So I just said to God, dear God, I'm so sorry. And I think I'm going to quit quibbling.

You know, the problem, what I was quibbling about was, do we call it the baptism in the Spirit or the second blessing or the fullness or the gift of or the anointing? You know, I was completely confused. So I said, dear Lord, I'll just stop quibbling about what we're going to call it. And would you please give me whatever it is that helps me make you real to the lost.

Now I'll decide what to call it later. And for the purposes of tonight, I must tell you I still haven't decided what to call it. Truly.

And I've got even more confused this week when I've heard how other people are talking. I'm completely confused as to what label is on this Holy Spirit. But I'm just telling you of my experience, which was, I was already passionate about the lost.

So according to David Wilkerson, I was baptized with the Spirit. But I didn't have the power to make him known. Well, okay, let's just take off the labels and we'll just go back to my... This is my experience, okay.

And so I said, dear Lord, would you please give me whatever helps me to make you real to other people. Because the words don't seem to be working. And the deeds do seem to be moving people.

But that's not enough. And this couple asked me to their home. Well, I have to tell you, this is not an enjoyable afternoon.

I know you're going to be shocked because a whole lot of people are already waiting tonight for this mighty wind. But I'll just tell you what happened to me. We went to their home, and it's very hot.

And I sat on a plastic sofa. And this is not where you want to be sitting in a human country when you're in a bit of a panic about receiving whatever it is you're going to call it from the Holy Spirit to make Jesus real to people. And this couple, I mean, you know, they were the kind that I wouldn't normally... Well, they wouldn't be my first choice to fellowship with apart from the fact they were shiny.

Because, I mean, they said grace in tongues. You know, and I'm British. And they put their hands on my head.

And they prayed loudly in tongues. And they said, now you open your mouth. And I thought, I'm not going to do that.

Well, of course I wanted a new language. I'd read, you know, the books about it flowing out, you know, and wafting on clouds and sitting on mountains and all that, you know. And I thought, well, you know, there's a language to pray in.

But I'm not going to open my mouth. If God wants me to have this, he's going to give it to me. Well, I... So I sat on the sofa and I was, by now, sticking to it.

And I just felt awful. Because on the table they had got two plates. One was a plate of oranges, which was to celebrate when I got it.

And the other was a plate of flannels, which was for me to cry into when I got it. And all I could think about during this terrible half an hour, during which my mouth was shut, was, oh, God. We're not going to need either plate.

And so, finally, I thought, well, I feel really bad for these two, you know, because they're sort of all ready. I know some of you are all ready tonight, you know. And so I finally opened my mouth in order to say in English, God, please help, because I just wanted the two to leave.

And when I opened my mouth, he was able to give me very clearly a new language. And I didn't feel anything at all except stupid. No, I didn't feel suffused with love.

I didn't feel filled with him. I didn't waft on a cloud, float on a mountain, or any of that stuff. I just felt really stupid.

And my overriding reaction was, oh, God, I'm so thankful that I could pray with Chinese and not the Brits. I couldn't have done this with the Brits. And, you know, just being real with you, you know, I know this sounds awfully shocking, but some of you, it will encourage when we get to pray in a minute.

And so, anyway, I tried to leave as quickly as possible. Knowing I had this language. And I went home and I sort of tried it out.

And I still didn't feel anything. And so, sort of, nobody's life changed. Nothing much happened.

I was still doing the good things. I mean the basic gospel. I mean the basic gospel.

Sharing my money and my food and my time and my house and all the things that we're supposed to do. And after a year, I met some Americans. And they said to me, I mean it was nearly the first thing they said, Jackie, do you pray in tongues? And I thought my toes screwed up in my shoes.

And they're Americans. The Brits, they wouldn't ask that question. So I said, no.

And they said, why not? And I said, well, I don't know if I received the same as all the other people I've read about because I didn't float on a cloud or waft on a mountain or feel filled with love or any of that, you know, I just felt silly. And they said, you're very rude, girl. You're a good evangelical.

And it says in scripture, if you pray in tongues, you will be built up spiritually. It does not say you will feel built up spiritually. Get with it.

You asked for power to share Jesus. You've got it and you haven't used it. Now do it.

And I said, now? And they said, yes. And I said, no, no, I've read 1 Corinthians 14. We're not all supposed to pray in tongues together.

They said, there are three of us. Nobody's going to be offended. We'll just pray together.

So I still felt silly. And I prayed in tongues, you know. And then, to my horror, they stopped.

They were praying with me. And I just felt I should continue. And then one of them had the interpretation of what I must have been saying in that language.

And it was the most beautiful prayer. It was the most beautiful prayer about being in a valley and calling out to God and the heights and so on. So it's lovely language.

And I thought, oh, I wish I could pray like that. Then I realized, oh, I was. He was teaching me how to pray.

Anyway, they told me to pray every day in tongues for half an hour. And every day I did. And I have to tell you, I still didn't waft on a cloud or float on a mountain or any of the things that you might have read that some people do.

I didn't feel, I hope this helps some of you, I didn't feel any closer to God. I did this by faith. Just like, dear Lord Jesus, there are people perishing out there.

Please, will you help me to pray for them? Actually, it was the first time my prayers in my whole life that they'd been the right way around. I said, Lord, you know who the lost are. You know who you've got ready.

Will you please lead me to the ones you want? Up until that time, I'd done it the other way around. I want to speak to this one and this one and this one and this one. Please bless me.

It was my idea asking for his blessing. This time I said, Lord, would you please reach those that you've got ready and help me to pray for them because I don't know who they are and if you'd just use me somewhere in it. After about six weeks, I bumped into people and I told them about Jesus and they believed.

They fell down in the streets and they thought, oh, my Chinese got good. But actually, I was saying exactly the same words about Jesus as I'd said before, but this time they believed. Then I understood evangelism.

Evangelism is he's done the entire thing. He just lets you say the words. That's it.

And I realized, and I know that my talk tonight is very shocking to you, but I could almost have said tomato ketchup and they would have believed. What I mean is, it wasn't my preaching that was convincing them. It was something else that God was doing in their heart by his Spirit.

He just let me be there. And this went on and people got saved and healed and then I learned that I could pray with them and they could receive the same Jesus and the same power of the Spirit. To share him.

I'll tell you a wonderful story about how the power of the Holy Spirit reached somebody. I used to often visit prison and one time the boss of the wall city, his younger brother, he actually had about five, one of them got arrested at a funeral and it was a bit like Romeo and Juliet. There were two gangs fighting at a funeral and they killed somebody and the boss' younger brother, his name was Ali, was arrested with about five other people and actually he hadn't been in this fight.

He had been quoting Buddhist scriptures at the funeral but he was very worried because somebody had actually identified him. Well, I went and I prayed with all of the six of them on remand and three of them accepted Jesus and got set free. The other three were still on trial and they had to stay a long time waiting for their trial.

And two of them out of the three believed in Jesus but Ali didn't. He was the one who'd been quoting Buddhist scriptures. But I went to see him very often and he was very worried and very frightened and I said, I just want you to know that I've got people in South Africa and Germany and England and New Zealand and lots of other countries and they're all praying for you on Wednesdays.

They're praying because there is a God in heaven who sees what's going on down here and he does know. So don't be afraid because they're praying for you on Wednesdays. Well, a few weeks later he said to me, Well, I've believed in Jesus now.

And I prayed with him through the glass to receive the power of the Holy Spirit because we always do this as quick as possible. And he prayed in tongues behind the glass and a few days later we had the murder trial and they didn't even bring it up properly. The judge dismissed the case immediately and he was set free.

So we went out for tea and I said to him, I'm really curious to know why did you suddenly believe in Jesus? And he said, Well, this is the story. He said, One day the prison governor was doing an inspection and he walked past my cell with two guards. And he said to the guards, What's that smell in his cell? And when he passed by he sent the guards back to say, Will you please search his cell? There's a smell in there.

And I said to the guards, What smell in my cell? And they said, Yes. Can't you smell it? There's a fragrance coming from your cell. And they couldn't find anything and they walked back and he sat down again in the cell and he thought, Fragrance in my cell? And then suddenly it's Wednesday and he believed in Jesus.

He certainly hadn't read that the prayers of the saints were like incense before the Lord, but it was revealed to him. Oh, we have so many unfair conversions. I mean, you ever heard of anyone getting converted through a smell in their cell? Oh, so good, that one.

We've found, and I love it this way, what a very fun, good way. I think it's God's of allowing Jesus to reveal himself to men, to the lost, is by expecting and praying that the Spirit of God will meet the Spirit of man. Now, I call it Spirit to Spirit.

The Scripture, you can just jot this down in Psalm 42, 7, says deep to deep. And I realize that much of the time when we try to bring people to Jesus, we use mind to mind. And I looked at all the gospel materials that we got and I found they were all written by people in the West in Greek fashion.

That is, they were entirely logical to the person that wrote the booklet. Point one, two, three, four, or three things beginning with B. Well, they don't work in Chinese. We are Hebrew.

And when Jesus spoke to the disciples, he spoke in parables and pictures and stories which Hebrews understand. And all the gospel materials we had were mind, entirely logical to the people that wrote the book, but not remotely logical to the lost. But our Chinese people are spiritual people.

They understand spiritual things. They understand spiritual things. They believe in spirits.

And if we could invite the Spirit of God to touch their spirit and not go through the mind, we could meet him. Now, actually, I happen to think all conversions are this way. Just let me give you an example.

And it's probably so for many of us here. It says in 1 Corinthians 1.21 that God is pleased to use the foolishness of preaching. Now, we think that people come to Jesus because we've preached a good sermon.

And actually that's not true at all. They come to Jesus despite the sermon. No, true.

This is a typical conversion story. I was in church. I had no idea what the preacher was saying.

I suddenly found myself walking forward with tears running down my cheeks. That's a typical conversion story. I didn't know what the preacher was talking about, but I found myself on my knees.

Yes? You see? It wasn't the preacher's preaching. It wasn't his four points. It was the Spirit of God touching your spirit to make you alive, quickening you.

And we can logically explain Christ to people. Paul nearly did once persuade someone. But if we can say, Spirit of God, will you touch that in a man which is longing for you, whether he knows it or not, quicken him, reveal yourself that he might by faith accept the Son of God.

I went to Japan once. And my friends had a very kind of evangelistic meeting, which is the worst, you know, dinner party. Because if people have dinner party and then I'm the speaker, you know, they're all going... They've eaten too much and it's warm and they're all nodding off.

Well, there was very fat fruit seller who'd been invited to this dinner evangelistic thing. And before I went to Japan, I said, God, I know, certainly at this time because it was about 15 years ago, people in Japan were not coming to Christ. And I said, God, I can't persuade anybody, but would you do it this way? And I always pray in tongues, not in front of people, but would you please whatever I'm saying speak to those who need to hear.

And I trust you to do the job. Well, I started. After a few minutes, I noticed that this fat fruit seller had gone to sleep.

And I did my whatever. And after 30 minutes, probably longer, I finished. And the fruit seller woke up and he went off to the hosts, my friends, and he said, I have to accept Jesus now.

And they prayed with him, and he came to know Jesus. And they said, well, what happened? And he said, well, I started listening to Jackie's talk and after a couple of minutes, I thought, well, I don't need to hear that. So I went to sleep.

And he said, in my dream, Jesus came to me and said, it's time you believed in me. So when I woke up, I did. God is pleased to use the foolishness of man's preaching because it's actually not the preaching that brings people to the Lord.

It's something else going on while we're preaching.

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