

Foundation stones of Word and Spirit

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Date: 19 April 2026

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[0 : 00] Good morning, everyone. Good morning. Should we just bow our heads in prayer? Lord, thank you that we can gather together.! Thank you for your word and your spirit working in us.

Lord, just pray that whatever is said today gives glory to you, honors your name, that you will minister to us through your word and your spirit.

In Jesus' name. Amen. Morning. So, in January 1991, on a Sunday morning, I heard a very loud voice in my head, so loud it woke me up and said, go to church.

And my response in obedience was, no. I mean, who gets up before nine o'clock on a Sunday morning? Right, Mike? And sorry, I apologize.

But the voice kept going and going and going until eventually I gave in, coming from a very non-Christian background and went to church.

[1 : 09] And I sat on the back of the church in the back pew and not having a clue what was going on. And an usher came up and said for me to go to communion.

So I went down and took communion. Not recommended, by the way, for unbelievers. And knelt down. And it was silent in churches in those days. And when I took communion, when I took the wine, I couldn't move.

I was stuck. And it was really weird. And then I started laughing, which was even more embarrassing. Because my mind was just constantly going, just shut up.

You're just embarrassing yourself. And eventually got back to the pew at the back of the church. And a person who sat next to me, a guy called Peter Ford, I remember. He's gone to be with the Lord now.

Said, kind of said to me, repent. That was the first thing. And put some scripture in front of me, which I can't remember what it was. But I left that place.

[2 : 11] And all I wanted to do was talk about this experience of God I had. To my non-Christian friends in the house that I lived at university.

And just kept talking and talking. So then I went and got a Bible. Because that's what you do. And I actually found my original Bible that was here. Even got the sticky labels on it.

So that you had to kind of put on in those days. You haven't got them anymore. And started reading the Bible. So I started reading from page one. Because that's what you do when you buy a book, isn't it? You kind of go to page one.

I've even got a prayer in here that says, help me God. That's there. And then went through and kind of underlined all the scripture. That I thought was important. Which was basically all of it.

From beginning to end, as it were. But as I read it, my heart was just on fire. For more and more and more to read.

[3 : 07] A few months after that experience and giving my life to the Lord, a friend of mine invited me to a conference. And it was two key men that I encountered is probably the best word.

The first one was a guy called David Pawson. Both these men have gone to be with the Lord. And I think it was the first session of the Unlocking the Bible series he did.

It was that long ago. It was recorded on VHS tape that was there. And he started from the book of Leviticus. And I actually found my original notes from that session back in 1991.

Bit sad, isn't it? I keep these things. That's there. And that just blew my mind. The connectedness of scripture. The relevance of scripture.

And it just made me hungry and hungry for more. And increased my faith as I went through learning more about the word of God. A few months after that, I went to probably what was one of the first new wine conferences, if you remember back in those days, at Shepton Mallet.

[4 : 17] And it was held in the cow shed because there wasn't that many people that went then. And there was an American guy that came over called John Wimber, if any of you have encountered this man.

He's quite a calm but quite a funny American. He's also gone to be with the Lord. And he was used quite powerfully by God. And demonstrated the power of the Spirit in a way that I had never, ever seen before in my life.

I think it was so dramatic that whenever his session was on, I would arrive about an hour before the session. So I could get kind of closer to the front. Because I thought there was more of the Holy Spirit at the front than there was at the back.

But these two men kind of led me to, just inspired me in my walk with both the Word and the Spirit as two foundation stones to my walk with Jesus.

And that brings me to the essence of this talk. The foundation stones embodied by Jesus. The key to our journey with Christ.

[5 : 23] To see the Word and the Spirit working together in that perfect unity in our lives. To be formed by the Bible, but to be transformed by the Spirit of God in action.

And that brings me to the first reading. There's two readings. And the first reading is in Luke. Luke chapter 14. Sorry, Luke chapter 4, verse 14.

It's a very famous passage that you will know. And it says, And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit to Galilee.

And a report about him went out through all the surrounding country. And he taught in their synagogues, being glorified by all. And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up. And as was his custom, he went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day. And he stood to read. The scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him.

[6 : 23] He unrolled the scroll, found the place where it was written. The Spirit of the Lord is upon me. Because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor.

He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives. And recovery of sight to the blind. To set at liberty those who are oppressed.

To proclaim the year of the Lord's favor. And he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant, and sat down. And the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him.

And he began to say to them, Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing. And all spoke well of him, and marveled at the gracious words that were coming from his mouth.

At this point, Jesus is the very embodiment of the word. As we read in John 1.1, that the word became flesh.

[7 : 22] That the word was God. That he was empowered by the Holy Spirit. He fulfilled this prophecy of Isaiah. He was the Messiah. He gave us the model of what true discipleship really looks like.

He preached the gospel to the poor. He prayed and supported those to be liberated from sin and oppression. He healed the blind. He raised up the downtrodden.

We are a people that are just made of flesh and blood. But yet, we have the mind of Christ. He lives within us.

We walk in the power of the Spirit. I don't know about you, but my constant Christian battle, this is kind of like public confession, I suppose. My constant Christian battle is to die to the flesh.

To die to the flesh. To have the mind of Christ. I kind of struggle with what does that mean? It's got to be more than just filling my mind with Scripture. To be obedient to whatever the Holy Spirit tells us to do.

[8 : 30] That we should speak, that the Spirit should call us each day to intentionally walk with him. So that we're useful to him.

So that we focus on that narrow path that he's put us on. So that we keep our eyes on Jesus. This is why both the Word and the Spirit are the foundation stones of our life, of our journey with the Lord.

The partnership between the Word and the Spirit that cannot be broken and shouldn't be broken. Yet, it is often quite threatened. If one is dominant, then the other one often will take a back seat.

Yet, Jesus showed us and fulfilled in this reading that he did from the prophet Isaiah. That the Word and the Spirit are an inseparable union.

If they're taken to the extreme, then one or other will be neglected. Some may well gravitate towards the pursuit or the experience of the Spirit.

[9 : 34] Often seeking those prophecies, signs and wonders. Desiring the power and the emotion. I've been in many of those settings. Or those that are solely focused on the Word and the theology and the doctrine.

And although they'll know the Spirit is important and the Spirit gives revelation, there's no real interaction with him as a person that's there.

However, if we want to experience the genuine work of the Holy Spirit, and I mean that, the genuine holy, where we see tangible healings, where we see valid and specific words of knowledge, etc., that changes us.

It builds our faith. It opens our understanding to who the Lord is. You know, Peter and the disciples, when they see Jesus walking on the water, they're terrified.

They're like, who is this? They know who it is. But there's that fleshly reaction, that who am I looking at, at this person? The Word comes to life, and the Spirit gives us deeper revelation.

[10 : 44] Certainly in the last few years, you know, many times reading Scripture, and I know I sort of joke and you might say, you know, that wasn't there, Lord, last time I read it. But it's the Lord highlighting particular things in our lives as we go through reading our Bibles.

And Scripture constantly reminds us of those two foundation stones that are inseparable. One without the other is a shipwreck. We can't have one without the other. The Word and the Spirit, if we have the Word and no Spirit, it is dull, it's lifeless, it's unfulfilling, it's an academic book.

You know, we're following that religious pursuit of the cerebral, as it would be. But the Calvary movement started with a supernatural move of God back in 1960 or something, where the spiritual encounter was through many signs and wonders.

But however, the preeminence that went alongside those supernatural experience was the systematic study of God's Word. The two went together.

You could say that the USP of Calvary is that verse-by-verse exposition of Scripture. Not like this one. That's there. And sometimes we come across Scripture and we go, I don't know what that means.

[12 : 08] And we need to be humble enough to say, I don't know what that means. And work through that. I always think the journey of Revelation is chronicled by, or through the life of the Apostle Peter, who often got things wrong, often kind of jumped in with both feet, would often come to some random conclusion that he had to be corrected about.

But in Acts 2.14, and onwards from that chapter, when Peter is empowered by the Holy Spirit, he clearly understands all that Jesus said, the law and the prophets, as he quotes Joel in that as well. In that chapter of Acts 2, in verse 37, the passage says that when the people heard this, they were pierced in their hearts, or pierced to their hearts. And in verse 41, in the same chapter in Acts, it says, those who received the word were baptized and added to their number and devoted themselves to prayer, to fellowship, to the breaking of bread, to the apostles' teaching.

Almost exactly what we're doing today with the fellowship meal, with communion that we've got here, and so on. However, many churches today are either strong in the word and doctrine, or they place that constant seeking of the spiritual manifestation.

In Luke, in Luke 24.19, tells us that Jesus was a prophet, powerful in word and deed before God and all the people.

[13 : 46] The emphasis, again, is on the unity of the power of the word and the deeds of the spirit. As seen many times in the apostles and in the early church and throughout all of church history.

The problem is more clearly outlined in the second reading. And the second reading is taken from the book of Matthew. And it's Matthew 22.

And it's verses 23 to 33. And it says, The same day the Sadducees came to him who say there is no resurrection.

And they asked him a question, saying, Teacher, Moses, Moses, sorry, Siri going off. Said, Teacher, Moses said, if a man dies having no children, his brother must marry the widow and raise the offspring to his brother.

Now there were seven brothers among us, the first married and died and having no offspring, left his wife out to his brother. So to the second, the third, down to the seventh.

[15:01] After them, after them all, the woman died. In the resurrection, therefore, of the seven, whose wife shall she be? For they all had her. And Jesus answered them, You are wrong because you do not know either the scripture or the power of God.

For in the resurrection, neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven. And as for the resurrection of the dead, have you not read what it is said to you by God? I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, the God of Jacob. He is not the God of the dead, but of the living. And when the crowd heard it, they were astonished at his teaching. The religious leaders are questioning Jesus about the law of Moses. The one thing they're very good at is quoting scripture, kind of chapter and verse, as it were, that was there. But in verse 29, Jesus tells them, you're wrong, or in some translations, it says mistaken. That you need, that you do not understand the scriptures or the power of God.

[16:09] You need both. Following this event, Matthew describes the crowd as astonished. In Acts 2, Peter's words, that they were pierced to their hearts.

In the first reading of Luke, we had the crowd wondered. Similar emotions whenever they heard Jesus speak, the embodiment of the word. But it's not necessarily just the word, but it's the spirit of God working through Christ or working through those words that gives it power, not just the plain text.

In Matthew 7, 28, when Jesus gives his famous Sermon on the Mount that we all know, the gospel writer describes the crowd as amazed at his teaching.

Why? Because he taught with authority, not like the teachers of the law. Following this teaching, Jesus comes down the mountain and he heals a leper in Matthew 8, 1 to 4.

So that same spirit that whom is embodied in the words of Jesus is the same spirit that then heals or the same spirit that works through the apostles, through Peter, through Stephen, through Paul.

[17:22] It's the same spirit who works through Jesus as he heals the leper. It's the same spirit who gives power to the word and authority to the word that is preached today as it was then.

However, as we read through, we see, as the crowd see more of the signs and wonders that are going on, the healing miracles, the teaching of Jesus almost starts to become secondary as they gain health in that point.

But Jesus is willing to continue because he has compassion on the people because he sees the people as people who are sheep without a shepherd that is there.

But when the religious leaders come and ask for a sign, his response is rather different as recorded in Matthew 12, 39. Jesus replies to those hard-hearted people who are just seeking a sign, none will be given you except the sign of Jonah.

There we go. audience participation. Where Jesus has compassion on the ordinary people of Israel, the words speak with power to change lives and the prayer that comes from the Father is about healing and about deliverance.

[18:40] But to the hard-hearted religious leaders, it is judgment. Paul helps us to understand this a little bit further and brings us a bit of balance and unity to the Word and the Spirit in 1 Thessalonians 1, 5.

where he says, the gospel came to you not simply with words, but also with power, with the Holy Spirit and with deep conviction. And in 1 Corinthians 2, 4, Paul says, my message and my preaching were not with wise and persuasive words, but with demonstration of the Spirit's power. When the Word and the Spirit work together, we personally and societally are transformed. transformed. If you think to the Welsh Revival or the Hebridean Revival or the Wesleyan Movement, you will see that whole society, whole groups of people were transformed by the Word and the Spirit.

If you think to the Welsh, people's behaviors have changed, their attitudes have changed, the churches are filled with repentant people, the pubs close, the police put their feet up because they've got nothing to do, and if you know anything, the donkeys don't move either, that's there in the Welsh minds.

But the Word of God, the Gospel, His good news for those that are created in His image, you and me basically, there, that is fulfilled in us that the Spirit acts to bring about that fulfillment and that deep change through signs and wonders, through personal revelation, through sanctification of the flesh and our bodies, the Word and the Spirit are always inseparable and work together.

[20 : 22] In the second reading that we had in Matthew 22, these well-educated aristocratic Sadducees were determined to prove two things, that their doctrinal distinctives were correct and that Jesus should be ignored.

Their focus was on Torah, the law, ignoring most of the prophets, their doctrine was airtight and they pointed and quoted to the Mosaic law concerning the incredibly unlikely events of these seven brothers and this poor woman dying in succession and all married.

They linked this to the resurrection which they didn't even believe in and Jesus clearly addresses the root of the problem. He doesn't answer that, He just says that you are mistaken, that you are wrong.

I might well argue back and said, well you don't believe in the resurrection anyway so what's the problem? But that doesn't really build unity or koinonia as it were. However, in Matthew 22, 29, Jesus simply says you're mistaken.

You don't understand the scriptures or the power of God and it's the same today. Over 30 years ago, many of my friends would quote scripture quite easily.

[21 : 38] They would know chapter and verse of many, many scriptures. But today, many Christians don't open their Bibles. Many leaders in churches don't open their Bibles.

That's not the case here in Calvary, may I add. I clearly remember the very first day walking into this church and this might seem strange because we're all used to it but people talk about the Lord.

They talk about scripture. They talk about their prayer life and that is not normal in many churches that certainly I've been over my time.

In John 14, 26, Jesus says that one of the things the Holy Spirit would do would be to bring to your remembrance what you were taught.

The problem is if you don't open your Bibles and you're empty-headed beforehand and the Holy Spirit comes to fill you when you're empty-headed, there's not really a lot to bring to mind once you are filled with the Holy Spirit that's there.

[22 : 39] So it is important that we do get into the Word of God. The question is that as Joseph kind of said right at the beginning when he was praying is that if we want revival, if we want the Jesus revolution as it were that started the Calvary movement and others back in the 60s, if we want God to do an incredible work here in Southampton, we need to ask ourselves a question and the question is are we ready to be taught?

Are we ready to be used by God? Are we ready to allow the Holy Spirit to speak through us and use us? Just like the disciples when Jesus came and said, follow me and they immediately got up and followed him.

And when they did, the Lord, quite often, they would have to be taught. They would have to be rebuked and disciplined at times. They may have to be taken to one side and asked three times, do you really love me?

They had to be obedient and they had to wait in Jerusalem until the Holy Spirit came upon them. But they were all following what the Lord had commanded them to do. We need to understand the scriptures and the power of God because memorizing scripture has basically disappeared from Western Christendom.

The question is, why memorize scripture when we have AI or Google search? But going through the scripture, it changes us.

[24 : 09] It changes us from within as we endure because those endure endless teaching. Why? Yet it says, those that are hungry for the word will be fed and those that are thirsty for the spirit will be filled.

The word and the spirit are two edges of the same sword as we read in Ephesians and Hebrews, Ephesians 6 and Hebrews 4. They are the armor of God that we should have every day.

But along with the foundation of the word, we need to have an understanding of the power of God through the Holy Spirit. And I've been to many gatherings over my time where the ministry of the spirit is often treated as a fleshly experience where we go for that emotion, that tingle, that bounce around the room, whatever it might be that's there.

But when you encounter the real power of God, the real Holy Spirit, he is transformational in our lives, in our faith. Our character changes, our attitude changes, our behaviors change.

Just look at Paul as he encounters God on the growth of Damascus and then he is healed, his eyesight is healed by Ananias in Acts 9. Total transformation of that person.

[25 : 29] And we need the spirit to come in power. We must never forget that the kingdom of God consists of power, not just of words and theological doctrine. As Paul reminds us in 1 Corinthians 4.20 where it says, for the kingdom of God does not consist of words but of power.

Christian maturity is about allowing the fruits of the spirit to flow through us, to allow the Holy Spirit to change us, which is Galatians 5.22-23. And when we do this, we stop conforming to the world around us.

We turn away from our sinful desires and our fleshly practices and we become, as Jesus calls us to, be holy as I am holy in 1 Peter 1.

This is the essence and the power of the spirit and of repentance. You see, if we're only word or spirit people, we kind of fall into two broad camps and I'm kind of extrapolating this a little bit.

You have the kind of subjectivists, as it were, those that seek the experience and the emotion. And then you have the rationalists, those that speak orthodoxy. And I'm not having a go at anyone, seriously, as both read the word of God, both love the Lord, both have a strong faith.

[26 : 47] You know, people that I know who are strong conservative evangelicals and those that are far more charismatic have a strong faith. But my concern is that sometimes they fail to understand the person of Jesus, the person of the Holy Spirit, the person of God, the Father, who wrote the scriptures.

I read lots of biographies over time and I've read Obama's biography, for example, seen him on TV, seen him on YouTube, but I don't know the man. I've never met him in person.

I never sat down with a cup of coffee with him and talked about all sorts of stuff that I'd like to talk about, by the way. Don't know him at all. But Jesus said in John 5, 37, you have neither heard his voice nor seen his form, yet the person who is stood in front of them at that point is actually God. Jesus said in John 14, 9, if you have seen me, you have seen the Father. This is what is most important. That's our walk with God.

That's about the intimacy of the Word and the Spirit. It's about touching the Father's heart of God. The sin that changed us requires a rebirth, a reconciliation to become children of God.

[28 : 09] In John 3, 16 is the famous one, John 8, John 14, our various scriptures. When we look at the relationship between the Father and his Son, Jesus, in John 14, 9 to 10, we see that deep intimacy between the two of them.

And we are part, we are called children of God. We are part of that relationship that we know the Word of God and we are transformed by the power of the Spirit.

That changes us for eternity as we run the race that the Lord has put us on. The third person in the Trinity, and I'm always quite cautious talking about the Holy Spirit.

I don't know why, but I get, I am. But the third person in the Trinity is often ignored or reduced to some ethereal power. And there are many questions I have about the Holy Spirit and maybe one day I'll get to ask him.

But however, we know that he teaches us. We know the Holy Spirit is a person. I put lots of scriptures up on the board at some point. I'm not going to go through all of them.

[29 : 19] But he's not just some energy flow that wafts around. And gives us some funny, funny feeling. We know he's male. We know he has intelligence. We know he has emotion.

We know that he has will. We know that we can know the Holy Spirit personally. He is called the paraclete or the counselor. He brings truth. He is God.

And he always points us to Jesus. The Spirit was present at creation, an integral part of creation as God spoke. He gives and sustains life.

He gives new life. He dwells within us. He prays through us and with us. He gives us spiritual gifts to his church. He makes us one. He brings unity. He illuminates our mind.

He's the resurrection power. He empowers and guides us. He gives us witness and service. He builds the kingdom of God. When I became a Christian all those years ago, part of what I did was to do a basic Christianity course, kind of like a pre-alpha and all that kind of stuff.

[30 : 25] It's called Saints Alive. And on the penultimate week, we had to go into the back room of this person's house. And then one by one, you were taken into the front room where something happened because then you left and the people in the other room never saw you kind of ever again, as it were.

It was a rather strange experience. And so you went into the room and you sat down and then you had to confess all your sins. Some of us were in there longer than others.

And then they said, so what spiritual gift would you like? A bit like going to Sainsbury's and saying to a child, what Easter egg would you like? So I said, healing. Because I thought, great, I can solve the NHS problem in a weekend.

And they said, no, you can't have that. That's far too big a gift. You can have the gift of tongues.

And I just said, well, I don't want the gift of tongues. What can I do with that?

And then they said, well, you can copy our tongue. And then my pride kicked in. And I was like, well, I don't want your tongue. If God's going to give me tongues, I want my own. And so it went. It's a long story.

[31 : 29] But I had an amazing encounter with the Lord at that time. But no healing and no tongues came from that event. However, a short while afterwards, I did get the gift of tongues.

And this is how you do it. As living in a non-Christian student house, you have to get up before six o'clock in the morning when everybody is asleep.

And in the shower, you have to sing as loudly and as tunefully as I am in the shower the Graham Kendrick song Shine Jesus Shine for about half an hour or so.

And then you get the gift of tongues. The issue is that when you come out of the bathroom with the long line of my friends that were down in the corridor at half past six in the morning who were less than happy trying to explain what on earth was just about going on when I didn't have a clue what was going on either.

So there we go. If that's how you want to get the gift of tongues, that's how you do it. I've never had a public tongue. Tongues to me is my personal prayer language between myself and the Lord.

[32 : 40] Prayed for various people and seen them healed. Prayed for various people and not seen them healed. But the spiritual gifts are not trophies. They're not badges of honor.

They're there for the service of others. They're there to build the kingdom of God. They're there to fulfill the great commission. As the gospel is preached, they go along side by side.

They are there from God. They belong to God. They point to God. They show God's grace, his kindness, his love, his mercy. But everything points back to Jesus.

As Simon said last week, if Jesus can kneel at the feet and wash the feet of his disciples, then that's the least we should be able to do here.

When God calls us to do something, he equips us to do it. When God called Moses to go back to Egypt and free the Israelites, Moses had no confidence, couldn't really put a proper preach together.

[33 : 42] God pointed to a rod in his hand. He empowered the rod as a tool to confront Pharaoh in Exodus 4 through to 5. When the Lord tells us to go, he equips us with his word and his spirit and makes to go and make disciples of all nations or even just Southampton.

What is the word? It's what came to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. It is what Abraham believed and was saved in Genesis 15. It's the way people are still saved today.

The word is near you, it is in your mouth, it is in your hearts. It is the name God disclosed is to Moses in Exodus 3 where he says, I am. We are saved by the hearing of the word.

We are not saved by signs and wonders. It's the gospel, it's the good news to those who are perishing that brings us to salvation. There is power contained in the word, Satan knew it.

When Jesus was 40 days in the desert, he used the word to rebuke Satan. However, the word itself doesn't have literal power, is what is behind those words, the working of the Holy Spirit.

[34 : 55] We know that all scripture is God breathed. God's breath carries the word, carries his spirit. In John 6, 63, it says, the words I have spoken to you are spirit and they are truth.

It is also possible to know the word of God really, really well, to be sound in doctrine to a point and to never surrender yourself to the Lord, to be born again by the Holy Spirit.

We shouldn't say that we are sound in doctrine, therefore we are going to heaven, because even the Pharisees would probably say that. And yet Jesus calls them in John 8, 44, sons of Satan.

The word relates to God's integrity, his promise, his grace, his ability not to lie, the very essence of who he is, his name.

It's about his reputation, his honor, his influence. The Sadducees in Matthew 22, Jesus said to them, you're in error that you neither know the power of the word or the power of the spirit.

[36 : 00] And as a sideline, he then corrects their theology as well and says, by the way, the resurrection that they were talking about in Matthew 22, 31, Jesus says, you know, he is the God of the living, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and not the dead.

And if you carry on reading, that basically shut them up at that point. We must love the God of the Bible and we need to know the God revealed in Jesus, be united by the power and the presence of the Holy Spirit.

We're not going to impact this strange culture and it is a very strange culture that we live in unless we have that radical commitment to the word and allow the power of the spirit to come alongside us.

remembering we're just lumps of clay. Some of us bigger lumps than others, but we're lumps of clay. He is the potter and rather than struggling to keep that shape that we want to conform to the world, to allow any hardness of our hearts to continue, we need to allow the hand of God to mold us, to shape us.

It is an absolute necessity that the Holy Spirit is active in all aspects of our lives and this church. It's his church and he will grow his church.

[37 : 16] He will build it. This is what we read through Acts, for example. It's what we see through the whole Bible, whether it belongs to Israel or the church. There are several warnings in 1 and 2 Timothy, which Simon took us through over the last few months, but in 2 Timothy 3, 5 and 7, it warns us of two perils in the last days of the church.

Firstly, holding to a form of godliness but denying its power and secondly, always learning but never acknowledging the truth. One of the things I love about Calvary is that we're not here for window dressing and what I mean is we're not here just to look spiritual and pious, that we must never be superficial, but we're able to talk to one another and show our weaknesses and show and be honest and say the things we've got wrong.

But sometimes we put these masks up and people are like, you know, you're not allowed to see through this mask that's here and yet, if we're true disciples of Jesus, then we are being transformed by the work of the Spirit within us and we work together as fellowship to pray for one another, to support one another and allow the power of God to set us free from addictions, to heal us, to guide us and so on.

We are people of His Word. That is our foundation stone of the Calvary movement. Although it's good and it is good to learn, but it's a waste of time if that learning of the Word doesn't change us from the inside out to make us more like Jesus.

We need to be wise and discern false teaching and not get distracted by the endless spiritual ideas or concepts that the world can throw at us because the Word of God is truth.

[39 : 04] It was 2,000 years ago when Jesus quoted it and it is today in the 21st century here in Southampton. We acknowledge the truth of the Word. It changes the way we think.

It changes the way we behave. It changes the way we interact with people. It changes what we watch on TV and listen on the radio. It changes the way that we walk through life and whom we keep our eyes on.

In John 14, 15 and 16 the Spirit testifies when somebody is telling us a biblical truth. The Spirit reveals the truth of God and comes to magnify the Lord Jesus.

It's never about us. It's always about Him. When Paul and Barnabas did some miracles in Lystra that kind of modern day Turkey the people there treated them or thought they were gods and yet what did they do?

Their reaction was to tear their clothes and to cry out to say no, stop. We are just men. We're just flesh and blood. Hosea 4, 6 puts it concisely when he says to the people that they are ignorant that they lack two things.

[40 : 16] The knowledge of the Word and they do not understand His ways. We have no excuse to be ignorant and focused and unfocused because we need to be still before the Lord sometimes as the psalmist says.

I love the story which Luke wrote in Acts 20 when Paul was preaching nearly to midnight. Don't worry, I'm not going to go on that long. And around about midnight a young man falls three stories and dies.

And it's just like he just pauses. You know, can I just sit there for a minute? And goes out, raises the guy from the dead and then carries on preaching. And he doesn't just preach and go, I'll just finish in 10 minutes.

He goes on preaching to noon and carries on. I mean, if that's not the Word and the Spirit working together, I'm not actually sure what is. But Paul in 1 Corinthians 6, 19 to 20, it says, you do not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit which is in you, which you have of God and you

