

# Ephesians Series

Lesson #226

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Dean Bible Ministries

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# What Difference Does a Filling Make?

Ephesians 5:15–18



# EPHESIANS

THE WEALTH, WALK  
& WARFARE  
OF THE BELIEVER

**Ephesians 4:1–6:9**  
**How the Believer is to Live Life**  
**The Five Walking Commands**

**Walk in Wisdom (Ephesians 5:15–6:9)**

**Eph. 5:15, “See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise,”**

- **Commanded to be filled by means of the Spirit (Eph. 5:18);**
- **Emphasis on worship through singing (Eph. 5:19);**
- **Gratitude to God for all things (Eph. 5:20);**
- **Mutual submission to live in harmony (Eph. 5:21);**
- **Family life (Eph. 5:22–6:9)**

Eph. 5:15, “**See** then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise,

Eph. 5:16, “[by] redeeming the time, because the days are evil.

Eph. 5:17, “Therefore **do not be** unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is.

Eph. 5:18, “And **do not be drunk** with wine, in which is dissipation; but **be filled** with the Spirit, ...”

## Negative

## Positive

**Do not be unwise**

**but understand!**

**Eph. 5:17**

**Do not be drunk with wine**

**but be filled by  
the Spirit**

**Eph. 5:18**

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*πληρόω plēroō*  
**2 plur pres**  
**pass impera**  
**“to fill; fulfill”**

*ἐν πνεύματι,*  
*en pneumati,*  
**dative,**  
**means, “by**  
**means of**  
**the Spirit”**

**Eph. 5:18, “And do not **be drunk with wine**, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit,”**

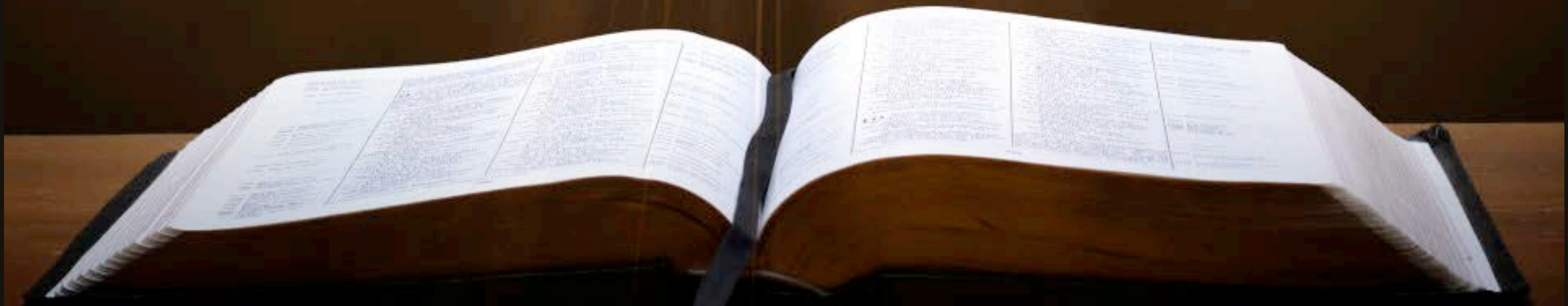
**ἄσωτία *asōtia* fem sing nom**

- 1. excess, incurable, unhealthy, dissipation;**
- 2. wild and disorderly conduct [~Cleon Rogers]**



# **What the Bible Teaches About**

## **The FILLING by the Holy Spirit *Introduction***



**“By various terms the Bible teaches that there are two classes of Christians: those who ‘abide in Christ,’ and those who ‘abide not’; those who are ‘walking in the light,’ and those who ‘walk in darkness’; those who ‘walk by the Spirit,’ and those who ‘walk as men’; those who ‘walk in newness of life,’ and those who ‘walk after the flesh’; those who have the Spirit ‘in’ and ‘upon’ them, and those who have the Spirit ‘in’ them, but not ‘upon’ them; those who are ‘spiritual’ and those who are ‘carnal’; those who are ‘filled with the Spirit,’ and those who are not. All this has to do with the quality of daily life of saved people, and is in no way a contrast between the saved and the unsaved. Where there is such an emphasis in the Bible as is indicated by these distinctions there is a corresponding reality.”**

**~L S Chafer, *He That is Spiritual*, 29**

**Acts 2:2, “And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting.**

**Acts 2:3, “Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and one sat upon each of them.**

**Acts 2:4, “And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.”**

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**Acts 2:3, “Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and one sat upon each of them.**

**Acts 2:4, “And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.”**

**“The Scriptures bear a decisive testimony that the filling of the Holy Spirit is a repeated experience. The early church was **filled with the Spirit** on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:4). In Acts 4:8, Peter is mentioned as again being filled with the Holy Spirit, and the entire company gathered at Jerusalem to hear Peter’s report of his encounter with the Sanhedrin are again filled with the Holy Spirit (Acts 4:31). Stephen, originally chosen a deacon because he was filled with the Spirit, is revealed to have been ‘full of the Holy Spirit’ immediately before his martyrdom (Acts 7:55). Both Paul and Barnabas are found filled with the Holy Spirit at widely differing periods of their lives (Acts 9:17; **11:24**; 13:9, **52**). The evidence for the experimental nature of the **filling of the Holy Spirit** is fully sustained in every instance.”**

**~John Walvoord, *The Holy Spirit*, 195**

**What is the problem with this?**

**Acts 2:2, “And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting.**

**Acts 2:3, “Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and one sat upon each of them.**

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**3 plur aor pass indic**

**to fill, fulfill, complete**



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***πνεῦμα *pneuma****

**neut sing genitive of content  
wind; breath; spirit, Spirit**

**Eph. 5:18, “And do not be drunk with wine, in which is  
dissipation; but **be filled with the Spirit,**”**

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**“The Scriptures bear a decisive testimony that the filling of the Holy Spirit is a repeated experience. The early church was **filled with the Spirit** on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:4). In Acts 4:8, Peter is mentioned as again being filled with the Holy Spirit, and the entire company gathered at Jerusalem to hear Peter’s report of his encounter with the Sanhedrin are again filled with the Holy Spirit (Acts 4:31). Stephen, originally chosen a deacon because he was filled with the Spirit, is revealed to have been ‘full of the Holy Spirit’ immediately before his martyrdom (Acts 7:55). Both Paul and Barnabas are found filled with the Holy Spirit at widely differing periods of their lives (Acts 9:17; **11:24**; 13:9, **52**). The evidence for the experimental nature of the **filling of the Holy Spirit** is fully sustained in every instance.”**

**~John Walvoord, *The Holy Spirit*, 195**

**What is the significance of these two words?**

## **Conclusion:**

**These represent two different ministries of the Holy Spirit.**

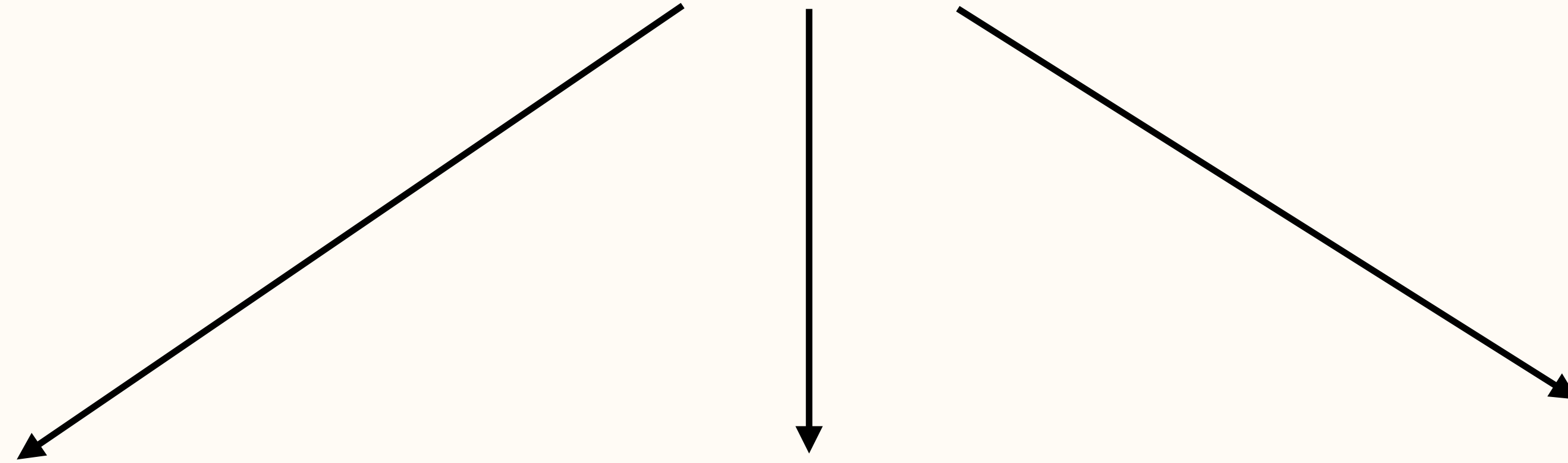
- 1. *pimplemi* (v) is repeated, and almost always tied to something said or written, so this describes an activity related to inspiration by the Holy Spirit.**
- 2. *pleroo* (v) is also repeated, but describes the work of the Spirit is filling us with God's Word and producing spiritual growth and maturity.**

**Three similar words occur in the original Greek text, and have often been assumed to be synonymous with the expression in Eph. 5:18: “be filled by means of the Spirit.”**

**Due to the widespread confusion resulting from this, some details must be investigated.**



**-πλη-**    **-plē-**



πίμπλημι *rimplēmi*  
*verb*

πληρόω *plēroō*  
*verb*

πλήρης *plērēs*  
*adjective*

**Meaning is determined by usage,  
it is not determined by etymology.**

## 1. Non-technical uses which are descriptive:

Matt. 22:10, “So those servants went out into the highways and gathered together all whom they found, both bad and good. And the wedding hall was filled with guests.” [“**Full of guests**” **genitive of content, aorist passive indicative**]

Matt. 27:48, “Immediately one of them ran and took a sponge, filled it with sour wine and put it on a reed, and offered it to Him to drink.” [“full of sour wine” **genitive of content**]

**πίμπλημι *pimplēmi* “to fill, fulfill”**

## Non-technical uses:

**Luke 4:28, “So all those in the synagogue, when they heard these things, were filled with wrath” [gen. of content],**

**Luke 5:26, “And they were all amazed, and they glorified God and were filled with fear, saying, ‘We have seen strange things today!’ ”**

**Luke 6:11, “But they were filled with rage, and discussed with one another what they might do to Jesus.”**

**πίμπλημι *pimplēmi* with genitive**

**“to fill, fulfill” “full of wrath, fear, or rage”**

## Non-technical uses:

**Acts 3:10**, “Then they knew that it was he who sat begging alms at the Beautiful Gate of the temple; and they were filled with wonder and amazement at what had happened to him.” [gen. of content - description],

**Acts 5:17**, “Then the high priest rose up, and all those who were with him (which is the sect of the Sadducees), and they were filled with indignation,” [“full of indignation” - gen. of content - description]

**Acts 13:45**, “But when the Jews saw the multitudes, they were filled with envy; and contradicting and blaspheming, they opposed the things spoken by Paul.” [“full of envy” - gen. of content - description]

**πίμπλημι *pimplēmi* with genitive**

**“to fill, fulfill” “full of wrath, fear, or rage”**

## Non-technical uses:

**Acts 19:29, “filled with confusion, and rushed into the theater with one accord, having seized Gaius and Aristarchus, Macedonians, Paul’s travel companions. [“full of confusion” - gen. of content - idiom of description]**

**πίμπλημι *pimplēmi* with genitive**

**“to fill, fulfill” “full of wrath, fear, or rage”**

## **2. Uses of *pimplēmi* used with the Holy Spirit**

**Luke 1:15; 1:41; 1:67; Acts 2:4; 4:8; 4:31; 9:17; 13:9**

**It is used eight times with the Holy Spirit, but only in Luke–Acts, not in the Epistles or Revelation.**

## **2. Uses of the verb *pimplēmi* used with the Holy Spirit**

**Luke 1:15; 1:41; 1:67; Acts 2:4; 4:8; 4:31; 9:17; 13:9**

**It is used eight times with the Holy Spirit, but only in Luke–Acts, not in the Epistles or Revelation.**

**Six of them clearly speak of an immediate speaking, one has the speaking closely follow.**

**3. Uses followed by the person making some sort of utterance.**

**a. Elizabeth speaking after hearing the greeting of Mary.**

**Luke 1:41, “And it happened, when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, that the babe leaped in her womb; and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. [gen. “full of the HS”]. [NKJV]**

**Luke 1:42, “Then she spoke out with a loud voice and said, ‘Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb!’ ” [NKJV]**



**3. Uses followed by the person making some sort of utterance.**

**b. Zacharias prophesied:**

**Luke 1:67, “Now his father Zacharias was filled with the Holy Spirit, and prophesied, saying” [gen. of content], “was full of the HS,” result: speaking.**

**3. Uses followed by the person making some sort of utterance.**

**c. The apostles are full of the Holy Spirit and began to speak ...**

**Acts 2:4, “And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.” [gen. of content], “was full of the HS,” result: speaking.**

**3. Uses followed by the person making some sort of utterance.**

**d. Peter was full of the Holy Spirit and began to speak ...**

**Acts 4:8, “Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, ‘Rulers of the people and elders of Israel:’ ”**  
**[gen. of content], “was full of the HS,” result: speaking.**

**3. Uses followed by the person making some sort of utterance.**

**e. The apostles were all full of the Holy Spirit and they spoke ...**

**Acts 4:31, “And when they had prayed, the place where they were assembled together was shaken; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spoke the word of God with boldness.” [gen. of content], “was full of the HS,” result: speaking.**

**3. Uses followed by the person making some sort of utterance.**

**f. The apostles were all full of the Holy Spirit and they spoke ...**

**Acts 9:17, “And Ananias went his way and entered the house; and laying his hands on him he said, ‘Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on the road as you came, has sent me that you may receive your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit.’ ” [gen. of content], “was full of the HS,” result: speaking in vs. 20:**

**Acts 9:20, “Immediately he preached the Christ in the synagogues, that He is the Son of God.” [NKJV]**

**3. Uses followed by the person making some sort of utterance.**

**g. Paul is full of the Spirit and speaks ...**

**Acts 13:9, “Then Saul, who also is called Paul, filled with the Holy Spirit, looked intently at him**

**Acts 13:10, “and said, ‘O full of all deceit and all fraud, you son of the devil, you enemy of all righteousness, will you not cease perverting the straight ways of the Lord?’ ” [NKJV]**

**4. The prophecy about John the baptist alludes to the results of his future speaking ministry.**

**Luke 1:15, “For he will be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink. He will also be filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother’s womb [from birth].**

**Luke 1:16, “And he will turn many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God.**

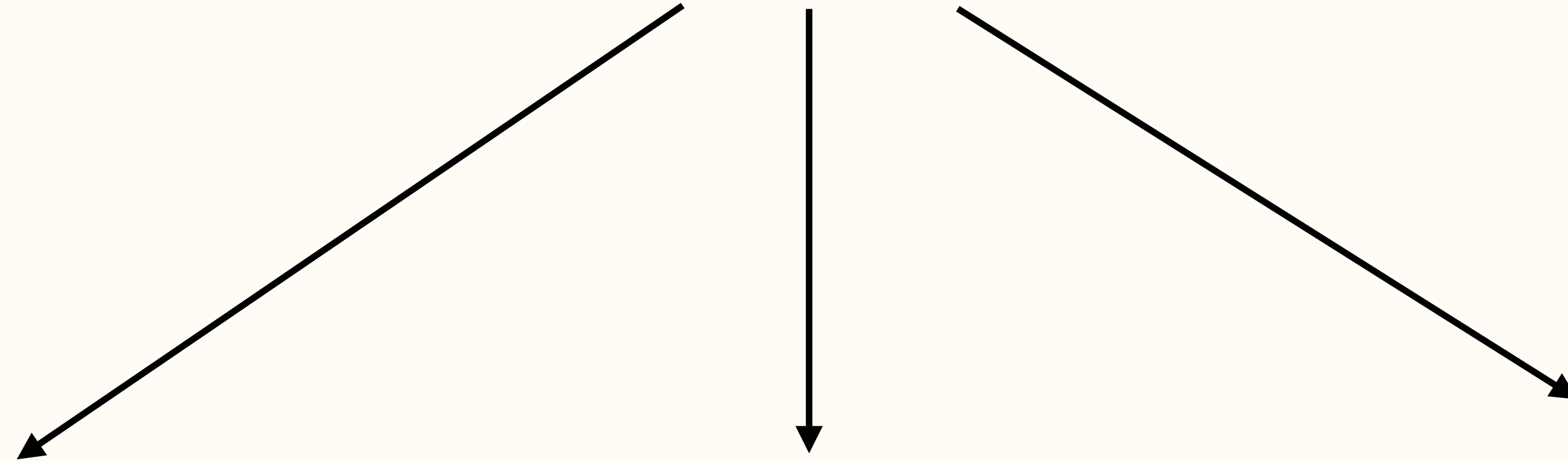
**Luke 1:17, “He will also go before Him in the spirit and power of Elijah, ‘to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children,’ and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.” [NKJV]**

**\*Although it is not immediately followed by John speaking, it is followed by a description of the results of his future message.**

**5. Conclusion: The verb *pimplēmi* is almost always used with an immediate speaking, but in two cases it relates to a future speaking. But in all eight cases it is contextually followed by some reference to speaking.**



**-πλη-**    **-plē-**



πίμπλημι *rimplēmi*  
*verb*

πληρόω *plēroō*  
*verb*

πλήρης *plērēs*  
*adjective*

**Meaning is determined by usage,  
it is not determined by etymology.**

- 1. Different verbs, though cognates, do not have the same meaning.**
- 2. Adjectives based on the same root do not necessarily have the same meaning.**

**The second situation investigates the use of the adjective *πλήρης plērēs* followed by a noun in the genitive.**

**Describes the baskets full of the fragments of food leftover, and many other descriptive uses.**

**Two categories of usage are theologically significant.**

1. The adjective is followed by one description in the genitive.

Acts 19:28, “Now when they heard this, they were full of wrath and cried out, saying, ‘Great is Diana of the Ephesians!’ ”

πλήρης *plērēs*

Adjective

acc masc plur full

followed by the  
genitive of description

**2. The use of the adjective with two complements in the genitive. These are descriptive of character.**

**Acts 13:10, “and said, ‘O full of all deceit and all fraud, you son of the devil, you enemy of all righteousness, will you not cease perverting the straight ways of the Lord?’ ”**

**Acts 9:36, “At Joppa there was a certain disciple named Tabitha, which is translated Dorcas. This woman was full of good works and charitable deeds which she did.”**

**Acts 11:24, “For he was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and of faith. And a great many people were added to the Lord.”**

**2. The use of the adjective with two complements in the genitive. These are descriptive of character.**

**Acts 6:3, “Therefore, brethren, seek out from among you seven men of good reputation, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business;”**

**πλήρης *plērēs***

**Adjective**

**acc masc plur full**

**followed by the  
genitive of description,  
content**

**Acts 6:5, “And the saying pleased the whole multitude. And they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and the Holy Spirit, and Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas, a proselyte from Antioch,”**

**Acts 11:24, “For he was a good man, **full of the Holy Spirit and of faith**. And a great many people were added to the Lord.”**

**Acts 3:10, “Then they knew that it was he who sat begging alms at the Beautiful Gate of the temple; and they were filled with wonder and amazement at what had happened to him.”**

**3. The exact same phrase describes Jesus and Stephen. It uses the adjective plus the genitive of “Holy Spirit.” This is a distinctive enduement with little else to describe it.**

**Luke 4:1, “Then Jesus, being filled with the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness,”**

**Acts 7:55, “But he, being full of the Holy Spirit, gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God,”**



## **Conclusion:**

- 1. The verb *pimplēmi* is almost always used with an immediate speaking, but in two cases it relates to a future speaking. But in all eight cases it is contextually followed by some reference to speaking.**
- 2. The adjective *pleres* translated “filled with” or “full of” followed by genitives is an idiom describing character. The character description of envy, deceit, wonder, amazement, faith, Holy Spirit, or good works is in the genitive indicating the content which is a description of character.**
- 3. Neither of these is the same word or grammar as “be filled by the Spirit” in Eph. 5:18.**