

Bethany Bible Church; AM Bible Study; March 14, 2018
The Holy Spirit—Our Helper; Lesson 20; His Filling

RESULTS OF THE SPIRIT'S FILLING

(Part 1)

Theme: There are certain practical and spiritual blessings that come upon a believer as a result of the Spirit's filling.

So far, we've talked about the character of the Spirit's filling, and the necessary conditions for the believer to experience and enjoy it. And now, we consider the consequences of His filling. It is truly a vast subject. As Dr. Rene Pache wrote;

To understand the results of the fullness of the Spirit, in their entirety, every field of the spiritual life must be taken into consideration, for there is none which will not come under His influence.¹

At the beginning, however, it may be a good idea to establish a very important thing that is *not* a consequence of the Spirit's filling. And that is that the Holy Spirit's ministry of filling the believer does not—in any way—bring about a change in that believer's spiritual position before God.² As we've already seen, there are certain works of the Holy Spirit that are 'non-experiential'—that is, particular ministries that the Holy Spirit performs toward the believer that occur whether or not the believer “knows” or “feels” that they have occurred; ministries He performs toward the believer that have to do primarily with that believer's spiritual position before God ‘in Christ’.

The Spirit's work of 'regenerating', for example, causes a man or woman to be born-again; and results in their being enabled by God's grace to place their faith in Jesus. The Spirit's work of 'indwelling' means that He takes up permanent residence in the believer. His work of 'baptizing' the believer places that believer 'in' Christ and 'in' the church. His work of 'sealing' secures the believer in that into which He baptizes them. These all have to do with the believer's spiritual standing or position before God in Christ; and they are all perfect and complete works at the time the Spirit does them. They give the weakest and most ignorant believer exactly the same standing in Christ—from the moment he or she believes—as the strongest and most mature Christian.

But the Spirit's ministry of 'filling' the believer is experiential, and has to do with the believer's active state and daily walk in Christ in that spiritual standing. And because this is a work in which the believer knowingly and obediently cooperates with the Holy Spirit, it is a work that is ongoing, and with which the believer continually cooperates, and in which he or she progresses and grows.

C.I. Scofield once wrote;

... The divine order, under grace, is first to give the believer the highest possible standing, and then to exhort the believer to maintain a state in accordance therewith. The beggar is lifted up from the dunghill and set among princes (1 Samuel 2:8), and then exhorted to be princely.³

And it is by the filling of the Spirit then that the Christian is thus enabled to behave before Christ like what he or she has been raised up in Christ to be.

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What, then, are some of the consequences of the Spirit's filling? From Galatians 5:16-18, we see that one result is ...

I. A PERSONAL HOLINESS THAT IS IN KEEPING WITH GOD'S LAW.

In his letter to the Galatians, the apostle Paul was dealing with the problem of believers who were losing their confidence in the sufficiency of Christ, and were trying to achieve righteousness before God on the basis of their effort to strictly conform to the letter of the Old Testament law given through Moses. But this cannot be done; because as Paul said in Romans 8:8, "those who are in the flesh cannot please God". Their efforts in the flesh (i.e., through the strength of their own human effort) could never lead to the sort of practical righteousness before God that they sought. To correct their error, Paul urged his fellow believers to let themselves be led by the Holy Spirit. He wrote;

I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law (Galatians 5:16-18).⁴

To "walk" in the Spirit meant to rely upon the Holy Spirit and to place one's feet where He leads. And because the Holy Spirit will never lead us contrary to the Father's will, He will always guide and empower our walk in a way that is in perfect keeping with the holy standards He established in His holy law. As Paul victoriously put it in Romans 8:1;

There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit (Romans 8:1).

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We also find, from Galatians 5:22-23, that the filling of the Spirit results in ...

II. THE PRACTICAL FRUIT OF CHRIST-LIKE CHARACTER.

As we read on in Paul's letter to the Galatians, we see that He lists the grievous fruit that would result from a daily walk in accordance with the principle of the flesh:

Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God (Galatians 5:19-21).

These things are the very opposite of the character of Jesus Christ. They are all condemned in God's law. But by contrast, Paul goes on to say;

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law (Galatians 5:22-23).

Note carefully that there are not nine different ‘fruits’ that are being described; but rather one single fruit with nine specific qualities. All of these different qualities give us a complete picture of the character of Jesus Himself. Our Savior, as He walked on this earth, displayed perfect love to us by giving Himself for us on the cross; and He said to us, "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another" (John 14:34). He experienced perfect joy: and said to us, "These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full" (John 15:11). He experienced perfect peace; and told us, "Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you ..." (John 14:27). The Bible entrusts us to "the patience of Christ" (2 Thessalonians 3:5); reminds us of the riches of God's "kindness toward us in Christ Jesus" (Ephesians 2:7); and encourages us that the good work God has begun in us will find its completion in "the day of Jesus Christ" (Philippians 1:6). The Bible also presents Jesus to us as one who is "faithful and true" (Revelations 19:11); one who, though in the form of God, "humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross" (Philippians 2:8); and one who displayed self-control in that He, "for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross" (Hebrews 12:2), and who, in the midst of His anguish in the garden, prayed to the Father and said, "Your will be done" (Matthew 26:42).

For us to allow the Holy Spirit to display His fruit in us, then, is nothing other than to allow Him to display these perfect qualities of our Lord Jesus in our lives. It's to allow the Holy Spirit to live the very life of Jesus in us and through us.

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And then, in John's Gospel, we learn that a result of the Holy Spirit's filling is
III. A PREVAILING HAPPINESS AND CONTENTMENT.

Jesus Himself established the promise of complete satisfaction and fulfillment to us through the ministry of the Holy Spirit. During the last great day of the feast in Jerusalem, He publicly cried out,

"He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water" (John 7:38);

and we're told by the apostle John,

"But this He spoke concerning the Spirit, whom those believing in Him would receive" (v. 39).

The indwelling Spirit that Jesus promised to give to us as a result of His ascension to the Father would result in a deep-hearted satisfaction that nothing else on this earth could provide. This is because, as He told the woman at the well,

"... whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that

I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life” (John 4:14).

Thus, He could say, on another occasion,

“I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst” (John 6:35);

and could say of those who trusted Him,

“I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly” (John 10:10).

This promise from our Lord is why the psalmist could write, “There is a river whose streams shall make glad the city of God” (Psalm 46:4). It’s why—even in a prison cell—Paul could say, “I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content: I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound. Everywhere and in all things I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me” (Philippians 4:11-13). It’s why Peter could tell his fellow suffering believers that, though not seeing Christ right now, “yet believing, you rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory” (1 Peter 1:8). It’s why John could write a letter to his fellow believers about fellowship with Christ, and say that it’s “that your joy may be full” (1 John 1:4).

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What blessings we receive as a result of the filling of the Holy Spirit! And the ones we have considered in this study only scratch the surface. In our next study, we will also explore how the filling of the Spirit also results in such blessings as joyful worship, a perpetual giving of thanks, an attitude of submissiveness under the Lord, and power for witnessing to our Savior in this world.

May it be that we learn to yield ourselves increasingly to the Holy Spirit’s prevailing and pervasive influence; and thus, to allow Him to produce these blessings in us abundantly!

¹Rene Pache, J.D. Emerson, trans., *The Person and Work of the Holy Spirit* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1954), p. 133; *emphasis added*.

²See Merrill F. Unger, *The Baptizing Work of the Holy Spirit* (Wheaton, IL: Van Kampen Press, 1953), pp. 17-18.

³Cited in Unger, p. 18.

⁴All Scripture readings are taken from *The Holy Bible, New King James Version*; copyright © 1982 by Thomas Nelson, Inc.