

Pastor Robert Rutta

The Filling of the Holy Spirit

Luke 11:13

The filling of the Holy Spirit is one of the most misunderstood ideas concerning the ministry of the Spirit today.

Many have different teachings or explanations of what this really is. Since this term has been so misunderstood, it is important that we look to the Bible **for what God has to say** concerning this very important part of the Spirit's ministry. One of the greatest works that the Holy Spirit wants to do is to fill us.

In Luke 11:13 Jesus is teaching us concerning prayer and our relationship to the Father. He tells us in the latter part of this verse that our Heavenly Father longs to give us the Holy Spirit if we will simply ask Him.

Absolutely nothing can be accomplished for God apart from the power and work of the Holy Spirit.

Even Jesus Christ performed His great and mighty acts upon this earth through the power and filling of the Holy Spirit of God.

When Jesus defeated Satan during His temptation following forty days in the wilderness, He did it through the Spirit.

In Luke 4:1, "And Jesus being full of the Holy Ghost returned from Jordan, and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness..."

And then after the temptation the Word of God tells us
"And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee..."

Luke 4:14.

(He was led of the Spirit into the wilderness and returned in the power of the Spirit.)

Zacharias, Elisabeth, and John the Baptist were all filled with the Spirit. Luke 1:15,41,67
The book of Acts refers many times to the disciples being filled again and again with the Spirit.

I. What is the Filling of the Holy Spirit?

A. It is a command from God.

Ephesians 5:18

This is not optional for the believer.

God clearly commands us to be filled.

We are indwelt by the Spirit of God when we get saved, but God commands us to be filled with the Spirit.

Here we have a command and a contrast.

It is contrasting two different lifestyles.

Paul contrasts it to being drunk.

A person is considered drunk when the alcohol in his body begins to influence what he does and it causes him to lose control.

[We need to make it very clear that the Bible always speaks of alcohol as wrong.

Prov 20:1 "Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging: and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise."

It's only purpose is to lead people to sin.

No one ever draws closer to God through its use.]

God calls for us to do the exact opposite – to be filled with the Spirit.
When we are filled with the Spirit, we have complete control.

Some of the charismatic groups talk of being “drunk in the Spirit” to try and explain their unbiblical actions.

They surrender all control of themselves and end up acting foolishly.
That is NOT the Holy Spirit.

[They are either surrendering the control of their body to the flesh or worse, but not to God.
I dare you to read through the Bible and find an example of someone that is worshiping God in that way.
We see that loss of control in the pagan worship of idols, but not in the worship of God.]

B. It is something that can be gained or lost - not automatic.

There are some works of the Holy Spirit that you can never lose:

- Regenerated
- Baptised into the Body of Christ
- Indwelt
- Sealed

But this fullness is something that can be lost.
That is why God commands us to do it.

This is why the Scriptures are filled with warnings and exhortations to be watchful.

Eph 5:15-18

He is saying, “Be careful how you live.”

We are to be watchful and not allow sin to slip into our lives.

To be filled with the Spirit is to be empowered by Him.
We must yield ourselves unto Him and allow Him to be in control.

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A good way to picture the filling of the Spirit is to ask, “Why do you fill the tank of your car with petrol?”

- To get from one place to another
- To get a job done.

That is why the Holy Spirit will fill a person.

If:

- You want to serve God
- You want to obey Him
- You want to grow spiritually
- You want God to use you

Then the Holy Spirit will give you the strength to do it.

He only fills you if you want.

You don't keep adding petrol to a car that you never drive.

If it is broken or it just sits there, then you put petrol in another car to get the job done.

Throughout the NT the believer is told:

- To yield to God

- To submit
- To surrender.

Romans 6:13

“Neither yield ye your members *as* instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members *as* instruments of righteousness unto God.”

Romans 12:1

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, *which is* your reasonable service.

2 Corinthians 8:5

And *this they did*, not as we hoped, but first gave their own selves to the Lord, and unto us by the will of God.

James 4:7

Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

God never forces us to do any of those things.

Remember, God wants us to ask Him.

It should be the normal state of the believer.

Unfortunately that is not the case.

Most Christians today are not filled with the Spirit.

(They are still indwelt by the Spirit and they are still saved, but they have a life that has no power.

Like the Israelites in the wilderness.)

Many believers live out their lives in the power of the flesh rather than in the power of the Holy Spirit.

The filling of the Spirit is by choice and not by necessity.

God intends for every believer to live a victorious life for Him through the power of the Spirit of God!

If our lives are filled with defeat after defeat it isn't God's fault...He has given us all we need to live the abundant life.

Inside the believer there are two powers striving for control – the flesh and the Spirit.

Some believers are dominated by the flesh and are carnal.

Others are dominated by the Holy Spirit and are spiritual.

The more of our lives that we submit to the Holy Spirit, the more we will be filled with Him.

II. What are the Results of Being Filled?

There will be a **difference in our worship.**

Ephesians 5:19-20

Worship is the natural result of being filled with the Spirit.

That means that a Spirit-filled believer will have the desire to worship the Lord.

In our society it seems that people come to church wanting to be entertained rather than wanting to worship.

If we aren't filled with the Spirit, it is expected that they would simply seek entertainment.

Eph 5 goes on to speak to show us that

There will be a **difference in our family.** (Instructions are given to husbands and wives)

Ephesians 5:21-6:4

There will be a **difference on the job.**

Ephesians 6:5-9

III. What is Necessary to be Filled With the Spirit?

1. We need to be dedicated to Him.

To be filled with the Spirit, we need to empty ourselves of our own goals and completely dedicate ourselves to Him.

“Ye cannot serve God and mammon.” Matt 6:24

You cannot follow the world and God at the same time.

“Present your bodies a living sacrifice.” Rom 12:1

Quit trying to run your life and turn it over to God.

“Be not conformed to this world.” Rom 12:2

2. We need to be controlled by Him.

The Spirit filled life is the Spirit controlled life.

We are to walk in the Spirit and pray in the Spirit – to do these things with His help, direction and power.

We need to recognize that we walk in His strength, not ours.

3. We need to ask for His power.

“Ye have not because ye ask not.”

Acts 4:31

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.

Prayer was a distinct part of this.

- They prayed
- They were filled
- They spoke the Word with boldness.

Speaking for the Lord is often seen in the Bible when a person is filled with the Holy Spirit.

I challenge you to look through the Book of Acts and see the number of times that it says someone is filled with the Spirit and their immediate reaction is to speak out and tell others of Christ.

Acts 4:8

⁸ Then Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost, said unto them, Ye rulers of the people, and elders of Israel

Are you filled with the Spirit? You can be! If you are a child of God then you ought to be!