

# RESULTS OF THE SPIRIT'S FILLING (Part 2)

Last week, we began to consider the “consequences” of the filling of the Holy Spirit. We looked at some key passages; and we considered what sort of things the Bible says would be evident in the life of someone who was filled with the Spirit. Specifically, we examined how, as believers in Christ, we will find that a submission to the prevailing and pervasive influence of the Holy Spirit results in (I.) a personal holiness that's in keeping with God's law (Galatians 5:16-18), (II.) the 'fruit' of Christ-like character (Galatians 5:22-23), and (III.) a prevailing happiness and contentment (John 4:14; 6:35; 7:38-39; 10:10; also Psalm 46:4; Philippians 4:11-13; 1 Peter 1:8; 1 John 1:4).

But as we stressed at the end of last week's study, we had only begun to consider the practical consequences of the Spirit's filling in the life of the submitted believer. This morning, we continue our study by considering more of the ways the filling ministry of the Holy Spirit shows itself.

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Looking at Ephesians 5:18, for example, we see that the Spirit's filling results in ...

#### **IV. JOYFUL WORSHIP.**

In Ephesians 5:18, we find the command given to the believer to be “filled” with the Spirit. Paul writes,

*And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit ...<sup>1</sup>*

Previously in our study (see Lesson 18, “The Pervasive and Prevailing Influence”, III.B.), we noted the comparison Paul intentionally draws between being “drunk with wine” and being “filled with the Spirit”. Both things have to do with the act of being under the prevailing and pervasive influence of something. And what's more, both have to do—at least on the surface—with the pursuit of a kind of joy. But as Paul says, the believer is not to do the former (i.e., be drunk with wine) because it leads to “dissipation” (or “debauchery” in the NIV; taken from the Greek word *sotia* [“preservation”], but with the alpha negative prefix in front of it; so that the word *asotia* means “recklessness”). Instead of seeking joy from being filled with alcoholic ‘spirits’—which leads to recklessness—we are to seek joy by being filled with the Holy Spirit.

After telling us this, Paul says that the result of doing so is that we will be found

*speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord (v. 19).*

The joy that comes from being filled with the Holy Spirit is a wonderfully controlled and ordered joy; for as the Bible tells us elsewhere in the context of the manifestations of the Spirit, “God is

not the author of confusion, but of peace” (1 Corinthians 14:33). A Spirit-filled joy isn’t expressed in the kind of silly and senseless giddiness associated with drunkenness, but rather in songs sung in joyful and intelligent reverence to God. As Pastor James puts it; “Is anyone cheerful? Let him sing psalms” (James 5:13). The Lord Jesus Himself “rejoiced in the Spirit” (Luke 10:21). Paul and Silas were found in a jail cell at midnight—perhaps awaiting execution the next day, but nevertheless “praying and singing hymns to God” (Acts 16:25).

May the watching world see such joy—and even hear it—from us as a result of the Spirit’s filling!

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As we look further in this same passage—to Ephesians 5:20—we find that the Spirit manifests His prevailing and pervasive influence in the believer through ...

#### **V. A PERPETUAL GIVING OF THANKS.**

Paul goes on to say that being filled with the Spirit would also show itself in a habit of

*giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ (Ephesians 5:20).*

The opposite of this—an attitude of unthankfulness—is something very contrary to the work of the Holy Spirit. In Paul’s letter to the Romans, unthankfulness is a characteristic of the ungodly; because “although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful ...” (Romans 1:21). But thankfulness is something that is to be the constant characteristic of the believer. “Rejoice always,” Paul writes elsewhere, “pray without ceasing, in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you” (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18).

The Bible makes it clear, in several places, that thanksgiving is to characterize the believer who is filled with the Spirit:

- Paul writes that this Spirit-empowered attitude of thanksgiving in the body of Christ is to “abound to the glory of God” (2 Corinthians 4:15).
- In Colossians 2:6-7, Paul writes, “As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him, rooted and built up in Him and established in the faith, as you have been taught, abounding in it with thanksgiving.”
- Thanksgiving is to characterize our prayers; just as Paul writes in Colossians 4:2, “Continue earnestly in prayer, being vigilant in it with thanksgiving ...”
- Thankfulness is to sanctify all that we are at liberty to enjoy; just as the apostle Paul says in 1 Timothy 4:4, “For every creature of God is good, and nothing is to be refused if it is received with thanksgiving.”
- It is to be the way we combat anxiety; just as he writes in Philippians 4:6, “Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.”
- It’s even possible to see a “thankfulness” put into practical action in the remarkable way that the apostles handled persecution. Acts 5:41 tells us that they were beaten for their faithful preaching; but then left their persecutors “rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for His name.”

Only the Holy Spirit’s enabling can make us thankful in all things like this. May we allow

Him to do so more and more!

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Reading further still in this passage in Ephesians 5, we find that the Spirit manifests Himself in those He fills through ...

**VI. AN ATTITUDE OF SUBMISSIVENESS UNDER THE LORD.**

Paul mentions this further manifestation of the filling of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer in verse 21;

*... submitting to one another in the fear of God (Ephesians 5:21).*

The Greek word for “submit” that is used here (*hupotasso*) is not one that suggests inherent inferiority—as if being ‘submissive’ means being self-degrading. Rather it speaks of subjection and subordination of one’s self to an authority figure, or to a position or role, in a willing manner under God. It’s the opposite of the sort of arrogant grasp for personal advancement over others that our Lord discouraged His disciples from pursuing in Matthew 20:25-28;

*“You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and those who are great exercise authority over them. Yet it shall not be so among you; but whoever desires to become great among you, let him be your servant. And whoever desires to be first among you, let him be your slave—just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many” (Matthew 20:25-28).*

Those who are filled with the Holy Spirit submit to the instruction of Jesus in this passage willingly and joyfully.

In Ephesians 5, Paul went on to expressed this submissiveness in very practical terms in the basic relationships of everyday life: a wife in her role toward her husband under the Lord (5:22-24), a husband in his role toward his wife under the Lord (5:25-33), children toward their parents under the Lord (6:1-3), fathers toward their children under the Lord (6:4), bond-servants toward their masters under the Lord (6:5-8), and masters toward their servants under the Lord (6:9). Peter similarly urged his fellow believers to

*submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord’s sake, whether to the king as supreme, or to governors, as to those who are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers and for the praise of those who do good. For this is the will of God, that by doing good you may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men—as free, yet not using your liberty as a cloak for vice, but as bondservants of God. Honor all people. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the king” (1 Peter 2:13-17).*

The world will be able to see our submission to the prevailing and pervasive influence of the Holy Spirit by this very thing—that is, our willing attitude of submissiveness to the various relationships and duties of life under the Lord.

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Finally, looking back to the Book of Acts, we see that the filling of the Holy Spirit will show itself in the life of the believer though ...

## **VII. POWER FOR WITNESSING.**

One of the great evidences of the filling of the Holy Spirit in someone's life is that of a faithfulness to testify of Jesus to others—not simply in human power or human skills of persuasion, but with a power and with results that are clearly of God. Just before ascending to the Father after His resurrection, our Lord told His disciples;

*“But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth” (Acts 1:8).*

When the Holy Spirit came upon the gathered believers at Pentecost, we're told that they went out “to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance” (Acts 2:4); speaking a message that those who heard clearly understood to be “the wonderful works of God” (v. 11).

Paul, who taught us so much about the blessings of the Spirit's filling ministry, was earnestly dependent upon this Spirit-enabled power in His ministry as a preacher and evangelist. He told his friends to be

*praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints—and for me, that utterance may be given to me, that I may open my mouth boldly to make known the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains; that in it I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak” (Ephesians 6:18-20).*

He said a similar thing in Colossians 4. He asked his readers;

*Continue earnestly in prayer, being vigilant in it with thanksgiving; meanwhile praying also for us, that God would open to us a door for the word, to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in chains, that I may make it manifest, as I ought to speak (Colossians 4:2-4).*

If even the mighty apostle Paul was so dependent upon the filling of the Holy Spirit in proclaiming the message of Christ, how could we get along with out it? The more we submit ourselves to the Spirit's filling ministry, the more we will find that we will become the Spirit's instruments for declaring the greatest message the world could ever hear. As Jesus Himself told His apostles;

*“But when the Helper comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify of Me. And you also will bear witness ...” (John 15:26-27a).*

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All of this should help us appreciate how indispensable to ministry it is that we avail ourselves to the prevailing and pervasive influence and enabling of the Holy Spirit—indeed, not

just for ministry, but for all of the Christian life! As Dr. Charles Ryrie has put it;

*The full realization and enjoyment of other ministries of the Spirit depends on being filled with the Spirit. Filling means control of all known matters and areas of the Christian life at every stage of our walk. Such control is prerequisite to Christ-likeness, praise, submissiveness, and service. In addition, other ministries of the Spirit, such as teaching and guiding, will never be fully enjoyed by the believer unless he is controlled by the Spirit, though they might be to some partial extent. Let's not ever be satisfied with partial control, but seek to obey all that our heavenly Father wants for us.*"<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>All Scripture readings are taken from *The Holy Bible, New King James Version*; copyright © 1982 by Thomas Nelson, Inc.

<sup>2</sup>Charles C. Ryrie, *The Holy Spirit* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1997), p. 168.