
THE FILLING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

TEXT: Ephesians 5: ¹⁸ Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit. ⁱ

PURPOSE: I want to see the thrill of being *filled daily* with the Holy Spirit and rejoice in all that He will accomplish in and through us, The Body of Christ.

INTRODUCTION: Greatest Unused Power

An American with an English gentleman was viewing the Niagara whirlpool rapids, when he said to his friend: "Come, and I'll show you the greatest unused power in the world." And taking him to the foot of Niagara Falls, "there," he said, "is the greatest unused power in the world!" "Ah, no my brother, not so!" was the reply. "The greatest unused power in the world is the Holy Spirit of the living God."

—A. J. Gordon ii

I want to focus on the *filling* of the Holy Spirit. The *filling* of the Holy Spirit is the *channel by which the Holy Spirit's character and the will of God are worked out in the life of the believer.* *Spirit filling* is a matter of the Holy Spirit *controlling one's life.*

The filling of the Holy Spirit is necessary in order to experience the full extent of the ministry of the Holy Spirit. The filling of the Holy Spirit is necessary for *spiritual growth*. All believers are somewhere in the process of this spiritual growth. We can also refer to this as *progressive sanctification*. Spiritual maturity involves three things:

- The Word of God assimilated.
- The Holy Spirit's continual control in the believer's life.
- This is also a process involving time.

The opposite of being Spirit controlled is *carnality*. That is simply being controlled by one's own self and desires.

First of all, let us consider THE CHARACTER OF BEING FILLED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT [Eph. 5:18]

1A. THE DEFINITION OF SPIRIT FILLING [Ephesians 5:18]

1B. The COMPARISON between being *drunk- intoxicated* with alcohol and being *filled – abound, abundance, liberally supplied - with the Holy Spirit* is that of *control and being complete*. Just as the alcohol controls an individual the Holy Spirit controls the believer. The Holy Spirit controls us, all the while using our various personalities and gifts to edify the Body of Christ. The concept of *completeness* is in the verb *filled*. This *completeness* involves the progressive changing of our *character* into the *character of Christ*. Note Galatians 5:22, 23.

2B. This is also a precise **COMMAND**. The verb *be filled* is in the present tense, passive voice and in the imperative mood. The imperative mood indicates a command. The passive voice indicates that the subject is the recipient of the action. The subject, you and I, are being acted upon by the Holy Spirit. He controls us. The idea is that you and I are to be submissive to the Holy Spirit and that results in His control in our lives.

ILLUSTRATION: Filling Is Answer

Paul tells us to live victoriously and to avoid excesses of the flesh. Moody once illustrated this truth as follows: “Tell me,” he said to his audience, “how can I get the air out of this glass?” One man said, “Suck it out with a pump.” Moody replied, “That would create a vacuum and shatter the glass.” After many impossible suggestions, Moody smiled, picked up a pitcher of water, and filled the glass. “There,” he said, “all the air is now removed.” He then went on to show that victory in the Christian life is not by “sucking out a sin here and there,” but rather by being filled with the Spirit.

—Mrs. Ruby Milleriii

APPLICATION:

- It’s all about who *controls our lives*. Do we control our own lives or do we permit the Holy Spirit to control our lives.
- For us to permit the Holy Spirit to control us enables us to be to the praise and to the glory of our Lord. The Holy Spirit power enables us to accomplish the will of the Lord in every area of our lives.
- The Holy Spirit will also reveal any sins in our lives that need to be confessed.

TRANSITIONAL SENTENCE: I want to see the thrill of being *filled daily* with the Holy Spirit and rejoice in all that He will accomplish in and through us. I trust that we all understand that every believer is commanded to *filled, controlled* by the Holy Spirit. Perhaps we should consider

2A. THE DESCRIPTION OF BEING FILLED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT

EXPLANATION:

1B. I would like to focus upon the idea of **COMPLETENESS** being the result of the Holy Spirit’s control in our lives. Our *completeness* involves our progressively becoming more like Christ. His characteristics become ours. We become absorbed into His glorious Person. Christ is our life, mind, goal and strength according to the Book of Philippians. Note Galatians 5:22, 23...

2B. Our **COMFORTER – HELPER**. John refers to the Holy Spirit as being a *Paraclete* - παρακλητον the transliteration of a Greek term meaning ‘called to the side of’ and therefore ‘advocate’ (cf. 1 John 2:1); Romans 8: 26-27

1C. Its importance derives from its use in the Gospel of John where Jesus promises his disciples that when he departs he will send them another Paraclete (RSV and NIV: ‘Counselor’; KJV: ‘Comforter’; JB and NEB: ‘Advocate’) to remain with them. (John 14:16-17, 26; 15:26; 16:7-11; cf. 16:13-15),

2C. As the Gospel of John makes clear, the Paraclete is the Holy Spirit, or Spirit of Truth (John 14:17, 26). The Gospel of John’s teaching about the Holy Spirit is set forth in terms of the Paraclete, who continues the work of Jesus himself (14:16-17), recalling things the earthly Jesus taught or revealing things He was unable to convey (14:26; 16:12-14). In John’s view, this spiritual knowledge or insight, unavailable until after Jesus’ death and resurrection, makes for the first time Christian faith and understanding fully possible. ivThat is why we can say that we can fully understand the Word of God.

3B. Our **COMPETENCE** - In the Acts we see the *power of the Holy Spirit* operative in the life of the Church (4:7, 33; 6:8; cf. 10:38). Paul looks back to the resurrection as the chief evidence of God’s power (Rom. 1:4; Eph. 1:19-20; Phil. 3:10). He also sees the gospel as the means by which that power comes to work in men’s lives (Rom. 1:16; 1 Cor. 1:18).v

4B. The Holy Spirit is also active in:

1C. Filling believers for witness (Acts 1:8; 2:4; 4:31; 5:32; 9:17)

2C. Leading them in ministry (Acts 8:26–30; 10:19; 11:19; 16:7; 20:23; 21:4, 11).vi

ILLUSTRATION: If Holy Spirit Pulls Out ... “If God called his Holy Spirit out of the world, about 95 percent of what we are doing would go on and we would brag about it.”

This blunt statement about church programs by Dr. Carl Bates of Amarillo, Texas, was coupled with an equally blunt question to ministers at the annual Baptist Statewide Conference on Evangelism in Columbia, S. C.: “What are you doing that you can’t get done unless the power of God falls on your ministry?”vii

APPLICATION:

- Let us rejoice in our *completeness in Christ!* There is nothing lacking!
- Let us ask the Lord and the Holy Spirit to make us very conscious permitting the Holy Spirit to control, to empower us in our daily living.
- We can never accomplish all that the Lord intends for us apart from the enablement of the Holy Spirit.

TRANSITIONAL SENTENCE: I want to see the thrill of being *filled daily* with the Holy Spirit and rejoice in all that He will accomplish in and through us, The Body of Christ. The Holy Spirit completes our relationship with the Triune Godhead and with one another. The Holy Spirit is *in*

us and *He* will *never leave nor forsake us*. There isn't anything that we cannot accomplish for the glory of our Lord with the Holy Spirit's help! Let us rejoice that we are *complete in Him!*

CONCLUSIONS: WHAT SHOULD BE MY RESPONSE?

1. Come to the Lord humbly in prayer laying ourselves bare before Him.
2. Ask the Lord to forgive you of any sin that may hinder the working of the Holy Spirit in you.
3. Ask the Lord to enable you to be totally committed to the Holy Spirit. Ask the Lord, through the working of the Holy Spirit, to give you the desire to *yield yourself to Him daily*.
4. Do not sin against the Holy Spirit by *grieving Him*. We cause Him grief when we walk according to the flesh.

ⁱ *The Holy Bible : New International Version*. electronic ed. Grand Rapids : Zondervan, 1996, c1984, S. Eph 5:18

ii Tan, Paul Lee, *Encyclopedia of 7,700 Illustrations*, (Garland, Texas: Bible Communications, Inc.) 1996.

iii Tan, Paul Lee, *Encyclopedia of 7,700 Illustrations*, (Garland, Texas: Bible Communications, Inc.) 1996.

iv Achtemier, Paul J., Th.D., *Harper's Bible Dictionary*, (San Francisco: Harper and Row, Publishers, Inc.) 1985.

v *The New Bible Dictionary*, (Wheaton, Illinois: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc.) 1962.

vi Enns, Paul, *The Moody Handbook of Theology*, (Chicago, Ill.: Moody Press) 1996.

vii Tan, Paul Lee, *Encyclopedia of 7,700 Illustrations*, (Garland, Texas: Bible Communications, Inc.) 1996.