Grace to You :: *Unleashing God's Truth, One Verse at a Time*

Be Filled with the Spirit, Part 1
Scripture: Ephesians 5:18
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Let's look together at Ephesians 5:18-21, you follow in your Bible as I read, "And be not drunk with wine, in which is excess, but be filled with the Spirit; Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord; giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God."

Let's pray together. Father, thank You for this great word and Lord I feel somewhat inadequate ah, even to deal with such a grandiose concept as the filling of the Spirit, and yet I know Lord how practical and essential it is and that it is indeed a command, and so Lord give Your wisdom as I speak and wisdom to those who hear that we might be obedient and comprehend the fullness of this that You say to us, in Christ's name. Amen.

Now, you will remember if you've been with us for any time that we are discussing the book of Ephesians verse by verse and have been for a long time now but, we have, have found out that we are to walk a worthy walk, we are to live a certain lifestyle, that God has defined for us the perimeters of our living very, very clearly and we've gone through 4, 5, and 6 or 4 and 5 of Ephesians and we'll go through chapter 6 in the future, and we find that all of these chapters really describe how the Christian is to live. And the key to how the Christian lives in right here in chapter 5 verse 18. Do you realize that if 5:18 was not in the Book of Ephesians the book of Ephesians could never be fulfilled? If this one verse was deleted from this book everything in it would be legalistic. If this one book was removed you would be the great engine, the great vehicle described in chapters 1 to 3, you would still have your road map in chapters 4, 5, and 6 but you wouldn't have any fuel to get you going anywhere. You'd be functioning completely in the flesh apart from this beautiful statement in chapter 5 verse 18, "Be filled with the Spirit." That is the heart of the whole matter. That is the energy of the worthy walk. That is the key to living the Christian life. That's at the bottom of all of it; you can never walk in humility, you can never walk in unity, you can never walk different that the world walks, you can never walk in light, you can never walk in love, and you can never walk in wisdom unless you are energized by the Spirit of God. The life of God in the soul is the only thing that can produce that kind of living, you see. If that weren't true then unregenerated people could live like that.

And so this is the heart of the matter in verse 18, it opens up to us horizons of tremendous understanding. And by the way I guess we'd have to say that ah, if you don't obey chapter 5 verse 18 you're the biggest fool of all. In verse 15 it says, "See that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise." And the biggest fool of all would be the one who tried to walk a humble oneness, a unique kind of life, walk in love, walk in light, walk in wisdom, fulfill all the will of God and do it in the flesh, that's the biggest fool of all. A Christian must do it in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Now what does it mean to be filled with the Spirit? Well many people are confused about this. Some people think it means you get some divine zap. Some people think that this is what happens when you speak in tongues and you know there are people who say, “Well have you been filled with the Spirit?” They sort of isolate you. They have the zapped and the unzapped; you know if you've had some kind of ecstatic experience you've got it, if you haven't you don't, and there's a lot of you know, variation and discussion about this concept. There are people on the one hand who say it's when you get some ecstatic zap and there are people on the other hand who approach it very stoically and simply recognize it as ah, the idea that the Holy Spirit is present and so forth and so on, it has very little impact on anything practical. But both are wrong, it is not a stoic kind of thing and it is not an ecstatic zap, it's not either one. The filling of the Spirit is a very profound reality and we want to understand it as best we are able, as we share this morning.

Now let's look at three points just to give you a framework for what we're going to say. We are going to look at the contrast, the command and the consequences. Now we've already looked at the contrast, we're going next time to look at the consequences; so today we're going to focus on the command itself, and the command is, "Be filled with the Spirit." That's the command. Now let me just mention the contrast for you that may have forgotten or may not have been here.

First the contrast in verse 18, "Be not drunk with wine, in which is asotia," or dissipation or debauchery or hopeless incurable sickness, and that's what that leads to, "But be filled with the Spirit." There is the contrast between drunkenness and being filled with the Spirit. And we've tried to point out to you in the last couple of weeks that drunkenness was a method used in pagan religions to induce a supposed communion with the deities. In other words it isn't a social issue that he's talking about primarily, although that certainly is true ah, before you were a Christian you might get drunk, when you become a Christian you shouldn't, it's true in a social element, but it's a theological issue that, that he really focuses on. The pagans would be drunken and thus they felt they would induce a high level of religious consciousness and commune with the gods. And I mean when they got drunk they really got drunk; they would even vomit so that they could drink more, and we have even discovered archaeologically that there are places where they had pits for just that purpose. They would induce a, a stupidity of drunkenness that they believed would elevate them to commune with the gods, and the Apostle Paul is contrasting that very starkly by saying, you commune with God, you go through your worship of psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, you live your lives of wives submitting to husbands and husbands loving wives etc. You do all of this not as it is induced by

drunkenness but as it is induced by the filling of the Spirit of God, you see. Completely different. Paul points out that we find our joy and we find our exhilaration and we find our communion with God, we find the basis of our worship, the motivation for our liturgy if you want to call it that from being filled with the Holy Spirit. They are evil, vile, orgiastic, debauched, liturgy of, of ah, evil music connected with evil dancing connected with sexual immorality was induced by drunkenness. Our true worship, our beautiful music, our communion with God is brought on by the power of the Holy Spirit. And so the, the stark contrast between the drunken orgiastic worship of the pagan systems and the Spirit filled beauty of the worship of the true God is in the mind of Paul, and he's saying, as a Christian you've got to leave that stuff and you've got to come to this point, that you're filled with the Spirit.

Now this is a common contrast in the Scripture, look at Luke 1:15 for example. It says in Luke 1:15 regarding John the Baptist, and we discussed this at length in an earlier message, "For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord," and here is one of the things that will characterize him, "Shall drink neither wine nor strong drink; but he shall be filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother's womb." There's that same contrast; he won't be a drinker, he will be Spirit filled, he will not have his religious attitudes induced by wine and strong drink but by the Spirit of God, he will not be influenced on the inside by drinking but by the Spirit of God, he will not be motivated by what alcohol does to his brain but by what the Spirit of God does to his mind. In other words he will be guided by the Spirit of God in contrast to that which guides so many people in drunkenness.

Look at Acts chapter 2 and we find the same contrast again. On the day of Pentecost you'll remember it says in chapter 2 verse 4 that "They were all filled with the Holy Spirit," they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they began to speak with other languages, as the Spirit gave them utterance." And here were the disciples and they began to speak all these languages and it even names the languages over in verse 9, it lists the various languages again in verse 10 and verse 11, and they were speaking all of these wonderful works of God in languages they'd never learned. The Lord miraculously gave them the ability to do that and, and the point was, when they were filled with the Spirit at the day of Pentecost this is what happened. So being filled with the Spirit they did this, but the people said, in verse 12, "They were all amazed, perplexed, and they said, What meaneth this? And others, mocking, said, These men are full of (gleukous) new wine." This is just another pagan orgy, this is just a typical Gentile pagan kind of religious activity, see. They were seeing it and to a Jew it would be a very distasteful thing, of Gentiles who induced their worship through drunkenness. This is just that; they have stooped to a Gentile kind of worship, they have stooped to a paganism, they expressed their worship to God in this unacceptable manner, and it's a mocking thing. In other words they must have set out to get drunk.

Gleukous was fresh wine. And they say here it is early in the morning and they're already bombed on the fresh kind of wine, they're mocking them, boy they've induced this drunkenness, these are typical pagan activities, and so they mock them. And then they say “Who wants to listen to what they have to say?” Peter stands up and says in verse 15, "These are not drunk, as you suppose." This is not

drunkenness; this is the filling of the Spirit. But the world in its stupidity sometimes doesn't know the difference between the expression of a pagan worship and that that is real. And so the comparison is used several times.

Now let's go back to Ephesians 5:18 and we find the same comparison again, "Be not drunk with wine, in which is excess, but be filled with the Spirit." And I'm sure Paul has in his mind the account at Pentecost. I'm sure he's looking back and thinking of that very thing. The day when the apostles and disciples were first filled with the Spirit of God they did things which looked to others as if they were drunk and exercising a pagan style of worship. And so there's the contrast.

Now let's look at the command, and we're just going to spend our time on this and it's just a tremendous truth. Many of you know this and you've studied it before but many of you haven't and many of you are new and, and so we want to take our time and share these thoughts with you, just a tremendously rich command. Look at it in verse 18, "Be not drunk with wine, in which is excess, but be filled with the Spirit."

Now what he's saying is that this is something that I demand of you, this is a command. There is in the Greek language an indicative mode which is the statement of fact and there is an imperative mode which is a command, this is an imperative. Be, being, kept filled with the Spirit. This is a command for the believer. This is not an option, this is not a suggestion; God rarely if ever has made a suggestion. He makes commands and He states facts, He doesn't deal in suggestions. In fact there are very few optional things with God, this is not one, this is a command. And you know it concerns me deeply that many so called Christians never know what it is to be filled with the Spirit. Do you know there are, there are some Christians who are never really committed to this principle. And all of us at some times in our lives fail to fulfill it, but it is no less a command.

And you know I really worry about this because today you know there's a lot of material coming out and there's a lot of literature and there's a lot of discussion about the fact that you can be a Christian and not even bother with any of these things. There’s a sort of a new category in the middle. Over here you've got the natural man, unsaved, unregenerate, on the way to hell. Over here we've got the spiritual Christian, loves the Word, loves the Lord, obeys the Lord, walks in the truth, walks in the commandments, walks in the light. And in the middle you've got this new box that you can stick people, they're the saved and indifferent, you know? They got them out of hell but they're never going to get them into much kind of Christianity, I mean they're just sort of the uncommitted.

Ah, I, I ah, read yesterday an article by a prominent theologian who says, these are the people who ah, who are saved but never walk in the light. I don't understand that myself, I can't quite comprehend that if you were saved out of darkness into the Kingdom of His dear Son and if we walk in the light as He is in the light I don't know what that's supposed to mean. But anyway what he was saying was, they come, they're saved but they never get out of the darkness. They're saved but nothing ever

happens and we've made a little convenient box, we've got the natural and the spiritual and the carnal. We just jam everybody in there and we can say, “Well you're all right, you're saved, you're going to go to heaven. It's okay if you don't choose to really get on with the Christian life uhm, you know you'll still make it all right, you're not going to lose your salvation, you'll go waltzing into heaven and you just won't have as big a place as the rest of us but that'll be all right, it's heaven after all.” And you have that very comfortable category, but you know that isn't the way it is, with God. The Lord doesn't say, “Now if you want to be one of the committed then do this, if you just want to be in the carnal box it's an option.” He doesn't deal like that; this is a standard that God established, and I don't think the Lordship of Christ is optional, I think it's essential to saving faith. And I don't want to pile people up in a comfortable little box that says you can be a Christian and not do anything.

Listen, the Lord has commanded us to be filled with His Spirit and anything less than that is flat out flagrant disobedience, and if your life is characterized by that kind of disobedience First John says you're not a Christian no matter what you think. So this is critical people. True Christians whose faith is real will not be content to deny the Lordship of Christ. True Christians who faith is real will not be content to deny the filling of the Spirit of God. They will not be content to live comfortably in a carnal box where they can just sort of say, “Well I'm one of those who doesn't choose to go to step two.” No. I think this is a command and I think it's a command because God says it binds itself on every believer, and the only thing to do with a command of God is obey it.

Now let's talk specifically about the meaning of filling. What does it mean? Okay, what does it mean? I'm going to give you several thoughts here so I think you'll find this fascinating. And I want you to get the basics clear, all right? So let's start at the ground floor, okay? First point, every Christian possesses the Holy Spirit in all His fullness, all right? Every Christian possesses the Holy Spirit.

Recently I heard a Christian say, “Ohh, you know I've been a Christian for a long time and I just found out that I didn't have the Holy Spirit. And since I, I asked God, He gave me the Holy Spirit everything has changed.” Yeah, well you've been a Christian a long time but you didn't have the Holy Spirit? Well you know bless that person's heart, I heard what they were saying and I understand it was a, you know that they-what they discovered in their life was what obedience will do for you not getting the Holy Spirit. The point is this, every Christian from the moment he believes possesses the Holy Spirit. There is no such thing in existence as a Christian without the Holy Spirit. You see it is the life of God in you that, that is the redeeming reality. When you become a child of God, God takes up residence by His Spirit within you. There’s no such thing as a Christian without the Spirit of God.

Let me show you that. Look at Romans 8:9, Romans 8:9. I'm going to try to approach it from maybe a little different angle, but Romans 8:9 is a fascinating Scripture. By the way, most of the time that the word carnal or fleshly is used in the Bible it's used to speak of unsaved people, not Christians. And here's a good illustration, "Carnal mind" he says in verse 7 "is enmity against God; is not subject to the law of God, neither can be. So, then, they that are in the flesh, or carnality, can't please God."

Here carnal means unsaved; here he's saying if you're carnal you're unsaved. People say, well I'm just a carnal Christian. The reality may be you could be a carnal Christian a la First Corinthians 3 or you could be carnal period, a la Romans 8 and not even saved at all. So if you, if you're comfortable with your carnality you'd better examine yourself to see whether you're really saved, because it's just as possible that you're carnal, Romans 8 rather than carnal First Corinthians 3. There can be Christians who act carnally, but carnality is mostly characteristic of unbelieving people. They're, they are at enmity against God, they are not subject to the law of God, they can't be subject to the law of God, they can't please God. But verse 8, "You are not in the flesh but in the Spirit." If you're a Christian you're in the Spirit, if you're a Christian you're not in the flesh. Now look at the end of-then he says, "If so be that the Spirit of God dwells in you." In other words, you are, when you're a Christian you are in the Spirit, because the Spirit of God dwells in you, and then at the end of the verse, "Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." Do you see? If you don't have the Holy Spirit it's not that you're carnal, it's not that you haven't gotten Him yet, you're not saved. If anybody doesn't have the Spirit of Christ he doesn't belong to Christ. Transverse, if anyone belongs to Christ he has the Spirit of Christ, do you see? It's a simple statement. The end of verse 9, "Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. But if Christ be in you," verse 10, see? In other words if you're a Christian with Christ in you, you possess the Holy Spirit. I just want you to get that from the very beginning. Some of you are new Christians and you might not understand that. You as a Christian possess the Spirit and He's there in fullness, He's there in totality. There's no doses, you don't get Him in bits and pieces, you don't have to say, oh God, I've heard people say, give me more of Your Spirit. There isn't any more to get, He doesn't come in units, He's there totally. Every believer possesses the Spirit.

Now look at First Corinthians 12:13, another important verse dealing with the same reality. First Corinthians chapter 12 verse 13. Now here again we have the same emphasis and it's quite interesting to me to know that the Corinthians were carnal Christians. Their carnality was the carnality of, of the Christian. They were Christians living like they weren't Christians in many cases, and I'm sure some of them weren't Christians at all they were just faking it. But he says to those, even though they were sinful people, even sinful Christians he says, "For by one Spirit were we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Greeks, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink one Spirit." The word into is best left out. We have been all made to drink one Spirit. All believers have taken in the Spirit; all believers have been baptized into the body of Christ. And beloved let me hasten to tell you that the baptism of the Spirit is not an experience, the baptism of the Spirit is non-experiential, you don't feel it, you don't know it happens, you can't experience it, nothing happens to you physically speaking when that occurs, because here it tells us that by one Spirit were we baptized into the body of Christ. The baptism of the Spirit of God is the act by which the Holy Spirit puts you into the body of Christ when you believe; it is a theological reality, it is not an experience it is an act by which Christ; the baptizer, through the agency of the Spirit, places you in the body. So when you're saved you're put in the body of Christ, and then the end of the verse says, "and you drink the Spirit." That is you take in the Holy Spirit. Every believer, it says it right there, we were all baptized

and we have been all made to drink one Spirit. There’s no Christian who hasn't taken the Spirit. None. We all possess the Holy Spirit.

Now go back to chapter 6 verse 19. I Corinthians 6:19. Now here he's telling the Corinthians about their, their immorality. They were committing fornication, they were going to bed with harlots, ah, they were doing just rotten, evil, vile things, and he says to them, "What?" And you expect him to say, why don't you get the Holy Spirit, so you can get your life cleaned up? But he doesn't say that. He doesn't say, what you Christians need is the Holy Spirit. Well if you'd just get the Holy Spirit you wouldn't have this problem, no he doesn't say that. On the contrary he says this, "What? Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you?" he says, “look,” he doesn't say, “If you'd just get the Holy Spirit you wouldn't act like that,” he says, “You'd better stop acting like that because you're defiling the Holy Spirit who's already there, do you see? Don't you know your body's the temple of the Holy Spirit? Don't you know you're defiling the Spirit of God who's in you?”

You see even when a Christian lives in sin the Holy Spirit is still there, do you see the point? He's still there, He's just defiled there. Or if you want, Ephesians 4:30 he says, "Grieve not the Spirit of God." Or First Thessalonians 5:19, "Quench not the Spirit." You can quench the Spirit, you can pour the water of your sin on His fire of holiness. You can grieve the Spirit. By the way, the Spirit is “He” not “it.” He is a personality and He sorrows and He grieves and He is anguished by our sin, and He is defiled when the temple, which is our body, is defiled. So you see every believer possesses the Spirit, "If any man have not the Spirit, he's none of his." Every believer is baptized into the body and drinks of the Spirit. Every believer is the temple of the Spirit of God. Galatians 2:20 puts it another way, he says, "For I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth where? In me." You see? The Spirit of Christ lives in me. Look at John chapter 7. You know, when I first understood this doctrine it was the most mind boggling truth imaginable to me. That the God of the universe, the very God of very God, God Himself sovereign, almighty and majestic, could take up residence in my body, was an inconceivable reality to me. What a thought. And that is exactly the truth of the New Testament. In John 7:37, "In that last day, the great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth on me, as the scripture said, out of his heart shall flow rivers of living water."

Now who gets the rivers of the living water? He that believes, anybody that believes, anybody that comes and says, “I'm thirsty and I want to drink” and takes Christ gets the rivers. And what are the rivers of water? Verse 39, "This spoke he of the Spirit, whom they that believe on him should receive." Stop right there. Who gets the Spirit? They that, what? Believe. You see it's the simple act of saving faith that gives you the Holy Spirit, He becomes the river of living water, and He takes up permanent residence in our lives. And you can never lose that. The Spirit is a permanent resident in the life of the believer. And that's why, now listen, that's why of all the commands in the New Testament, and there are myriads of them. Of all the commands in the New Testament listen to this, there is never a command to be baptized with the Spirit, never, never. There are seven references to

the baptism of the Spirit in the New Testament. Not one of them is in the imperative mode, not one of them is a command. You are never commanded to be baptized by the Spirit because the baptism with the Spirit is when you're placed in the body of Christ and that happens at the moment you're saved.

Second, you are never commanded anywhere in the New Testament to be indwelt by the Spirit. Never. That is also a promise already guaranteed, you're never commanded to be sealed by the Spirit or kept secure, that is also a gift of God. Ephesians 1; you've already been sealed, you've already been baptized, you've already been indwelt, those are never given as commands. The command is this, Ephesians 5:18, "Be what? Filled with the Spirit." That's different. Not indwelt, baptized, or sealed but filled. You say, “Well what does it mean? Well in the first place it's the very opposite of the pagan kind of activity and the pagan ecstasy, but the verb means this. Let me give you the verb rendering in its literal sense and then I'll show you how it works out. It means to the literal present tense says, “be,” “it” Is a passive, be, being, kept filled with the Spirit. And the idea of be, being, kept is a constant, be, being, kept. You don't say, “oops I'm filled with the Spirit that does it I'm in for the rest of my life.” Be, being, kept filled, moment by moment by moment by moment, see? Day by day by day by day by day it's not a once for all, it's not a zapper here and a zapper there and a zapper there next year, it's moment by moment by moment by moment by moment, see? Be, being, kept continuously filled, it's passive, that is something fills you, you don't fill yourself, you receive the action, and it is the Spirit of God, the Spirit of God who fills you. Present tense; be constantly in the present tense being kept continuously filled by the Spirit of God. You may be baptized into the body, you may be indwelt by the Spirit. You may be sealed by the Spirit unto the day of redemption; but you know something? You can live your Christian life in defeat if you don't know what it is to experience moment by moment the be, being, kept continuously filled by the Spirit of God experience.

It expresses the idea of a moment by moment continual work. It's not some second thing that's good for the rest of your life. My being filled with the Spirit five minutes ago isn't any good for this moment. None. My being filled with the Spirit tomorrow isn't any good for today. It's moment by moment by moment.

Now, when you think of filling you think of a glass you know and you fill it or a box and you stick something in it or a container and you dump something in it, but that's not the idea. I'm going to give you three concepts to hang onto. The word pleroo is used of, of a wind filling a sail and billowing the sail out, and moving the ship along. You know when we say that the, the sails are filled with wind, and that's in Paul's mind for a beginning thought; to be carried along, to be carried along, a beautiful thought. To be moved along, to have the, the thrust of your life and the energy of your life and the pressure of your life be the power of the Spirit of God.

In other words you don't move in your own energy, you don't move in your own flesh, you don't move with your own ideas, you don't move into your own ideals, you don't generate your own will, you are

blown along under the wind of the Spirit of God. You are carried along the path that He will go. It's in a very real sense almost like those who wrote the Scripture who were borne along by the Spirit of God. It's as if you are nothing but a stick in a creek, and have you ever watched a stick when you were a little boy, you drop a stick in a creek and then run down and watch it come down, you're carried along by the Spirit of God. You're blown along like a sailboat in the wind; that's one thought. To be filled with the Spirit is to be carried along from day to day, from moment to moment, from enterprise to enterprise, from thought to thought, from word to word, from deed to deed, by the power of the energy of the Spirit of God. So it has the idea of, of pressure, of pressure of carrying you along in God's will.

There's a second one, and that's the idea of permeation. Pleroo is used sometimes of something which permeates, and I think a good illustration of that is salt. Salt permeates, in fact it permeates so well that if you put enough of it on something it will preserve it, won't it? But when you want to eat something and you put all that salt on it, it gives it flavor; it permeates the whole thing so that the whole thing is flavored. I used to use the illustration also of a fizzie, and if you've read my little book called, "Found: God's Will" you've read about the fizzie principle. Fizzies were a, kind of a flavored Alka-Seltzer, a little uhm, thing about the size of an Alka-Seltzer only they made them in grape and orange and root beer and cherry and all of that, you know and you'd get a little deal of those things and you'd drop them in a glass of water and they'd phwww! You know, like an Alka-Seltzer does and they'd fill it up and it was permeation you know. You put a grape fizzie in there and the whole glass of water tastes like grape juice and what it did was flavor the water, and pleroo is used in that sense. There's the sense in which the Spirit of God wants to flavor your life so that you taste like the Spirit of God, and so that when anybody gets next to you the flavor of your life is that of God, so that being with you is like being with God, you see. So it's the idea of, of pressure to move you along and it's the idea of permeation so that, you know when somebody gets around you they think maybe they've been with Jesus, because He flavors your life. But the dominant thought here in my mind as compared with the Gospel record particularly, the dominate use of pleroo is to speak of control, to speak of total control. That's kind of the idea, you've got the idea of moving along, you've got the idea of permeation, but the control idea is the key.

Let me see if I can illustrate it to you. Whenever in the Gospel record the writer wants to talk about somebody who, who just is dominated by an emotion he will use the word pleroo which is used here. In other words in, in John 16:6 it says, "They were filled with sorrow." In other words sorrow to such a degree that it can't be balanced off by happiness and they're just totally sorrowful.

Now let me give you an illustration to help you understand this, ah, most of the time we can kind of balance things in our life, can't we? Take the concept of sorrow, okay we've got sorrow over here on the scale and happiness over here, right? And we go through life and a little bit of sorrow and then we think of something happy, see. Or, well it's not going too well at home I think I'll go to the office, see, and it's better, no it's not going too well at the office I think I'll go home, see? We balance this thing

off. You know we talk about sad things, and we don't want to talk about it anymore let's talk about something happy, see? We do like this see. But every once in a while we can't keep that balance, you know? The person we love the most dies, phoom, see. All of a sudden the scale is all the way down on the sorrowful side and nothing anybody says and nothing anybody does can take away the sorrow. Filled, and that's when that word would be used. It’s totally dominating. On the other hand you're going along happiness over here and sadness over here, Aunt Martha dies and leaves you fifty thou-whoaa on the happy side, you know and it doesn't matter, the world can go down the tubes I got fifty thou, see? Never expected it, now all of a sudden you're filled with happiness, and that's the concept of the word, you're totally dominated by it and you don't need any equilibrium and the saddest thing going on around you is totally uninteresting to you, you're happy. And that's the way life goes, you know. Ah, there may be things that keep us secure and things that scare us and give us fear and we go along a little bit and, and oh you know, a husband gets a raise and we get a new house and the kids are doing great and we feel so ... we're filled with security.

On the other hand some disaster happens, terrible, we’re scared to death, you know it is the middle of the night and somebody is poking around the windows and whoa, see? You know that's, that's pleroo it's to be controlled by that emotion so that you no longer can keep your balance. You’re out of it, you're out of control, you're controlled by that which influences your thinking and your emotion. Now the same thing is true with how we live the Christian life. You know this is the way most of us go, here's self over here and here's the Holy Spirit, and we say a little bit for self, a little bit for the Holy Spirit, oh, little bit for me, see, and that we, we kind ... But all of a sudden at some point in time we yield to the Spirit of God and when totally self disappears and we're filled with the Spirit. Everything is controlled by Him, all of our emotions, all of our acts of will, all of our thinking processes, that's what it means to be filled with the Spirit, you see. That's the heart of the matter. It is the idea of being moved along, it is the idea of being permeated so you have the flavor of Jesus Christ, but it is also the idea of being controlled by, and a firm hand of control.

Let me give you an illustration, look at Matthew 4:1. Matthew 4:1 says this, "Then was Jesus led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tested by the devil." Now here's the Holy Spirit operating in the life of Jesus, and the Holy Spirit it says, led Jesus, He led Jesus, all right? Now let's go to Luke 4:1. He led Jesus in Matthew 4:1 to the temptation, in Luke 4:1 we have the same incident, the temptation, the same situation, but here it says, now watch, "And Jesus, being full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan, and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness."

Now what was the condition by which the Spirit led Him? He was what? Full of the Spirit. Do you see what being filled with the Spirit means? It means to be led by the Spirit, to be controlled by the Spirit. Now if you were to go to Mark chapter 1, Mark chapter 1, the same thing is dealt with again, the temptation of Jesus, and in Mark 1:12 it says, "And immediately the Spirit, and it uses the word ekballo, drives him into the wilderness." And that is a really strong word. He drove Him into the wilderness; He thrust Him into the wilderness. In other words, Jesus Himself was under the power of

the Spirit of God, so that the Spirit of God literally drove Him where He wanted Him to go. He was controlled by the Spirit of God, and that's why later on when they came to Jesus and they said, "What you do, you do by the power of Satan." He said, "You have blasphemed not me, but whom? The Holy Spirit." Why? Because He had yielded the control of His life to the power of the Spirit of God. He was full of the Spirit, and that's why He was driven by the Spirit.

Listen, to be filled with the Spirit, beloved, is that same thing; it's the idea of being driven by the Spirit of God, of being moved by the Spirit of God, of being permeated by the Spirit of God, of being controlled by the Spirit of God. That's the issue. And that's what we're talking about, we talking about living your life under the control of the Spirit of God, He's there and if you don't live that way you grieve Him on the one hand and you quench Him on the other hand. You grieve Him, that's how He personally feels sorrowful; you quench Him, that's how you restrict what He'd like to do, so you are really dealing with His person negatively and His purposes negatively. And by the way unless you're filled with the Spirit of God you're no use.

I used to use the illustration of a glove. If I have a glove laying here and I say, “Glove go play the piano,” what's the glove do? The glove doesn't play the piano it just sits there. If I put my hand in that glove and then play the piano, what happens? Chaos. March of the Wee Folk, you know? That was it, I quit after my first recital, went into baseball. But you know the glove, you put a hand in the glove and a glove just goes, the glove doesn't get pious and say, “Oh fingers show me the way to go.” It doesn't do that, and a glove doesn't fight you, you say, glove please respond, no the glove just goes. Well as a Christian you're a glove and you can lie around on the table and grunt till you die but you're never going to affect anything for God until you're filled with His Spirit. Because a glove can't do anything without a hand and you can't do anything without the energy of the fullness of the Spirit. Everything you try to crank out on your own is done in the flesh and is useless; it's at best stubble. Not gold, silver, precious stones. So what the Scripture is saying here is that you need to be filled with the Spirit of God to be effective. To fulfill the worthy walk, to fulfill the love walk, light walk, wise walk, to do anything for God, to walk in wisdom; you must be filled with the Spirit of God, you must be permeated by His person, you must be borne along by His power and you must be controlled by His presence.

Now let me show you something, you know unless you're that way you're useless to the Lord, I mean He can't do a thing with you, you're, it's a waste of time. Functioning in the flesh reaps absolutely zero. Whenever the Lord wants a job done He always gets somebody full of the Spirit. In Acts chapter 6 and verse 5 they needed some men for a special job, and so what were the qualifications? Acts 6:5, "And the saying pleased the multitude; and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit." They chose him because he was full of faith and full of the Holy Spirit. And it says in 7:55, "But he, being full of the Holy Spirit, looked up steadfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God." Boy, I'll tell you to be filled with the Spirit just takes you right out of this world, doesn't it? To be filled with the Spirit gives you a view of God to be filled with the Spirit detaches you from the system. To be filled with the Spirit means I could care less what

happens to me as long as He is glorified. It’s a transcending thing, it's a transcending reality, you move right out of the world, right out of your circumstances, right out of your vicissitudes, right out of your trials to see God, see. Whenever God wants a man for a job He wants a man full of the Spirit because it may wind up the man getting stoned and if he isn't filled with the Spirit he'll never be able to handle that.

Later on in chapter 9 He needed a man. He needed a man named Saul who was a tough nut to crack, frankly. He was a persecutor of the church but the Lord got a hold of him and the Lord had one basic condition for him in chapter 9 verse 17, "Ananias went his way, entered into the house; and putting his hands on him said, Brother Saul," this is after his Damascus Road experience, "Even Jesus, the Lord, has appeared unto thee in the way that thou camest, and he sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be what? Filled with the Holy Spirit." Saul, before you begin your work you've got to be filled with the Spirit or it'll be done in the flesh. Being filled with the Spirit beloved is just living one moment at a time under the control of the Holy Spirit. That’s all. It’s a yieldedness, it's a yieldedness, it's the emptying of me so that He can fill, see? You find further as you go into chapter 11 verse 22, the Lord needed a man named Barnabas to help a man named Paul, and when the Lord wanted to pick a man named Barnabas He had some conditions. Verse 22, "They sent forth Barnabas." Why Barnabas? Verse 24, "For he was a righteous man, and what? Full of the Holy Spirit." I mean it had to be that way, what else would God require? And later on you find in chapter 13 verse 9, "And Saul, filled with the Holy Spirit, set his eyes on him." Here he is sometime later still filled with the Holy Spirit. Chapter 13 verse 52, I love this, "And the disciples were filled with joy, and with the Holy Spirit." And what happened? "It came to pass in Iconium that they went both together into the synagogue of the Jews, and so spoke, that a great multitude, both of the Jews and of the Greeks, what? believed." Isn't that great? When God wants somebody to minister to His church, when God wants somebody to pioneer a missionary work, when God wants somebody to win people to Christ He finds somebody, what? Filled with the Spirit. Somebody who is borne along in the will of God by the pressure of the Spirit of God, permeated by the flavor of Jesus Himself, and somebody who's absolutely controlled by that power. That's the standard that God has set, people.

You say, well that's the meaning of filling, but what's the means? How do I get filled? Let me give you this real quick and we'll be done. How do I get the filling of the Spirit, how can I know this? If it's, if it's commanded. Well you know it's amazing, I hear people praying for the filling of the Spirit. You don't have to pray for it, it's not a prayer request it's a command. You don't say, “Lord, oh, I want to be filled.” He's up there saying, I want you to be filled, I want you to be filled,” and you're saying, “I want to be filled; I want to be filled,” see. There's sort of a roadblock there. If He gave you a command then you have the resources, right? And the resources to empty yourself of yourself, it's a matter of the confession of sin. But let me give you a simple way to look at it. It involves a surrender of your will, your intellect, your body, your time, your talent, your treasure everything to His control. It’s the death of self. It’s the crucifixion of self. It’s the slaying of your own self-will. It's the mortification of the members of your body. It’s the death of you. When you die He fills, when you empty yourself of

yourself, He'll fill it up, He'll fill it up.

Now let me give you an illustration of it, now look at Ephesians chapter 5 very quickly, you have in Ephesians chapter 5 verse 18 this statement, "Be not drunk with wine, in which is excess, but be filled with the Spirit." Now what happens when you're filled with the Spirit? Here's what happens; you'll speak to yourselves in psalms, hymns and spiritual songs, verse 19. Verse 20, you'll be thankful; you'll give thanks always for all things. Verse 21, you will submit yourselves to each other. Verse 22, Spirit filled wives will submit to their husbands. Verse 25, Spirit filled husbands will love their wives. Chapter 6 verse 1, Spirit filled children will obey their parents. Chapter 6 verse 4, Spirit filled fathers will not provoke their children to wrath. 6:5, Spirit filled servants will be obedient, and 6:9, Spirit filled masters will treat their servants right.

Now do you notice that, isn't it amazing? All this filling of the Spirit never produces anything ecstatic at all; it produces singing, saying thanks, submitting, and a whole lot of right human relationships. Nobody gets zapped and goes off the deep end, amazing. Nobody falls over flat on their back; nobody gets into some kind of ecstatic experience, what happens? Simple, all relationships become right. Your relationship with God is right because you sing and say thanks. Your relationship to other people is right because you submit whether it's in a marriage or family or in an employment situation; it's all very practical, it's all very clear, the filling of the Spirit affects all these relationships to God, to our families, to others.

Now let me show you something. Look at Colossians chapter 3; this is a parallel, this is a fabulous parallel, Colossians 3, now look, verse 16, it says in the middle of the verse, "teaching and admonishing one another," here we go again, just exactly like Ephesians 5, "psalms, hymns, spiritual songs." All right, verse 17, "Whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, give thanks." Now we go through the same routine again. It's condensed but it's all here, wives submit to your husbands, husbands love your wives, children obey your parents, fathers provoke not your children, servants obey your masters. And then in chapter 4 verse 1, "Masters, give your servants what is just and equal."

Now do you see that? The same sequence, you've got it all right there, you've got the singing, the saying thanks, the submissiveness, the wives, the husbands, the children, the father, the servant, the master, identical. Now well we know what produces this in Ephesians 5, the filling of the Spirit. What produces it here? Oh, it's different here, look at verse 16, "Let the word of Christ dwell in you what? richly, in all wisdom."

Now hang onto your seat folks, let me tell you something, being filled with the Spirit is the same thing as letting what? The Word of Christ dwell in you richly, do you see? It's got to be the same because it produces the same results. People say, “oh the filling of the Spirit is mystical, very mystical.” No, the filling of the Spirit is taking the Word that Christ has given us and letting it dwell where? In your heart.

If you want to be Spirit filled don't go sit in a corner somewhere and plead God. If you want to be Spirit filled feed yourself the Word of Christ, and as you're fed and filled with the Word and as it results in dwelling in you, plousios, abundantly, richly in fullness you'll find yourself coming under its control. Who is the author of the Word of Christ? The Spirit. And when you pour the Word in it becomes the thing that controls you. Like Spurgeon said, "Your blood will become Biblean." He's right. It's a simple thing and there's no reason to make it confusing. Being filled with the Spirit is simply letting the Word dominate my life. If you want to know what it is to be Spirit filled then feed yourself the Word of God, because when the Word goes in the Spirit has the truth with which to give you the direction and the guidance, you see.

A closing illustration, and I've used this many, many times. Peter. Peter wanted to be where Jesus was. I tell this story in my little book on God's Will. He wanted to be where Jesus was always, I mean I'm sure Jesus walked down the road and stopped and Peter ran into the back of Him. Peter trailed Him everywhere. The Lord went up in a mountain; Peter went up in a mountain. The Lord said, “will you go away?” He says, “where am I going to go?” Peter was always around. And so you know, I know why he was around, because when he was near Jesus three things stand out in the Bible, he did the miraculous, said the miraculous, and had miraculous courage. The first thing you know he, the first time you see Peter he, he's in a boat on the sea and boy it's nervous time, right? The storm and oh they're all alone and they're shaky and they're out in the middle of the Sea in the Galilee and all of a sudden they look off in the distance and here comes Jesus walking on the water. And then Peter thinks to himself, “I'm here, He's there that's no good, I've got to close the gap”, see, and he's going to go be with Jesus. Now he's been a fisherman all his life, lived on the shore of the Sea of Galilee, never walked on it yet. Every time he ever stepped into it he went right to the bottom. He knows that, it's never been any different and yet he jumps out of the boat and takes off across the water, he gets out a little ways and says, ha, ha, ha!!!! You know. Well ah ha, you see he was unconscious of what he was doing because his compulsion to be with Jesus absolutely overrode everything. He just was going to be where Jesus was, and of course he met Jesus and he for a while he started to sink and the Lord reached down and lifted him up and they walked back to the boat, you know, and I can just imagine, you know him walking along with Jesus back to the boat feeling pretty hot, you know hum, look at us fellas hum-hum, you know, see?

And ah, I'm-I always laugh because one writer wrote had a sandbar, that they were walking on a sandbar, but ah ... he's the same writer who said that there wasn't a great fish that swallowed Jonah either; that was just the name of the dinghy tied on the back of the ship. Of course my question was whoever heard of a dinghy that vomited, but anyway that's on the side. So anyway Peter and Jesus are walking, Peter and Jesus are walking to the, to the boat and, and you know what you have to admit that when Peter was near Jesus he could do the miraculous. I mean he couldn't walk on water but he could when he was near Jesus, right? The next time we see him in our little analogy he's gathered with the disciples, "And Jesus says, Who do men say that I am?" Matthew 16, "And they said, oh Some say you're Elijah, or Jeremiah, or one of the prophets. And he says, well who do you

say that I am? And Peter goes; Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." And I'm sure he thought to himself, where did that come from? You see Peter's mouth was available, a little while later in that chapter Satan used it, remember? And Jesus had to say, "Get thee behind me, Satan." His mouth was available, and then God used it, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." What a shock! And Jesus looked at him and said, "Flesh and blood didn't reveal that to you Peter, my Father in heaven did." My Father just used your mouth for a moment there. Well no wonder he wanted to be where Jesus was, he could do the miraculous and say the miraculous.

The third thing, he could have miraculous courage, in the garden you know all the soldiers came in to catch Jesus, capture Him, take Him to trial, and Jesus said, "Who seek ye?" And the whole Roman army fell over, fell over like dominos, flat on the ground. And Peter thought to himself, this is going to be easy, I mean one and, and they all fell over already. And so he's standing next to Jesus and he's getting more and more irritated and pretty soon he decides he going to just lash out. So he takes his sword and he starts with the first guy in line, he was going to go through the whole pile. There were maybe five hundred of them from Fort Antonius, he just whacks off Malchus' ear and he was going for his head but Malchus ducked, no question in my mind about it. He wasn't just going, got your ear, you know, that wasn't the idea, he was going for the whole deal. And he started with the first guy in line, he was going to work his way through the whole troop. We say, we who, where did you get the courage man, where did you get the courage? Well he knew that all he had to do was just look at Jesus and Jesus would go like that again and they'd all fall over, so he didn't have anything to worry about, see.

See he had the ability to do the miraculous, say the miraculous, have miraculous courage when he was near Jesus, no wonder that's where he wanted to be. No wonder when Jesus said, will you go away? He said, “Where would I ever go Lord?” And yet you know what happens the next time we see him? He's separated from Jesus, Jesus is inside being tried, he's outside washing his hands or warming his hand rather, and the Bible says three times he did what? He denied Him, isn't that awful? You know all it took for Peter was to get separated from Jesus and he was a failure. A great principle in that, isn't there? You say, he was a coward when Jesus was a hundred feet away or so? Yeah. The next thing that happened Jesus went to heaven, you say, ah, that's the end of Peter. He’s a coward at a hundred feet what's he going to do now? The Lord's clear back in heaven we might as well bury the guy. No, you know what he does? He stands up on the day of Pentecost and he says, "Ye men of Judea, and all ye at Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and hearken to my words." And he goes on to preach about Jesus whom you crucified as the Lord and Christ, and he preaches a fantastic masterpiece and God is using his mouth again and it's going with divine inspiration and he gets all done and "they were pricked in their hearts, and they cried out, what are we going to do? And he said, Repent, and be baptized, for the remission of sins, and you shall receive the Holy Spirit." And three thousands of them were. You know what you see him doing? Saying the miraculous again, he's opening his mouth and God's talking. The next time you see him he and John are going over to the temple to worship and there's a guy laying there he's been a beggar and he looks at him and he says,

"Silver and gold have I none, but, such as I have, give I unto thee. In the name of Jesus of Nazareth, rise up and walk." And the guy jumps up and jumps around and dances and goes right on through the temple doing all that. He not only could say the miraculous, he could do the miraculous and so they didn't like what he was doing and they dragged him in before the Sanhedrin and they said, “Stop preaching!” And he said to them, “You tell me whether I ought to obey you or God,” and he let him go and he went right out and started a prayer meeting and they prayed that God would give them more boldness and they went out and preached all the more.

Listen, it's amazing to me that when, when Peter was with Jesus he could do the miraculous, say the miraculous, had miraculous courage. Later on, when Jesus was clear back in heaven he could do the miraculous, say the miraculous, had miraculous courage, you say “what's the connection?” Before he ever stood up on Pentecost the Bible says in Acts 2:4, "They were all filled with what? The Holy Spirit." Now listen, here's the conclusion. Being filled with the Spirit is the same thing as living as if you're standing next to whom? Jesus Christ. Being filled with the Spirit is the same thing as letting the presence of Christ dominate your life. It's not a mystical thing people; it's filling myself with the Word of God so that the truth of Christ dominates my thinking, and then the Spirit of God as I yield to the truth of Christ in me will lead me to do and say and be what God wants me to be. More about that next week. Let's pray.

Father, I pray that You'll bring into the prayer room and the counseling room those that You want to come. Bring us back tonight Father, to meet You in a special way. Thank You for the Holy Spirit who lives in us and wants to fill us a moment at a time as we yield to the presence of Jesus Christ. Help us to practice His presence, to think Jesus from morning till, till night as we feed on His Word so that the Spirit can lead, so that we can be useful to You in Your purposes, for Your glory in Jesus' name. Amen.

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