

# Crisis of the Spirit Filled Life

by Paris Reidhead

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*The sermon explores the crisis of the Spirit-filled life, emphasizing the importance of understanding our union with Christ and the role of the Holy Spirit in achieving true freedom and joy.*

**Duration:** 34:25

**Scripture:** Matthew 6:33, Ephesians 1:4, Philippians 3:8, Colossians 2:16, 1 John 1:1

**Topics:** "Spirit Filled"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes that being filled with the Spirit brings joy, freedom, and liberty to the Christian life. He criticizes the misconception that being filled with the Spirit leads to bondage, explaining that it is actually meant to bring believers into a deeper relationship with God. The preacher highlights the importance of having a pure heart and a desire to please God in order to experience the fullness of the Spirit. He also emphasizes that loving God with all our heart, mind, soul, and strength enables us to do anything we want, as our desire will be aligned with pleasing God.

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## Transcript

It will do well for us to turn back to 1st John, the first chapter. I want you to see one verse. Perhaps you may think it out of context.

I do not. That's why I call it to you. 1st John, chapter 1, verse 1. That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled of the word of life.

For the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and show unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us. That which we have seen and heard, declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us. And truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son, Jesus Christ.

And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full. Last week we talked at length about preparation for being filled with the Spirit by way of our union with Christ in identification. We saw that not only did the Lord Jesus Christ die for us, but we died with him.

We were crucified with him, that we might have victory over ourselves. We were buried with him, that we might have victory over the world. We were quickened, and raised, and seated with him in the heavenlies.

We might have victory over principalities, and powers, and the rulers of the darkness of this age. But that is preparation, not the end. That victory is not the end, but it is preparation for a relationship.

You must remember that whereas we eat with a knife, and a fork, and a spoon, there is somewhat something of a difference between what we do with each. We eat with them, but we do not use the spoon in quite the same way we do the fork, or the knife the way we do the spoon. Each has its own function, and its own use.

And so it is that we should distinguish between things that differ. Cleansing from sin is always through the blood. It is the blood that cleanses.

Victory is always through the cross. And power is always through the Holy Spirit. Now they are related, all part of this great salvation.

But we need to understand the continuing role of the precious blood of Christ. The blood of Jesus Christ, his son, keeps on cleansing us from all sin. Whenever there is that in our life which grieves God, it is back again to the cross, back again to the place where he poured out his life, his love, his blood for us.

Cleansing through the blood. Victory always through our identification with him at the cross. And power through the person of the Holy Spirit.

Now, the night in which the Lord Jesus was raised from the dead, he'd been raised that morning, that night, he came into the upper room. And you recall that his first words were these, Peace be unto you, as the Father hath sent me, so send I you. Strange and truly wonderful.

The little word *as* in the Greek *kathos* means, according to Thayer's lexicon, just as, accordingly as, in the same manner that, similarly to, in identically the same way. Rather strong word, isn't it? Only two letters in English. Just as in exactly the same way.

How was the Lord Jesus sent into the world? First, Mary, overshadowed by the Holy Spirit, had one cell in her body quickened. And that which developed from that cell was Emmanuel, God come in the flesh. And from the moment of his birth, he was, as the Nicene Creed says, very God of very God, very man of very man.

Man in every sense of the word, manhood. And God in every sense of Godhead. In him dwelt the fullness of the Godhead bodily.

But it was in nature. Now, for 30 years, there is silence. There's no communication from heaven during those 30 years, as far as we have record in the scripture.

But when he went down to Jericho's bank, when John was baptizing and obedient to the Father, he went out into the water to be baptized. The question has to be asked to us. Baptism is a picture of death to self and death to sin.

But in Christ did not sin, and in him was no sin. To what could he die? As we saw last Lord's Day, to the right, to his rights. And therefore, the Lord Jesus Christ went into baptism.

He was baptized, and he did go under the water. And when he came up, John said, I bear witness, I saw the Holy Ghost in the form of a dove descend upon him and stay. And after that, it was said, the Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because the Spirit of the Lord had been in him from the time of his conception

and birth.

Do you see? If not, then he had not been the God man. But if he was the God man and the Spirit of God indwelt by the fullness of the Godhead bodily in nature, then it could be that the Spirit of God came upon him to cover him, to clothe him, to immerse him, so that the ministry performed by Christ in the three years of his public ministry was done by the Father through the Spirit. 47 times I pointed out to you in the Gospel of John alone, it was stated, I do nothing of myself, I only speak as I receive commandment of the Father, I do what I see the Father do, or how else it might have been stated.

But still it was the same message. Everything done by Christ in three years of public ministry was done by the Father through the Spirit. Now, he has said to his disciples, as the Father sent me, so send I you.

Now, what does that mean? Well, remember what we saw initially, that there was a preparatory work, we were awakened by the Spirit of God, we were convicted by the Spirit of God, we were brought to repentance by the Spirit of God, faith was quickened in our hearts by the Spirit of God, we savingly embraced the Son of God as Lord and Savior and the Holy Spirit witnessed to us that we were born again. Now, all of those ministries were performed by God, the Holy Spirit, but without request from the individual upon whom they were proposed. You don't need to know there'd be a Holy Spirit to be brought out of death into life.

It is not through faith in the Holy Spirit that you are forgiven and pardoned. It is not through your awareness of what the Scripture teaches about the work in talking with the unconverted, you need not mention the work of the Holy Spirit. He speaks not of himself.

He's speaking of Christ. In other words, it's the Holy Spirit presenting Christ to the sinner. So, we saw there were a crisis there, a crisis of the new birth, preparation, awakening, conviction, repentance, faith, born of the Spirit and the witness of the Spirit to that birth.

That's the first crisis. Then we saw that after the witness of the Spirit, there was the discovery of failure, there was brokenness and confession, cleansing, there was discovery of victory, and now our union with Christ at the cross and faith that is going to lead to being the initial crisis of being filled with the Spirit. Where I at the Blackboard, I draw a swoop up and a point and then I would swoop down again at another point and I would number these one to about 11 or 14 and I would put at the first point, born of the Spirit and at the second high point or crisis point, I would put the initial crisis of being filled with the Spirit.

Now, it's important to understand that as it was with Christ, so it was with us. We were born of the Spirit. The Spirit of God quickened our spirits and witnessed to us that we were born again.

As the Lord Jesus was indwelt by the fullness of the Godhead bodily and had the, without measure, we were born of the Spirit and had the witness of the Spirit to the new birth. And now it is Christ, as it was before, in contrast, it was the Holy Spirit presenting Christ to us as sinners, now it's the Lord Jesus Christ presenting the Holy Spirit to us. You see, it was John said of him, there comes one after me who's preferred before me.

He it is that baptizeth you with the Holy Ghost and with fire. That was the credential of Christ, that he baptized his people with the Holy Ghost and with fire. Now, Christ was conceived by the Holy Ghost and he had the Spirit of God come upon him.

He said, as the Father sent me, so send I you. We are born of the Spirit. Then there's a work of preparation.

We are filled with the Spirit. You say, how long a time elapses? It can happen in five minutes, five months, five years. The time is not significant.

I've known some who came into an experience of being born again and then within minutes afterward had been filled with the Spirit. But it's not the usual rule. In the New Testament, after they had given good evidence that they were born again, they were baptized in water and when they came out of the water, the elders would gather about them and pray for them and they were filled with the Spirit.

So we see that the pattern prevailed throughout the Scripture. Now, the point you've got to understand is this, the reason why the cross is so prominent in being filled with the Spirit is not to destroy us, but to fulfill us. That's why I read the verse, these things are written that your joy might be full.

Not that your joy might be squeezed away, but that your joy might be full. You see, when sin brings us into slavery, it brings us into bondage. And back from the Genesis right on through the Scripture, you discover that sinners are always in bondage.

Why? The psalmist said, the wicked are like the troubled sea, which casteth up mire and dirt. There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked. And yet the lie of the God of this world is, be free, do anything you want.

But it's a horrendous lie because it leads to slavery and it leads to bondage. One of the worst kinds of bondage there is is bondage to the opinions of others. A terrific bondage, a terrible bondage.

The bondage to what others demand or what others expect or what others are going to require. True freedom. Sometimes, though, that bondage is in the form of, thou shalt not do this, thou shalt not do that, thou shalt not do the other.

A long list of taboos. Another time, it may be in ritual. Thou must do this, thou must do that, thou must do the other.

It's true of the world. If you think not, then you just talk to the people that are living for the pleasure of the world and the approval of the world. And you'll discover that they are horrendously afraid of violating that continuous list of taboos on the one hand and rituals on the other.

And sometimes the dear children of God are in the same position. Now, what he's offering us. You know, the reason that the law as given by Moses failed was because God was so far from the people.

Go back, if you please, to the books of Pentateuch and you find there that there was a tabernacle in the wilderness with a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night. But all the people didn't live in sight of that pillar of cloud or pillar of fire. Some of them were way back across the Jordan River where Ephraim and Manassas were.

And Reuben was some distance. And the other tribes were scattered around and they couldn't see it. And the difficulty, sure, God dwelt back there at the tabernacle between the wings of the cherubim, but I'm out here and I'm living with all of these heathen people that are still around us and I'm in trouble.

And they had to walk such a long way back and take a lamb and stand in front of the door of the tabernacle, confess their sin. It didn't work. So under Ezekiel, God said, behold, I'm going to do a new thing.

I'm going to take away the heart of stone and I'm going to give you a heart of flesh and I'm going to put my spirit within you and cause you to walk in my statutes. What's he doing? Now let's go back. First, in repentance we've renounced our right to rule.

That's the essence of sin. In faith, we've been quickened by his spirit and we know we've been born of God. We've discovered that we need continuously, whenever there is need, come for cleansing.

We've discovered there's victory through the cross. We've taken our place where that eye that wants its own way and demands its right to rule is crucified with Christ and now we present our bodies to him, a living sacrifice. Why? To bring us into bondage? No, to bring us into liberty, to bring us into freedom, to bring us to that place, to that position.

Someone is chiming in. Jim, would you look and see who it is? I appreciate it. Bring us to that position where we are aware of the fact that all we are, all we have, is ours to present to him so that he can present it back to us.

The liberty, the freedom, the delight that there is in the spiritual is designed to have cause you to be the very best possible you that you can. That's the point that you've got to understand. The reason for being filled with the spirit is not to bring you into another kind of bondage but to bring you into freedom.

You see, if your purpose is to please God in everything, you can do anything you want. Is that right? To love God with all your heart and mind and soul and strength is simply this. Whom you love, you seek to please.

And when you love God, get violent here too, when you love God with all your heart and all your mind and all your soul and all your strength, takes a little of it here too, then you're going to find that you can truly do anything you want to do. Why? Because all you want to do is please God. Do you see? When all you want to do is to please Him, you can do anything you want to do.

Now, if you've got mixed feelings, mixed emotions and so on, and you don't recognize that you still carry, you still have that eye that has got to stay on the back of the cross crucified with Christ, now you can get into problems when you're told you can do anything you want to do. But again, the moment that you discover that, then you come back under the law, the Pentateuch, the Decalogue, the Scripture. He gives us no license, whatever.

But when your heart is pure toward Him and your desire is to please Him, and that's to be the normal Christian life, then you've been brought to the place that's filled with the Spirit. You're to be brought into joy, into freedom, into liberty, into the unfolding of your personality to the greatest possible glory of Christ. And that's been misunderstood, I'm afraid.

Fail to realize that this is why God has designed so great salvation. Oh, it's dreadful, isn't it, to live under the tyranny of what will he say? What will she say? I remember years ago when I was still wearing the grave clothes of dispensationalism. You see, I grew up in a school that taught us that you never understood the Scripture until you knew what dispensation it was.

When I went to Africa as a missionary, my Bible was about the size of a 12-weeks quarter in a year, a Sunday school quarterly. It was pretty thin. I had a little bit of Ephesians, Philippians, and Colossians, and all the rest had been chucked away to the Jews that were going to come or the people that had been.

And I didn't have much Scripture left. And there were juicy parts in the part I had left that you had to be afraid of, so I was told. At any rate, I was a thoroughgoing dispensationalist.

I discovered with me at least dispensationalism as I've been told about pregnancy. There's no such thing as a little bit of it. It just keeps growing and growing and growing until it fills your mind and spirit and there's no end to where it will lead you.

Well, I came to the place one time that I had what I thought was a message from the Lord from the, of all terrible things, the Sermon on the Mount. And the Sermon on the Mount was, of course, forbidden because that was to the Jews when Christ was there, nothing to do with us. And it wasn't until I got this message prepared and the outline made and my heart was thrilled, I remembered, whoops, that's not for us.

So I picked up one of the books I had there, one of the sets of books, and I read to Matthew. Oh boy, I blew it. But you see, I wasn't just that I blew it and took the, by, I was frightened.

I'll tell you what I did. Now, I was pastor of a church, mind you. I was old enough to do that.

I tore that manuscript in two and then I tore it into little bits and then I mixed it up and I put half of it in the waste basket in my room and the other half in the janitor's closet down the hall from where my office was. I didn't want anybody ever to put those pieces together and find out how close I'd come to heresy. You say, not really.

Really, yes, really, really. That was the bondage in which I found myself. You say, well, that's an extreme case, isn't it? Well, so be it.

It still is the case, as it was. And I say to you today that that is a bad way to live and a worse way to die. And I'm so delighted now that I can tell you that where the spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.

And these were written that your joy might be full. And I submit to you that it is only as we are brought into the fullness of the Holy Spirit that we can possibly enter into the joy that God intended us as human beings to know. Why? Because our minds and our hearts and our spirits are directed by Him.

You see, the Lord Jesus was perfectly naturally Himself. He didn't say what the Pharisees expected Him to say. He didn't preach what the Sadducees wanted Him to preach.

He didn't do what the priests looked for Him to do. I do only those things that please the Father. I say what I hear my Father say.

I do what I see my Father do. But the others were brought into such terrific bondage. They were to be seen of men.

They prayed to be seen. The whole life was bondage. Now I'm submitting to you today that the crisis of the Holy Spirit, that initial experience of being filled with the Spirit is prerequisite to walking in the fullness of the Spirit.

I close with this. One of the finest little books on the subject of the spiritual life that I know about is published by Christian Publications and it's available from our publishing house. It's Dr. Tozer's little booklet How to be Filled with the Holy Spirit.

And he makes in the course of that book these three statements. Everyone filled with the Holy Spirit knows it. Everyone filled with the Holy Spirit knows when.

And everyone filled with the Holy Spirit has the wonderful sense of the Lord's presence. Knows that he's filled. Knows when he was filled.

And he has the witness from the Spirit of God himself to the fact that he is filled. Now years and years ago there was a division that occurred in the Christian Missionary Alliance. Being filled with the Spirit as a crisis in the Christian life had been taught by such great worthies as Andrew Murray and F.B. Meyer and the great men of Europe and America.

And it was brought that message and ministry had been long taught and experienced here. But about the time of Dr. Simpson beginning the Alliance Fellowship there was a pouring forth of the Spirit of God with the phenomena of the glossolalia the speaking in tongues. And Dr. Simpson's that occurred at NIAC it occurred in many other places.

Studying the scripture Dr. Simpson came to the conclusion that did the men with him that the gifts of the Spirit do are in the church today have always been in the church have never been removed and are there including among all the gifts, the gifts of tongues. But that there is no single gift that is the evidence of the baptism of the Spirit. Any gift of the Spirit is proof of the presence of the Spirit.

And the reason that one of the clear reasons why I came into the Christian Missionary Alliance back in 1953 was because I believed that with all my heart that there is no single gift that's the evidence of the fullness of the Spirit. Everyone filled with the Spirit knows that he is filled and knows when he was filled and was filled with the Spirit suddenly. These are the three cardinal points that Dr. Tozer makes in the little book.

The Alliance has taken the position as an action that Dr. Simpson repeated when I was on the board of managers that all the gifts of the Spirit do belong in the church and have their place. But no one is the evidence of the baptism or the fullness of the Spirit. And so we have a paper that has been published by the order of the board of managers Seek Not, Forbid Not.

It is true that many people filled with the Spirit do have some particular gift of the Spirit manifest at the time as they did in the New Testament. But the Scripture does not teach and I stand on this for 30 years of close exegesis any one gift is the evidence of the baptism of the Spirit. But again I go back to Dr. Tozer.

Here's a crisis. Everyone filled with the Spirit knows it. Everyone filled with the Spirit knows when.

And everyone filled with the Spirit was filled suddenly. Be filled with the Spirit literally is being filled with the Spirit. But there has to be a first time if there's ever to be a second time or a third time.

And we're talking today about the first time. The normal Christian life, a life of joy, a life of blessing, a life of freedom, a life of liberty. Not of license, but of joyous liberty in the Lord.

That our joy might be full. And so, the prayer moves to that. That ought to be the normal Christian life.

I personally refuse to see that as being higher or deeper or fuller or any other adjective other than normal. Just normal. Listen to it now as we close.

That for this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ writing to saints at Ephesus, men who are faithful in Christ Jesus. For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is in his name, that you would be granted according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus. To be strengthened deep in the inner man in order that Christ may take up his lasting dwelling place in your heart through faith.

That you, being rooted and foundationed in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth and length and depth of the love of Christ which passes the grasp of your intellect in order that you might be filled unto all of the fullness of God. And the only time in the epistles of Paul when he puts the benediction in the middle is here and he raises those chain-manicled hands and begins to praise the Lord now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all we ask or think according to the power that worketh in us. Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end.

Amen. The normal Christian life. Paul said, I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live.

Yet not I, but Christ liveth in me. The crisis of the spiritual life. Everyone filled with the spirit knows it.

Everyone filled with the spirit knows when. And everyone filled with the spirit was filled suddenly. Let us bow in prayer.

Our Father, how grateful we are to Thee that we have that promise today, made as it was by Peter so long ago, but the promise is to you and to your children, to them that are far off, even to as many as the Lord our God shall call. Not just to the company about him, but clear down to the present. We can ask, we can seek, we can knock, knowing that Thou are able to give good gifts to your children.

Lord, we do today come praying that everyone in this company may joyously, happily and victoriously know what it is to walk in the fullness of the Holy Spirit. But we know that if we're to walk in that fullness, we must begin. And should there be among us those who do not know that they have been, that they are filled with Thy Spirit, O that there might be that stirring of hunger and yearning and longing that will lead into this relationship that the Lord Jesus purchased with His precious blood and so freely offers to all who love Him.

To that end, we ask Thee now, Father, to bless as we close this time of meditation together. In Jesus' name, Amen.

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