

“Be Filled with The Spirit” (Ephesians 5:18-21), *Rushing Wind, #3*

[18] And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit, [19] addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with your heart, [20] giving thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, [21] submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ. (Ephesians 5:18-21 ESV)

3 questions: What is it; When does it happen, and How?

I. What is the filling of the Spirit?

“Filled” means literally permeated, intoxicated...

- Same word used in Luke 4:28, “they were *filled* with rage at Jesus’ teaching”
- Or, for example, my “staff infection.” That’s not an isolated thing. Every part of me is controlled.
- Vs. 18 he gives you a comparison, “being drunk with wine.” I hope you don’t know what it is like to be “drunk with wine,” or “filled by it,” but when you are, alcohol has consumed all of you. Every part of you, your reflexes, your mind, your eyes, is affected by alcohol in you. They take a blood alcohol sample. They don’t have to take it directly from your stomach, it’s everywhere in you.
- One more analogy: **Chocolate milk** (the chocolate permeates all of the milk)

To be filled by the Spirit is when the Spirit takes up full residence in your heart and you are alive with feeling and emotion in Him.

Paul contrasts the filling of the Spirit here to being drunk with wine... There’s some way that being filled with the Spirit is similar being drunk with wine, other ways it is dissimilar.

Similar

- Alcohol captivates your bodies; affects your thinking; controls your responses. It causes certain things that normally don’t bother you to bother you and caused others that do bother you to not.
- It removes your inhibitions. **E.g. Me on plane with woman.**
 - I got bumped up to 1st... she clearly had had a lot to drink.
 - Leans over and starts to talk like we are old friends. “You were on the other flight!” I noticed you.” Then she seemed to realize what this might imply... “I’m not saying I was checking you out... Or maybe I was.” After about 2 minutes I realized no substantive conversation was going to be possible so I started to read my book. You think that stopped her? She kept on, “What are you reading?” So I tried option 2 and laid my head down. She reached up and turned off my overhead light. I turned your light off.” I said, “Thanks.” Finally, I put in my headphones, the universal sign for “leave me alone.” She keeps talking to me and, realizing I have headphones on, shouts so I can hear. Chances are, this woman is typically not like this, but, filled with alcohol she is.
- Being filled with the Spirit removes some of your inhibitions. Hopefully not in an annoying way. Throughout Acts, when someone is filled by the Spirit they get an uncanny boldness and courage. Peter, who had prior to this denied Jesus 3 times in the space of one hour, boldly testifies to Jesus before hostile audiences in Acts 2 and Acts 4. Same thing happens with Stephen in Acts 7 and the whole church in Acts 4.
- It says people listening were “astonished” at their boldness (Acts 4:13). Has that ever happened with you? The mentality today in most of our churches is that you only need one Spirit filled person in the room. No, imagine if everyone hearing me were Spirit filled and went out in the power the Holy Spirit

to RDU. How about you? Has anyone ever been astonished by your boldness? I have felt this at times. You're so alive with God's heart and emotions and so aware of His glory that you forget about your reputation; sometimes even danger.

Remember I've told you that the presence of God is when the Spirit of God makes God's attributes come alive to you.

- Exodus 34:6-7
- You're so alive with God, eyes so full of His message; so confident in His plan, you forget everything else!

Dissimilar

That's how it is similar. Here's a few ways being filled with the Spirit is not like being drunk:

- **He's not talking about losing your mind.** Drunkenness and losing control of yourself is debauchery. The reason I say this is because there is a whole movement out there that says, "Get drunk on Jesus" and you stagger around in church and bark like a dog or cluck like a chicken.

When Paul is talking to the Corinthians about their church services one of the things he says is "when guests or unbelievers come in you guys are all hooping and hollering and screaming in tongues and nobody can understand you..." and then he says, "Won't they think you've lost your mind?" That's a bad thing, not a good one! He concludes his talk on the Holy Spirit in the church service by saying, "Let everything be done decently and in order." (**1 Cor 14:40**).

- **Alcohol deadens you to reality.** Sometimes people like it because it dulls pain. But in order to dull pain it has to dull everything. It can't select that one part of your brain and dull it... so, you lose reflexes, awareness.

By contrast, the Spirit makes you more alive. Look back in your Bible at the verses leading up to our text, Ephesians 5:18,

"Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, [16] making the best use of the time, because the days are evil. [17] Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. And do not get drunk with wine, but be filled with the Spirit..." (Ephesians 5:15-18) See that? Be careful. Be wise. Understand. We're talking about an expanded consciousness, not a dulled one.

2 Kings 6:15-18. The armies of Syria had surrounded Israel, and Elijah's servant was distraught. "Look at their army; there's so many of them! We will be destroyed!" So what does Elijah do to give this guy the ability to cope with life? He could give him alcohol to numb his mind to reality. Instead, he prayed that God would open his servants' eyes to see *all of reality*. God opened the young man's eyes to see chariots of fire surrounding the city.

No person who understands God and His ways should need to numb themselves to reality. Life is painful; numbing yourself to it isn't helping you or anyone else. God's Spirit can give you a hope that lifts you beyond pain. Doesn't always take it away... but empowers you in it! **2 Cor. 6:10**, Paul says, "we are sorrowful, yet always rejoicing. Poor, yet we possess everything!" The fullness of the Spirit let's you perceive the wisdom of God's plan within the pain (even when you can't understand it); let's you taste the sweetness of God's presence even when the cup life gives you is bitter! Paul said that the Spirit bears witness with ours (**Romans 8:16**), in the midst of pain, that we are the children of God!

When are we filled with the Spirit?

- Normally I try not to bog you down with the nuances of Greek verbs, but this is a very unique verb tense. “Be filled” is literally “be being filled continually.” It’s something that happens over and over again.
- There are two different kinds of filling with the Holy Spirit that people get confused a lot of times.
 - **Baptism of the Holy Spirit**
 - **1 Cor. 12:13**, “For we are all baptized by one Spirit into one body... we were all given the one Spirit to drink.”
 - **Ephesians 1:13**, “After that you believed you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise.”
 - Let me make this simple: If you’re saved, you have the Holy Spirit. He was the instrument of your salvation. **Titus 3:5**, we were saved by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit. **1 Cor 12:13**, our confession that “Jesus is Lord” is enabled by the Holy Spirit.
 - In **Romans 8:9**, Paul says plainly, “Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, He is not His.”
 - If you don’t have the Holy Spirit, you’re not saved; and if you are saved, you have the Holy Spirit. Period.
 - But wait, you say... “Why separate times in book of Acts?”
 - For example, Acts 19... “We haven’t even heard if there is a Holy Spirit.” You have to understand what is happening in Acts. The Great Commission was that God’s salvation was for all peoples of all nations, not just the Jews; and that the Spirit of God would no longer rest upon a temple in Israel but on every believer in Jesus, regardless of their nationality. For a Jew, this was really hard to believe because for so long God’s presence had resided only in Israel.
 - So every time in Acts the Spirit breaks into a new group, it is signified by a ceremony: the laying on of hands by the Apostles (showing their endorsement of it) and the speaking of tongues (which shows God’s endorsement.) Each person within the same group doesn’t get the same ceremony, because the group as a whole has already been signified.
 - Think of it like this. Running water came to NYC for the first time around the turn of the century. As running water was brought to each of the 5 burroughs, there was a ceremony. Now, it took a while for running water to get to each house. When it did, they didn’t have a new ceremony for each house. You just turned on the water spigot. In the same way, as the Holy Spirit entered new groups, there was a ceremony: laying on of hands, speaking in tongues. After that, each person within the group doesn’t need the ceremony; you just access what is there!
 - So, to say that the baptism of the Holy Spirit is a separate event subsequent to salvation, or to say that when you get Him you have to speak in tongues is incorrect.
 - So you have baptism. One baptism, at salvation. But many fillings. **One baptism, many and frequently recurring fillings!**
 - So see, we don’t need to pray for the baptism of the Spirit and wonder if we have it... we need to pray for continuous and new fillings—fillings for power and mission and communion with God.
 - You see, in my experience, a lot of times people start focusing on the baptism, and whether or not they have it, and they overlook the fact that they have the Spirit of God and they can be confident about that, and they can focus on asking God to fill and empower them for ministry!

- **The question is no longer do you have the Holy Spirit, but does He have you?** If you are a believer, you have Him. When He has you, then He can fill and empower you for His healing and redemptive mission in the world.

How are we filled by the Spirit?

- Singing and making melody; giving thanks
 - Is that the result of being filled, or the cause? Both!
 - You don't go up and burst into "all hail the power of Jesus' name"
 - The gospel: Colossians 3:16–17 reference
 - There is some discrepancy as to whether or not that says making melody *in* your heart or *from* your heart, or *with* your heart. For some of you, we would prefer it meant *in* your heart. For those of you with great voices, we're fine with *from* your heart. For those of you with not so great voices, maybe *in* your heart
 - Rejoicing in salvation (Sovereignty; joy of salvation; 2 phrases of gospel prayer; submitting)
 - Gal 3:1–3 Galatians 3. That's how we received him.
 - Luke 10:21: Jesus rejoiced in the Holy Spirit over God's giving Himself to children!
- By not...
 - Quenching: **1 Thess 5:19**
 - **You resist Him.¹**
 - E.g.
 - Not apologizing
 - After a sermon, "I'll deal with it later"
 - **Here's another way you can quench Him: entertaining sin. Galatians 5:17 – desiring against the HS.** Walk in the spirit and you will not fulfill the desires of the flesh. We cannot succumb to the desires of the flesh.
 - **John Owen**
 - Every sin "weakens" and "darkens" the soul. "An unmortified lust will drink up the spirit, and all the vigour of the soul, and weaken it for all duties... it corrupts our affections, expelling the love of the Father (1 John 2:15, 3:17). It entangles us and chokes us, so that the soul cannot say uprightly and truly to God, "Thou art my portion." It is a cloud, a thick cloud, that spreads itself over the face of the soul, and intercepts all the beams of God's love and favor. It takes away all sense of the privilege of our adoption."
 - Owen said, "Be killing sin, or it will be killing you." (*On Mortification from Sin*, 9)
 - Grieving: **Eph 4:30**
 - J. Oswald Sanders says "grieve" is a term that bespeaks love. An enemy can frustrate you, but you can only be grieved in relation to something that you love. That's how God's Spirit feels about us.
 - Rejecting: **Genesis 6:3**
 - "My Spirit will not always strive with man." Where you reject the HS to the point that he doesn't always strive with you. He leaves you alone. This is the blasphemy of the Holy Spirit
- So, don't do those 3 things!

The HS is always present in the gospel! David's prayer in Psalm 51: Seeing the gospel: Chapter 11 bankruptcy. You stare at it until the HS bursts alive in your heart.

¹ **Acts 7:51** – Stephen sees the **hardened hearts** of the people. 'You always resist the HS...' When we resist the HS we forfeit the filling of the HS and all the good that God wants to bring into our lives.

I agree with the leaders of the Asuza Street revival:

“The solution to the problems of the church today is to solve the individual Christian’s problems, and the solution to these problems is a Person—the Holy Spirit. He is the antidote for every error, the power for every weakness, the victory for every defeat, and the answer for every need. And He is available to every believer, for He lives in his heart and life. The answer and the power have already been given us in the power of the Holy Spirit.”²

Bullpen:

Signs and wonders are like the whistle blowing on a steam train. The steam doesn’t exist for the whistle; it exists to drive the train. But an offshoot is the whistle!

In Colossians and Ephesians, Paul gives a parallel passage, except that he switches one phrase: be filled with the Spirit for Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly. *To be filled with the Spirit means that the word of Christ dwells in us richly.*

- ^{5:18} ...be filled with the Spirit. ¹⁹ Speak to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord, ²⁰ always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.
- ^{3:16} Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God.

² Charles Ryrie, quoted in John MacArthur, *The Silent Shepherd*, 6.