

## **Pentecost and the Four Freedoms**

**A Sermon By Dr. Charles S. Price**

The Saviour passed through many dark nights and many were the hours he spent in grief and disappointment. It is possible for us to enter into the humanity of Jesus because he entered so freely into ours. He was so very human. One would have thought that Jesus being divine would have used his deity to live above tears and sorrows, but although he had the power so to do, he never used it, but chose to live like others who knew grief and sorrow and heartache and tears. What a wonderful character he was. One moment he would cry like a man and the next he would stand with the authority of God himself and command a dead man to come out of the tomb. And when he spoke the dead obeyed.

One minute he is asleep in a boat, weary and tired from the toil of the day; wrapped in kindly sleep, just like the laborer sleeps when he comes home from the toil of the day. The next minute however he is standing in the bow of the vessel, rebuking the north wind and making the seas obey his word. He who yielded to nature one minute becomes its master the next. So the storm listened to his voice and heard him say, "Peace be still." The ocean gave a little whimper like a spoiled child and then lay its watery head on the bosom of Nature and went to sleep.

The sympathy and compassion of Jesus highlight the four stories of his life. Never was there one who was such a friend of sinners. Never was there one who would enter so freely into their homes and join with them in their sorrows and joys. He defied convention by sitting on the side of the well of Samaria and talking to a woman of questionable character; if we did that we would be the gossip of the town before the falling of the night. But into the soul of that woman he poured the water of His truth and the story of his love; he gave her deeper things than he ever gave to Pharisees for the sinner was able to receive him in a way the Pharisees never could. She not only received what he said but she received the man who said them; and that is what we have to learn before we can really be his followers and disciples.

It was because she received him that she was able to receive what he said. Christ is the interpreter of his truth for he himself is that truth. No man can take his teaching unless he receives the teacher. That is why people can go through seminary and come out with a lot of theology but no salvation. No one can understand the things he taught unless he dwell within to unfold and to reveal. In the last analysis He is the gospel and the power in it is not the power that is in the truth but in the Christ himself who is the truth. In genuine Christianity there can be no salvation without a

Saviour and no Christianity without a living Christ.

Undoubtedly that great truth was uppermost in the mind and heart of the Master when he sat with the disciples around the table of the passover. Their hearts were grieved because he told them he was going away. He was their all. There was nothing left when he went. The miracles and the works would be forever over; for they knew what I wish every professed Christian knew today; that without Him there is no salvation, no experience, no eternal life, no miracles; that Christ is all and in all. Is it any wonder then that they were depressed and unhappy? Is it any wonder that they were grieved? Every hope they ever had; every ideal they had ever built; every prospect for the golden future was to be swept away by the cruelty of his departure. When Jesus went everything would go. And they would have to go too.

So he told them not to be troubled; he begged them not to be downhearted as he revealed the coming of the paraclete. They were not to have an experience called the baptism, but they were to have the indwelling presence of the Holy Ghost. They were to be baptized in him. They were not to get SOMETHING but they were to wait for the coming of SOMEONE. And that SOMEONE would be God in the Spirit as Jesus completed and finished his work. He would abide with them forever. After the physical life of the Christ was over that SOMEONE who was the Holy Ghost would continue to administer the life of Christ and to reveal the truth as he revealed the Christ who was the truth.

Marriage is an experience. But man does not go around the country seeking a marriage; he seeks rather a wife and when he has found her he gets married and then he has the experience of being married. When a Christian desires to be baptized and to enjoy the experiences of the baptism in the Spirit, he should not seek the baptism but he should seek the Holy Ghost, and when the Holy Ghost comes he will give him the experience. You don't get the Holy Ghost through the baptism but you get baptism when the Holy Ghost comes. So we should seek him. We should obey the Lord and tarry at "Jerusalem" until we be endued with power from on high. POWER FROM ON HIGH. That is where the power comes from. And he brings the power when he comes.

But the purpose of this message is to talk about the four freedoms which every Spirit-filled Christian should enjoy, for it is the ministry of the Holy Spirit to impart these four freedoms to every heart and life in which he is allowed to operate. And believe me, if you will let him, he will give them all to you. They are more precious than gold and are more to be desired than anything this old world knows of or can give.

The first is freedom from FEAR, I think of all the enemies of the Christian heart and mind fear is perhaps the worst and the most destructive to faith in God, and to the maintenance of that peace which our Lord wants us to have. Fear is a powerful weapon in the hands of the adversary of our souls. What is fear? It is an emotional condition caused by our uncertainty regarding the present and the future. It does not

dwell in the past but it anticipates the things of the future and strangles the heart and stifles assurance until it literally makes us sick in body as well as mind. Fear is very real; for although it is an emotional reflex it has a tremendous power over nerve and body. Fear can make you physically sick. It not only can, but it does.

Fear operates only as we anticipate the future. The past in which we feared has gone; we do not fear it anymore; but at the same time the fears of yesterday can make us the sick nervous wrecks some of us are today. Let me illustrate. I fear the dentist. I don't like the sound of that drill grinding away at tooth and root. I jump before he touches me. I make this confession because I know I am not alone. My dentist friends tell me that there are very few of us who are immune from all fear when we step into the dentist chair and hear him say "Open a little wider please." But when the bill is paid and you march down the stairs after the drilling is over you are not afraid. Not you. It is over and you don't fear the things which are over. IT IS THE FUTURE YOU FEAR. But why should you fear when you have the Holy Spirit to lead and to guide and to guard and to bring you through.

It is the ministry of the Spirit to make you free from fear. He wants to liberate you and he will if you let him. D. L. Moody used to say there were two classes of people on the way to heaven. First class and second class. The second class passengers on the grand old gospel train had a motto which read "When I am afraid I will trust in the Lord." The first class passengers had a better motto than that; for theirs read, "I will trust AND NOT BE AFRAID." Someday you will know that as a Christian every fear you ever had was unnecessary and that you were foolish beyond words to allow such an enemy to rob you of your peace, your happiness and joy. There is not any real basis for fear in the Spirit-filled life but there is absolutely no need of it. When we see that, we shall cease from our foolish fears, and begin to do what we ought to do all the time; have such unswerving confidence in our Lord and His promises that we shall always face our troubles with a song knowing that our Lord will bring us through. Jesus never fails. He never in all human history has gone back on a promise or deserted the souls who have put their confidence and their trust in him. He does not always lead us out of trouble OUR WAY, but he always leads us out. Never does he violate his word; never does he betray the trusting soul who puts his confidence in him. Why should we fear when

*The soul that on Jesus hath leaned for repose  
I'll never, no never, desert to his foes  
That soul; though all hell should endeavor to shake  
I'll never, no NEVER, NO NEVER forsake.*

When the giant of Gath came thundering his blasphemous maledictions against the armies of the Lord do you know why only the boy David was able to go out against him and slay him? It was because David was the only one in the army who

was not afraid. Every one of them could have done what David did if they had put their trust in the Lord and gone out to meet Goliath without any fear. Every man in Saul's army believed God COULD do it, but only David believed he WOULD. Fear says he CAN, but the Holy Spirit says he WILL. Who are we going to follow and WHOM are we going to believe? If you don't slay fear he will slay you.

Many years ago I met a little lady who was a living object lesson of what it means to trust in the Lord and to walk the highway of life without any fear. No matter what happened she was always the picture of serenity and quiet confidence. She lived with her daughter who had maintained a little bungalow and had kept the little old trusting lady for quite a number of years. Then sickness came. The savings from that little home were soon gone. It became necessary to borrow on the property and then to borrow again. After a while her daughter died and she was left alone. She was too old to work and had absolutely no income at all. Pretty hard to face the county poor farm when you are old and gray and there is no one left to love you and to care for you. Did I say no one? Did I say nobody cared? Then I was wrong as this story will prove. I asked her after the funeral of her daughter what her plans for the future were. With her characteristic smile she said she did not know. Then I said, "Are you not a little anxious? Are you not afraid?" From beneath that quaint old fashioned bonnet she smiled and said, "Young man, why should I be? For fifty years and more the Saviour has been walking by my side. I have never faced a situation but what he has brought me through. Do you think he is going to desert me when I am old? Do you think he will leave me now that I need him as much or more than ever I did in all my life before? No, sir; I am going to leave it with him. I don't know how he will arrange everything but I know he will and I am not going to fear while I have him by my side."

So the old lady spoke and her sweet abiding confidence in Jesus was a tonic to my heart. I knew the home would go. I knew she did not have a relation on earth. But she knew she had. She had a Father who was living and an Elder Brother too. She had a comforter and a guide and was rich in all the promises of the word. The hand of fate could close the door of human resources but the devil has never been able to get hold of the key that could lock the door of the unsearchable riches of his grace. And the little old lady knew it. She continued to trust.

A few weeks later I had another funeral. This time it was the mother in a home who died. Her race was run. She too had been living with her daughter and her son in law. Two sweet children were there too; little feet to make music in the house as they pattered over the floor. Little voices to make laughter as sweet as an angel's song. But Grandma died and I buried her and we turned away from the last resting place in the arms of the earth where she slept beneath a bower of flowers and the smiling of a springtime sun. A day or two later I was in the home of the folk who had laid away their mother. They showed me her room just as it was when she left it. It belonged to grandma and her white cap with the whisp of the snow white hair

peeking from beneath and the trembling little voice so full of love and tenderness.

“Do you know,” her daughter said to me, “we have become so used to Mother being in there, and the children spent so much time playing in her room that we are all going to miss her so very very much. I can't turn that room into a sewing room, or a den, it seems a shame there is not some dear old lady who could live in it. Sometime Mr. Price you may . . . meet someone . . . who has no children to take care of her . . . and who would like to live in a room like that. I don't mean that anybody could take the place of my dear mother. I don't know why I feel this way, but I do . . . I feel an urge that someone needs that room . . . and I thought perhaps you knew . . .”

Did I know? I told the story of the little old lady whose daughter had died. They listened and tears came in the eyes of the mother of those two little tots. She thought for a moment and said, “I feel now that I am going to love her. And the children will too.” So I brought them together. And the little old lady with the cute little bonnet and the hair white as the driven snow moved in to her new place not only in a bungalow but in the hearts of God's children who lived there. And do you know what she said when she moved in? It was: “This is another of my Father's houses; and these dear dear people are some more of my Father's children.”

She is in the glory now. She went to the larger house; the one of many mansions where you never have to borrow on the place because of sickness, and you never have to say good bye because of death. She is with the rest of the Father's children in the home prepared beyond the blue. And someday it will be our home too. But never can I forget the little soul who had learned how to trust and not to fear. We honor the Lord when we believe him. We make him glad when we trust him. A Christian who is filled with the Spirit has no business to be afraid. That is what Jesus said the Holy Ghost would do for you. Read on your knees the closing chapters of the gospel of John; and before you rise tell the Lord you are sorry for your foolish fears and that by his help you will never be afraid again. Perfect love casteth out fear, and there is no need for you to be afraid.

In the second place we are delivered from WORRY. Freedom from worry. Would not that be a grand and glorious life? We can have it if we want it. We can enjoy it if we will. Just imagine what your life would be like if there was no worry at all. How prone we are to worry. Every hair of our head knows it is numbered and they turn gray before their time trying to stop the brain from building bridges we never cross and making troubles that never come. Not that there are no dangers. There are plenty of them. But worry never has removed them and instead of driving your troubles way, they merely invite your troubles to feast on them and they get so big and fat they are too big for the door when at last you try to throw them out. Worry digs more graves than the men who work in a cemetery, and tears more months from the calendar of life than any other enemy we have. We have no more business to worry if we love Jesus and have given him our hearts and lives than we have the right to go to the engineer of the train and demand that he turn the throttle

over to us. Let him run things. Turn the government over to him. He has sent the Holy Spirit to be the executive of our lives and our conduct and he has the power to make sunshine out of our shadows and to give us the oil of his joy in exchange for our mourning. But he can't do it if we worry. He can't fill our cups with joy if we keep them full of worry.

I love to tell the story of the ancient mariner who took his little daughter with him one time as he steered his vessel for the sea. He was an old sea dog and had weathered many a storm and had gone through all of the fits of temper that the elements can show when they get together and start to quarrel.

Late in life the Lord had given him this little curly locks of a daughter and he loved her with all his heart. She had often longed to go with her daddy on one of his sea trips, and this time he had yielded to her entreaties and allowed her to go. It would have to be on such a trip that he encountered one of the worst storms of his entire career. The wind screamed and howled. The waves were rolling like mountains. The gallant ship of his command plunged and tossed like an unruly colt as if it was trying to get rid of everybody who dared to defy the fury of the storm and pitch them into the cauldron of the sea.

While the old skipper was at the wheel he was thinking of the little girl whom he had sent to bed in the cabin. He began to wonder how she was and it occurred to him that she might be beginning to worry about the fury of the storm. So he sent the mate down to find out.

"How are you little miss?" he said, as he entered the cabin. The little curly head turned to him and said, "Is my daddy at the wheel?" "Yes" was the reply. She smiled and said, "Then I am alright. I am always alright when my daddy is on the bridge." So are we. Why do we not come to the recognition of the fact that the leadership and the guidance of the Holy Spirit is not a doctrine but is a reality proved ten thousand times in the lives of the redeemed of the Lord?

When you worry you are telling the Lord you have no confidence in him. You may deny that, but just the same it is the truth. During the first world war Tommy Adams was called to the colors. Now you do not know Tommy Adams but I did; he was a fine lad and proved an able soldier. But when first he was called he went to pieces not because of cowardice but because he was worried sick about his mother and the payments that had to be made on the house. Now Tommy's second cousin was a man much older than he; he had a responsible position and for years had been earning more than the average wage. When this man saw Tommy's nervousness he went home and told his wife that it was their patriotic duty to stand by their relative and to lift the burden from his shoulders and the worry from his mind. So they wrote Tommy a letter and Tommy brought the letter to me. There it was in black and white. They promised to take care of his mother; to let her keep the home and pay the payments as they became due. But Tommy still worried. He thought they were making a promise they might forget in a little while. He imagined all kinds of things

and instead of believing he began to doubt and to fear. When his cousin heard of it he was hurt. Deeply hurt. He took it as a personal affront against his integrity. He came to see Tommy. He told him how he felt that his generosity had been questioned and his honor impugned.

Tommy saw what he had done. He said, "If only YOU had been here to tell me with your own lips and give me your hand I would have believed. I can see now that you really meant it. I am so sorry for what I have done. It was so ungrateful of me after all your kindness. I would not blame you if you were to withdraw your kind offer." But instead of doing that his cousin made it all over again. They shook hands as he said, "I will give you my hand on my promise there will be nothing to worry about while you're away. I will look after your mother." And he did. Gone was the worry. And Tommy Adams went away to war with no load on his shoulders save his musket and he found happiness in thinking of the fact that love was taking care of his mother back home. Someone who cared was keeping the home fires burning.

That is what Christ has done. He not only wrote in a letter, but gave you his spoken word. And then he offered you His hand; the hand with a nail print in it and placed it in yours. That nail print was the price he paid to redeem you. At what cost he purchased you back from the control of the devil and the forces of a wicked world. If he loved you enough to die for you, don't you think he loves you enough to KEEP you?

Then why worry? Why not begin to believe! Why not begin to trust! Everything will come out alright. I mean in YOUR life; you are reading this; in YOUR life, I tell you; things will shape themselves for God's glory and your good if only you will refuse to worry. But you ask me how? The answer is very easy. By casting all your care upon him, for you know he cares for you. Don't bring a burden to the altar and take it away with you again. Leave it there. Roll it off on Jesus.

I found a beautiful scripture the other day. It is in the 37th Psalm. It says, "Commit thy way unto the Lord." In the original it reads, "Roll off thy burden onto the Lord." He has already borne it. It was your cross he carried along the way of weeping. Not his alone. It was your sufferings he bore when they scourged him at the whipping post. It was your death he died upon the tree. It was your sorrows he bore and your griefs which he carried. He was your burden-bearer. Do you believe He gets any joy in seeing you bear them all over again? The Holy Spirit will liberate you if you will let him. You can have the second of the four freedoms of the Holy Ghost. Freedom from worry.

*"Why should I charge my soul with care?  
The wealth in every mine  
Belongs to Christ, God's Son and heir,  
And He's a friend of mine."*

So why worry. Acknowledge him and he will bring you out alright.

The third freedom is freedom from SELF. Now who in the world wants to be free from themselves? Well I do. For the older I get the more I realize what a despicable fellow self is. He sits on a throne and has a whole host of little imps to wait on him. There is self-pity, and self-sympathy; greed and envy and jealousy; there is lust and pride and self opinion and other characteristics of self that swell you up until ego becomes as inflated as a balloon waiting for someone to come along and deflate you and show you what you really are. Now I don't like the devil one little bit. But I am sure that he gets the blame for a lot of things he has never done; and we charge him with lots of sins he never commits. If you want to see the face of the fellow who is the cause of most of your trouble get up in the morning any time between six and seven and look in the mirror. You will find him there.

How prone we are to blame the other fellow or blame the devil. Now sometimes they are to blame; but oftentimes they are not. We get grouchy and blame it upon circumstances. We get angry and blame it on conditions. We lose our tempers and blame it on the animals around the farm, etc. We get discouraged and blame it on the town.

*"If you'd like to live in the kind of a town  
Like the kind of a town you like  
You needn't slip, your clothes in a grip  
And start on a long long hike  
You'll only find what you've left behind  
There's nothing that's really new  
It's a knock at yourself when you knock at the town  
It isn't the town; ITS YOU."*

Do you remember when David cried, "Oh that I had the wings of a dove. Then I would fly far away and in the wilderness build me a nest, and there forever I would be at rest." He thought so but he was wrong. He had a good idea, but for one thing. He could not fly away from himself! When he got there he would find himself there waiting. The trouble was one part circumstances and nine parts David. That is proved by the way he came out of it. For it was after that he wrote some of the most sublime poetic writings that have ever left the pen of mortal man. It was in the same surroundings and in the same environments that he dips his pen in the ink of inspiration and takes us to where the pastures are the greenest and the waters are still and where there is no fear even in the valley of the shadow. It was a grand day when he was saved from his sin; but it was a beautiful morning when he was saved from himself.

Elijah had to learn the same lesson. The man who had faced the hosts on the summit of Carmel, was sitting underneath a twisted Juniper tree crying like a spoiled

child and wanting to die. He had David's trouble. A dread disease called self. He was filled with self-pity until self-pity took the giant that was the real Elijah and made a crying captive out of him. Seems impossible this fellow could be the same one who had been the hero of Carmel. But he was. But the Lord gave him a good square meal and sent the birds to feed him. Elijah got hold of some real good gospel and in the strength of that food he went forty days and nights unto Horeb the mount of God.

Peter had it too. Self. Too much self. If ever I preach on his denial of Jesus I shall use the words "I" and "THOU" as my text. Peter said "I": if all men forsake you yet will not "I." Why "I" would fight an army; and he tried it and cut off one man's ear. But Jesus knew the self that was Peter. That is why Jesus said "THOU." And look what "I" did: cursed and swore and denied his Lord. That was self in manifestation. That was self in testimony. That was self in conduct. Maybe you don't want to enjoy freedom from self; but I do.

It is really harder to die to self than it is to die to worry and fear. There are many people who can gauge their happiness by what other people think about them. Flattery is a fickle goddess who lures many to destruction who are slaves of public opinion. To say we do not care what anybody thinks about us is to go to the other extreme, which may lead to loose living and careless words and acts; but none should be a slave to the opinions of others to the extent that we are bound by them and know not the freedom from self which should be the heritage of us all.

People will talk about you whatever you do. If you dress too well you are proud; if not well enough you are sloppy. If you work too hard you are foolish; if you rest you are lazy. If you buy a cheap car you are penny wise and pound foolish; if you buy a good one you are extravagant. If you give liberally you are showing off; if you don't you are stingy. Don't you want freedom from all that? The only way to get it is to die. Stones can't hurt a corpse and that is what you are supposed to be. We are told to "reckon ourselves dead" to sin, to self, and to the world and to be alive unto him who loved us and who wants us to live our lives in him. Flesh is never really beautiful. Self is an enemy we all have to overcome.

When you want to quit the church because someone has talked about you don't call it the proper thing to do; but call it self. Have you forgotten that Jesus Himself said, "Blessed are ye when men shall revile you"? That is the time to be glad; for the man who is dead to self will catch the stones as did Paul on the shield of faith at Lystra and think of the Home over there.

When your feelings are hurt because another won the church election, instead of complaining, think of a man I read about once who girded himself with a towel and washed the feet of some men called Peter, James and John, *et al.* He chose to be a servant. The man least equipped to run things is generally the fellow who wants to do it. No man knows how to give an order unless he has first learned how to take one. He that is the greatest among you, let him be the least. That was the teaching of the Saviour; it was not only his teaching, it was his life. You can't do that though, not

until you die to self.

*"So wash me now; without; within;  
Or purge with fire it that must be.  
No matter how if only SELF  
Die out in me; die out in me."*

Then the fourth freedom is the freedom from **DEATH**. Christians do not die. They are so filled with Christ's life that the valley of the shadow holds no terrors and the gathering gloom of the eventide is swallowed up in the sunrise of an eternal tomorrow. Christians do not die. They merely change their residence. He came that we might have life and that we might have it more abundantly. And the life he gives us is eternal life. And all of us have eternal life as long as we have Christ. There is no life apart from him. "He that liveth and believeth in me shall never die," he said.

Should we call it death when we drop this robe of flesh and rise to seize the everlasting prize? Should we say we die when we say farewell to mortality and are clothed upon with the garments of immortality? Tell me not it is death when we say good bye to corruption and receive the habiliments of incorruption, in the land where even flowers bloom for ever and never die. Beyond the blue of yonder sky is the home sweet home of the children of the Lord. On the other side of the sky in the land of forever is the Father's house where no one will ever have a cancer and tears will be forever wiped away. And we call that homegoing death. Why should we?

When Catherine Booth lay dying her family were grouped around her. The doctor moved near to pull down the blinds. The wife of the general of the Salvation Army moved feebly and said, "Let them stay up; let the sunshine in." The doctor shook his head. "But you are dying, Mrs. Booth." "Yes," she replied, "The waters are rising but so am I. I am not going under; I am GOING OVER, praise the Lord." And she was gone. Gone; while the angels sang, and the choirs of heaven made the portals of heaven ring. Gone. While Jesus stood at the welcome gate and said, "Well Done." And men call that death. It is not death; it is the homecoming of one of the Father's children.

Do you not know that in that land of the sweet forever just across the shining river, we shall know our loved ones who have gone before? You will slip your arm through the arm of your mother and walk with her along the streets of light. You will talk of the old days and the happy times you had together when you were yet creatures of time and lived in the old house on the earth Christ came to redeem. You will feel the touch of baby fingers again. We shall meet one another in the land beyond.

And I believe it is as real as the town in which we now live; it will not be a spiritual existence, it will be the life of time transferred to eternity. It is the heaven built for you and it will be you who will be there; living in YOUR house, and loving

forever the Saviour who went to the cross to buy your home sweet home. Only the sinless can live in God's sinless heaven, and it took the blood of Jesus to wash your sins away. So call it not death when the Saviour calls. The Christian should never fear the valley of the shadow for the revelation of the Spirit has made him free from that.

These then are the four freedoms of the Spirit. Freedom from fear. Freedom from worry. Freedom from self. Freedom from death.