

BUT BE FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT

TEXT: EPH. 5:18-20

Introduction:

1. The Bible has much to say about being filled with the Holy Spirit (5:18).
2. In Acts 2:4 it says that on the Day of Pentecost, “they were all filled with the Holy Ghost.”
3. Acts 4:8 says Peter was “filled with the Holy Ghost.”
4. Acts 4:31 says, “And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness.”
5. Acts 6:3 says, “Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business.”
6. Acts 6:5 says Stephen was “a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost.”
7. Acts 9:17 says, “And Ananias went his way, and entered into the house; and putting his hands on him said, Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost.”
8. Acts 13:9 says, Paul was “filled with the Holy Ghost.”
9. Acts 13:52 says, “the disciples were filled with joy, and with the Holy Ghost.”
10. AT Pierson wrote a commentary on the book of Acts and entitled it, “The Acts of the Holy Spirit.”
11. The Holy Spirit’s filling is vital because it is the means by which He controls our behaviour and performs His work through us (Christians).
12. The carnal man is a man walking in the flesh; he is controlled by the flesh; but the spiritual man walks in the Spirit and is controlled by the Holy Spirit.

I. BEING CONTROLLED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT

1. You will notice that this a command from God. The Greek word translated “filled” (Eph. 5:18) is in the imperative mode – a command.
2. Christians are never commanded to be baptized by the Holy Spirit. Though some Christians use the terms “baptized” and “filled” interchangeably there is a distinction.
3. Christians are never commanded to be indwelt by the Holy Spirit.

4. Once a person receives the Lord Jesus Christ as his Saviour, he immediately is indwelt by the Holy Spirit (cf. Eph. 2:18, 22; 3:16; 5:8, 9).
5. In fact, if they are not indwelt by the Holy Spirit they are not saved. Romans 8:9 says, “Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.”
6. Christians are never commanded to be sealed by the Holy Spirit (cf. Eph. 1:13; 4:30).
7. Christians are commanded to be filled with the Spirit (5:18).
8. The present tense means we are to be continually filled with the Holy Spirit – not up and down, hot and cold, fervent and backslidden, etc.
9. The word translated *filled* in the original Greek text signifies continuous action. The idea is to “keep being filled.”
10. “And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess...” (Eph. 5:18).
11. This is much more than a warning about drunkenness, even though drunkenness was a big problem in the ancient world (and still a big problem today).
12. The Bible draws both a comparison and a contrast between drunkenness and being filled with the Spirit (cf. I Sam. 1:12-15; Luke 1:15; Acts 2:4, 13-18).
13. The comparison is in the matter of control. A drunken man is being controlled by the wine, and thinks differently, and acts differently and talks differently than he normally would when sober.
14. A Christian who is filled with the Spirit will also think differently, and act differently, and talk differently, because now he is being controlled by the Holy Spirit.
15. This has absolutely nothing to do with emotionalism.
16. Interestingly, alcoholic beverages are often called “spirits.” God says, “Do not be under the power and influence of spirits, but be under the power and influence of the Holy Spirit.”

II. HAVING A JOYFUL SPIRIT (5:19)

1. We are to speak to ourselves “in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs...” (5:19). Nothing thrills the soul like good, Christ-exalting music.
2. And nothing quenches the Holy Spirit like worldly, sensual music (I Thess. 5:19). Recently we studied Eph. 4:30 – “And grieve not the Holy Spirit.” Worldly rock music grieves the Holy Spirit.

3. Not all of us can sing well. Some of us cannot make melody on a musical instrument. But every born again Christian can make melody in his “heart to the Lord.”
4. When we are filled with the Spirit we will not sing the old worldly songs that please the flesh, but new songs that are in harmony with the purposes of God.
5. “And he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God: many shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the LORD” (Psalm 40:3).
6. When we are filled with the Spirit we will sing out of joyful hearts that love God. It disturbs me at times to look out over the congregation and see some people not singing.

III. BEING THANKFUL (5:20).

1. When the Holy Spirit is in control, there is gratitude to God, a deep sense of appreciation, and a sincere expression of it.
2. “By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name” (Heb. 13:15).
3. Thankfulness goes along with spirituality and godliness.
4. “When gratitude dies on the altar of a man’s heart, that man is well-nigh hopeless” – Bob Jones Sr.
5. One night a pastor preached a message on thankfulness, and his text was I Thess. 5:18 – “In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.”
6. A lady approached him after the meeting and said: “I don’t see how it is humanly possible to give thanks in everything.” The preacher replied: “You are right. It is not humanly possible. That is why you must be filled with the Holy Spirit.”

CONCLUSION:

1. Over 100 years ago, Dwight L. Moody said, “Nine-tenths, at least, of the church members never think of speaking for Christ. If they see a man, perhaps a near relative, just going right down to ruin, going rapidly, they never think of speaking to him about his sinful course, and of seeking to win him to Christ. Now certainly there must be something wrong. And yet, when you talk with them, you find they have faith, and you cannot say they are not children of God, but they have not the power; they have not the liberty; they have not the love that real disciples of Christ should have. A great many people are

- thinking that we need new measures, that we need new churches, that we need new organs, new choirs, and all these new things. That is not what the church of God needs today. It is the old power that the apostles had; that is what we want, and if we have that in our churches, there will be new life. Then we will have new ministers – the same old ministers renewed with power, filled with the Spirit.”
2. C.I. Scofield preached Moody’s funeral. This is what he said, “The secrets of D.L. Moody’s power were: First, in a definite experience of Christ’s saving grace. He had passed out of death into life, and he knew it. Secondly, he believed in the divine authority of the Scriptures. The Bible was to him the voice of God, and he made it resound as such in the consciences of men. Thirdly, he was baptized (meaning “filled”) with the Holy Spirit, and he knew it. It was to him as definite an experience as his conversion.”