

A Dynamite Life!

Revival Institutes

By E. A. Johnston

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My goal with this message today, friends, is to be clear on my subject and for you to grasp it, and if God will enable me by his Spirit to have his authority to give you this treatment on the doctrine of the fullness of the Spirit that will be presented with such clarity and finality that it'll stick with you and its message will remain with you for the rest of your days, and that God will use it in your life to bring change. The aim of this message is to get you to the place of admission that you will see your need of what I am talking about, and that you will admit your need of it. My message today is about being filled with the Holy Spirit.

I know you say that you were filled with the Holy Spirit at the time of your conversion and that is true, what I'm talking about is power or lack of power. I'm talking about a mighty God we serve. God demonstrated his power in our life by raising us from death to life, by saving us through the blood of his Son, but where is our power? Where is our authority?

Vance Havner summed it up when he said, "If we serve such a dynamite God, then why are so many of us living firecracker lives?" Firecracker lives. Why are we living firecracker lives where we go off with just a little pop and without little notice? There's no real power in our lives, no explosion of taking down strongholds either of the devil or in our personal walk. We are confronted with sin every day, we're confronted with sin when we hear a coworker take God's name in vain, we're confronted with sin when someone tells us a filthy joke or dirty story, we are continually confronted with sin in the media, sin in the movies we watch. We can either condone sin in our life or condemn it, but to condemn it takes power from above. We need power. We need power over sin, power for service.

Let's talk about the first of these, power over sin, and it is here where I am attempting to get you to agree with me, friends, and to see your need of something, to see your need of being filled with the Spirit. We have a command of this in Ephesians 5:18 which is a command to be filled with the Spirit. Being filled with the Spirit means more than being indwelt by him. It is possible for the Holy Spirit to be present in the life without being president. In England, they have a Queen who reigns but she doesn't rule. The same principle can apply to the life of a believer. We need power from above to live a victorious life in Christ. Here in Ephesians, God's word is clear in his command to be filled with the Spirit, to be under the undisputed control of the Spirit. This is seen in the Greek language of Ephesians 5:18 where the verb is in the imperative mood, the passive

voice, and the present tense. This calls for obedience and allegiance to and dependence on the Holy Spirit every day, every hour of our lives.

The Bible speaks of our besetting sin. Hebrews 12:1 mentions this besetting sin, "Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us." If we were truly honest with ourselves, we would admit that we have a besetting sin, a sin that keeps resurfacing in our lives. We may be able to avoid it for some weeks at a time, or we may even be able to stay away from it for months at a time, but there it comes and rears its ugly head and we cannot hold out against it any longer, and we give way to its sway, we collapse before it. Oh, how we regret that besetting sin, how many years it has bothered us, how many tears we have wept over it. We think we've come to the place where we are finally done with it once and for all, and the devil puts us in an environment ripe for its resurgence once again. We fall before it like a domino in the wind.

This besetting sin seems to plague us, to mock us, and to continually discourage us. When I say, friends, we need power over sin, this is the very thing I am addressing here. We need power over our besetting sin. You have to admit two things, that you have a besetting sin and, secondly, you need power over it. Do you agree with that, friend? Do you see your need for power over sin? I'm not talking about the eradication of sin. We have a ruined nature and a bent toward sin. Christ saves us from sin, Christ saves us from the penalty of sin, Christ saves us from the power of sin as we are crucified with Christ positionally.

Galatians 2:20 declares, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." We need power over sin. We need to be filled with the Spirit. I can have a glass that has some water in it, it may be half full of water because water is residing there, but it is not full. I can fill that glass with water to where it is spilling over the brim. To be filled with the Spirit means to be filled to the brim, to be brimming over with the Spirit.

So this doctrine of the Spirit-filled life consists in giving the Holy Spirit control at all times and all circumstances. We must give the Lord Jesus his rightful place in our lives. Self must be dethroned and another enthroned there, the Lord Jesus Christ, where he is reigning and ruling in our hearts and lives. A good scripture example of this is seen in 2 Corinthians 3:17 which states, "Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." This can be understood where the Spirit is Lord, that is, where he is given his true deity and sovereignty, there is liberty.

Listen to my message, friends, this message can set you free. It's done wonders in my own life when I heard it from the lips of Stephen Olford when he preached on the fullness of the Holy Spirit years ago. I want to give you some of the instruction I've learned over the years in the truth of being filled with the Spirit so you'll have power over sin, and it can be realized by every believer in Christ Jesus who is willing to bow daily and hourly

to the sovereignty of Christ and the authority of the word. We are commanded in Ephesians 5:18 to be filled with the Spirit, and not to be filled is our only excuse for our lack of power. The Holy Spirit is a person who can be grieved and quenched in a believers life by sin, but when sin is exposed and self is executed, then the Holy Spirit can fill to overflowing and anoint with authority and power.

Now I want to address this second aspect of the Spirit-filled life. We see our need for power over sin but we must also confess our lack of power for service. We do much in the energy of the flesh, rushing to this conference here, and that meeting there, and working day and night in our physical strength until we are plumb worn out for God, but where is the power?

I remember Dr. Stephen Olford sharing with me a story about a preacher who showed an interest in Stephen Olford's message on the Spirit-filled life, but this man refused the invitation to Dr. Olford to come meet with him to discuss it further. Well, this man rose to popularity and prominence within his denomination and Stephen Olford went to hear this man preach at a big Baptist church and the man preached a funny and amusing message where he gave one funny joke after another and he kept the congregation laughing in stitches, and when he was done, he was given a solid round of applause, and Stephen Olford went directly home that day to write this man a letter and in it he stated that he'd just heard him entertain his audience that Sunday morning with jokes and stories that made him popular with his hearers, then Dr. Olford asked this stinging question, "But tell me, my good man, where is your power?" And that is my question to you today, brother pastor, fellow evangelist, dear Christian worker, where is your power?

We need power for service or our efforts are just in the flesh. Did not our Lord Jesus tell his disciples to tarry in the city until they were endued with power from on high? Jesus instructed them, "And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high." And that's the very thing Vance Havner was talking about when he said, "If we serve such a dynamite God, then how come so many of us are living firecracker lives?" It's because we lack power, that dunamis power of the Holy Spirit like dynamite in our lives.

I'll never forget the story about D. L. Moody. D. L. Moody saw his need one day for this power when two elderly ladies in his congregation in Chicago told him they were praying for him. He told them, "Why don't you pray for these other folks who need Christ? Why pray for me?" They informed him they were praying for him to have power, to be filled with the Holy Spirit. From that day on, Moody would meet with these two ladies for prayer to be filled with the Spirit. His desire became so great he would actually roll on the floor in agony of soul as he wrestled in prayer with God to give him his Spirit.

One day while Moody was in the city of New York, he felt an incredible urgency to go get alone with God and to pray. He found a friend's home and asked for a room to pray in, and he stayed in that room for hours until the Holy Spirit came upon him, filling his soul with such joy he had to ask God to withhold his hand lest he die on the spot. Moody often would speak of this time. "The sermons were no different and I did not present any

new truths, and yet hundreds were converted. I would not be placed back where I was before that blessed experience."

Well, we need, too, that power, friends. We need power for service. The church today has no authority because the church operates more on money and manpower rather than God and Holy Ghost power. We need power. I've been preaching a long time. I know what I'm talking about. I know what it's like to preach without power and just to have my audience stare at their watches to know when they can go have their lunch. There have been other times when I've preached with such a power and anointing I've seen an entire church frozen in their seats by the Spirit of God to where they could not stand up until God told them to. I've seen an entire room of pastors get so distressed by the disturbing presence of Christ that the very look on their faces became altered from looks of smiles to looks of alarm. I've seen people brought to the very verge of eternity. I know the difference. I know what I've done in the flesh is flesh and it will perish, but what God has wrought by his Spirit will last forever.

Listen to me, friend, we need power over sin. We need power for service. Do you recognize this? Do you sense your need for this power? Do you want this power? It's yours for the asking. It's yours to be appropriated. There are steps I will walk you through to have this power. That's why this message is so important today, several things need to be done. We will first list them and then elaborate upon each head. We must remember that what counts costs and what costs counts. Nothing important in life is ever gained without effort and commitment. If we want to graduate college, we have to study hard and make some sacrifices. The spiritual life is no different, what counts costs and what costs counts.

We need power over sin. We need power for service. We need to be filled with the Holy Spirit for this power. God will not give his Spirit to a dirty bride. We must get right with God. Amos 3:3 states, "Can two walk together, except they be agreed?" Well, the answer is, no. We must be a clean and empty channel for God to flow through with his Holy Spirit power. Like a mountain stream can be hindered by collective debris in its path, the debris of fallen branches and dry leaves can stack up and stop the flow, they must be swept away for the water to flow freely and there are some strategic steps in the spiritual life as well, friends. We need to get right with God so our lives can be clean and clear channels for his blessings and power to flow through to others.

I want to talk about these steps today. There are four of them. The first is confess. The second is admit. The third is submit. And the fourth is believe. Let's take these one by one.

Confess. That means to relinquish your self-life and its need and control and to ask God that you need his help to confess your need of him, to confess that you need to have his Holy Spirit filling you. Psalm 24 speaks of the one who receives a blessing from the Lord. We read in Psalm 24:3-5, "Who shall ascend into the hill of the LORD? or who shall stand in his holy place? He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully. He shall receive the blessing from

the LORD, and righteousness from the God of his salvation." Clean hands speak of our dealings with others. Have we lied to someone or treated them dishonestly?

I remember years ago, I was playing racquetball with a church friend and he asked me when I graduated college. Well, I was too embarrassed to tell him the truth so I lied to him about it because at the time I had just dropped out of school. Oh, I felt absolutely useless for God until I made things right with this man. I found him at church on the next Sunday in a hallway and confessed my sin of lying to him and asked for his forgiveness, and when I did that, I knew instantly my walk with God was restored.

So clean hands here in our text speaks of our dealings with men. This is on the horizontal plane. Next, a pure heart signifies our walk with God. This is on the vertical plane. We must search our hearts and confess to God anything he is displeased with in our lives. So we must get right horizontally and then vertically, if I may so speak, and when these two planes meet, they form a cross. This is the cross in the life of the believer. I am crucified with Christ.

So the very first step to being filled with the Spirit is confess. We must get right with God in an intimate, close walk with him. We must confess our sins. We must confess our need of him. Secondly, we must do the next thing which is admit, admit our need to be filled with the Spirit. Confess our lack of power and ask God to hear our admission of our need for power. We must admit that we can do nothing without him. John 15:5 says the very thing. Jesus told his disciples, "for without me ye can do nothing." That means nothing impacting for eternity or spiritual good. If you do these things, friend, then mean them with sincerity of heart, you will have an answer to your prayer and be filled with the Spirit.

The next step is to submit. This one is critically important for submission to God is everything in the Christian life. I want to share with you a story about one of my heroes in the faith, the evangelist Sam Jones. Well, in the late 19th century, the two titans of American evangelism were D. L. Moody and Sam Jones. God had a great work cut out for each of them but this story is about Sam Jones. I hope you bear with me while I relate it to you. You'll be glad when it's over that you listened to it.

Sam Jones was at his home in Cartersville, Georgia when he received a telegram from Texas inviting him to go preach to the cowboys of southwest Texas. Well, he prayed about it and he got on a train and went to Texas and for two weeks he preached the gospel of Jesus Christ to the cowboys of Texas. When it was over as they came to the end of the campaign, the cowboys wanted to give Sam Jones a love offering. They felt the laborer was worthy of his hire and they had received wonderful blessings from his time among them. But there was a problem, they had no money, not a single dollar in any of their pockets, and they didn't know what to do, and they allowed Sam Jones to go back to Cartersville, Georgia with no compensation or love offering of any kind whatever.

Well, Sam Jones went back and a number of weeks passed by, then suddenly one day he received a telegram, it was from the cowboys of Texas. It read like this, "We are sending

you a love offering and we are shipping you a carload of broncos." And Sam Jones scratched his head as he looked in amazement at that telegram. "What am I going to do," he said, "with a carload of wild horses in the small town of Cartersville?" Well, his friend was standing beside him and he said, "Why, it's very easy. Hold an auction sale. Sell the broncos and you'll get your money. You can get your love offering then and put it in your pocket."

Well, Sam Jones thought it was a good suggestion so he held an auction sale. He sold the broncos all except one. He kept the finest looking bronco for his son. He wanted to give that bronco to his son, he wanted to give that bronco to his son as a gift and that's what he did. But the son had never in his life been on the back of an unbroken bronco and Sam Jones wondered what he could do. He called the cowboy to him who had brought the carload of broncos to Cartersville, he said, "Will you take this bronco, will you break him so that my son can ride him?" "Yes, sir," said the cowboy, "I'd be glad to." "How much will you charge?" "\$15," said the cowboy. "Alright," said Sam, "take him away." The cowboy disappeared with the bronco. Two weeks later he came back. "Is he broken," said Sam. "Yes, sir. He's broken." "Can my son ride him in perfect safety?" "Yes, sir. Your son can ride him in perfect safety." "Alright, here's your \$15."

The father thought that before allowing his son to ride the bronco, he'd better mount himself and make sure that the cowboy had broken the bronco. He started toward the bronco, the cowboy came running up waving his hands in alarm. "Why," said Sam, "what's the matter? What's gone wrong?" "Oh," said the cowboy, "he's only broken on one side and you're mounting from the wrong side." "Oh," said Sam, "that will never do. My son might make a mistake and he might mount from the wrong side. How much will you charge to break him on the other side?" "\$15," said the cowboy. "Alright," said Sam, "take him away and break him on the other side." Well, another two weeks passed by and again the cowboy came back leading the bronco. "Is he broken," said Sam. "Yes, sir. He's broken." "Both sides?" "Yes, sir, both sides. Your son can mount him with perfect safety from either side." "Alright, here's your \$15."

Well, I like that story, friend, but it's so true. You know, the average Christian is only broken on one side. He'll do this but he won't do that. He'll go here but he won't go there. He'll give God just so much of himself but still hold something back. He's like the bronco, he's only broken on one side and then he wonders why God doesn't use him more, why the years have passed by and he's not used of God. He's been highly educated, perhaps he's been well-trained, he may even have gone to seminary and he sees God using other men who've got very little education, very little training, who've never been to seminary, and they're being used of God, but he can't understand why God doesn't use him more. He doesn't realize he's only been broken on one side that God can't trust him. He'll do this but he won't do that. He'll go there but he won't go here. He's only broken on one side and God cannot rely upon him, God cannot trust him.

The man God uses is the man who's been broken on both sides, the man who's been totally surrendered and totally yielded to the Lord Jesus Christ, and that's what I mean by submission, and unless you and I are broken on both sides and thoroughly surrendered to

the Lord Jesus Christ, there isn't any way that God can use us. We are willing to go to the hillside with Jesus, to sit at his feet and learn of him, but we are unwilling to go with him to Gethsemane to suffer with him. We are broken only on one side, we hold something back from God and that will never do. God has to have us, all of us, lock, stock and barrel.

Well, the last thing in our things to do to be overflowing with the Spirit of God, to be filled to the brim through the life of fullness of the Spirit is to believe, to believe God's word is true, that he's true to his word. We must appropriate this truth and ask him to fill us by his Spirit. It's by faith this is done and I like what R. A. Torrey told his students at Moody Bible School, he said, "If you want more of the Holy Spirit, then be prepared to have the Holy Spirit to have more of you." And that ties into our thoughts here, friend, it's true.

Well, I want to take this time now for those of you that God's been dealing with, for those of you who want to get serious with God, because I believe God gets serious with those who get serious with him. Do you want to continue to serve God in the energy of the flesh? Do you want to keep falling to your besetting sin? Do you want power over sin? Do you want power in service? Your impact on eternity hangs in the balance. Do you want to be busy for God in the strength of your might, relying only on your talents, training, education and personality? Or do you want to be a clear and empty channel where the power of God courses through you like dynamite?

I'm going to ask you, friend, as we close out this message to slip out of your chair and get on your knees so you can get alone with God, to seek him earnestly with all your heart in regard to these things which we've talked about today. Admit you need power over sin. Admit your bankruptcy. Admit your need for power for service to him. Take God at his word and trust him to give you the desire of your heart in honoring his dear Son Jesus to give you this power. Do it today, friend, and you will never want to go back to where you were before this time again. I can tell you that myself. Admit you've been broken only on one side. Confess your need of him. Wonderful things happen when God uses broken things. He broke the loaves and fed 5,000. He broke the vase and the beautiful ointment enveloped the room. Are you only broken on one side? Make today the day you give it all to him.

Give yourself up entirely to Jesus, friends. Don't hold anything back and he will fill you to the brim with his Spirit. Come now. We serve a dynamite God. Don't you settle one skinny minute for a firecracker life again when you can live a dynamite life for him, but come and surrender all you are to all he is and place everything you are and all you have on his altar. Ask God to change you now.

Let us pray.