

Subject: *The Filling of the Holy Spirit*

Scripture: *Ephesians 5:15-21*

The Holy Spirit does several things at the time of our conversion: He convicts; He regenerates; He indwells; He seals; and He baptizes. The Holy Spirit continues to work in us as He leads, teaches, produces fruit, empowers, helps, intercedes, and fills. In this message we are going to look at the filling of the Spirit.

1. The meaning of this filling

The key to understanding this is the word “filled.” Here it means “to be controlled by, to be under the influence.” We say a person is filled with anger or envy or bitterness. We mean a person is controlled by one of those: anger, envy, or bitterness. Being filled with the Holy Spirit makes a big difference. It’s like the difference between pushing a car and driving a car. One is a chore; the other is a pleasure.

The key to understanding what it means to be Spirit-filled is the contrast in verse 18. When a person is drunk with wine we say he is under the influence. To be filled with wine is to be dominated or controlled by it. On the Day of Pentecost, people thought the disciples were under the influence of wine, *Acts 2:12-15* ¹² *And they were all amazed, and were in doubt, saying one to another, What meaneth this?* ¹³ *Others mocking said, These men are full of new wine.* ¹⁴ *But Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice, and said unto them, Ye men of Judaea, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and hearken to my words:* ¹⁵ *For these are not drunken, as ye suppose, seeing it is but the third hour of the day.* The Holy Spirit resides in every believer. *Romans 8:9* *But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.* It is one thing for Him to be resident; it is another for Him to be president. We don’t get more of the Holy Spirit. He gets more of us.

2. The motivation for this filling

- A. The Lord commands it – This is not a request or a suggestion. It’s a command. In fact, it’s a sin not to be filled with the Spirit. Is it a sin to be drunk? It is just as much a sin for us not to be filled with the Holy Spirit. One is a sin of commission and the other is a sin of omission. If we do what we’re supposed to do, then we won’t have the time or the interest to do what we’re not supposed to do. *Galatians 5:16* *This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.* To walk in the Spirit is to be filled with the Spirit.
- B. Life demands it – Look at the rest of this passage after verse 18, where it talks about our worship life, our married life (husbands and wives), our home life (parents and children), and our work life (servants and masters or employees and employers). What a difference it would make in our church, our families, our jobs, and our schools.

3. The marks of this filling

How do you know if someone is filled with the Spirit?

- A. Joyful worship – **Ephesians 5:19** *Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord. Joy is associated with the Holy Spirit, **Romans 14:17** For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.*
- B. Constant gratitude – **Ephesians 5:20** *Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ;*
- C. Humble submission – **Ephesians 5:21** *Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God.*
- D. Holy boldness – When Peter was filled with the Spirit he preached with boldness. He preached that Jesus was the only way to be saved in the very city where Christ had been crucified. **Acts 4:31** *And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spoke the word of God with boldness.*
- E. Godly character – **Acts 6:3** *Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business.*
- F. Spiritual fruit – **Galatians 5:22-23** ²² *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,* ²³ *Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.* – The Holy Spirit produces these nine qualities in our lives.

The sure way to tell if you are Spirit-filled is to take “the spill test.” Get jostled a little bit, and see what spills out. You’ll find out what you are full of.

4. The maintaining of this filling

The Holy Spirit comes to live in every believer, but the Holy Spirit does not automatically control a believer all the time. That’s why the Lord commanded us, “Be filled (continuously filled) with the Spirit.” This is not a one-time event. It’s a life-long process. To maintain a Spirit-filled life we must do two things:

- A. Yield yourself to God – **Romans 6:12-13** ¹² *Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof.* ¹³ *Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God. **Galatians 5:16** This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.*
- B. Fill yourself with God’s Word – **Colossians 3:16** *Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. This is a parallel passage to Ephesians 5:18. The filling of the Spirit is not some ecstatic, emotional experience, but the steady control of a believer as he obeys the teachings of the Word.*