

The Blessed Person and Work of God the Holy Spirit



Lesson 11--What are the Results of the Filling of the Spirit?

Every believer is either filled with the Spirit or controlled by the flesh. Either God is controlling the person's life or SELF is in control. Either God is steering the ship and is the Master at the helm, or the believer is steering the ship apart from Him and apart from His guidance.

In Galatians 5:16 we read, "This I say then, Walk in the _____ and ye shall not fulfill the _____ (strong desire) of the _____." If you are walking in the Spirit then you will not be fulfilling the lust of the flesh, and if you are fulfilling the lust of the flesh, then you are not walking in the Spirit. There cannot be two people steering the ship at the same time. Either the Spirit is in control or the flesh is in control. Either God is guiding and leading, or SELF is steering the ship according to the strong desires of the old nature.

Timothy McVeigh (April 23, 1968 – June 11, 2001) was an American terrorist who detonated a truck bomb in front of the Federal Building in Oklahoma City on April 19, 1995. Commonly referred to as the Oklahoma City bombing, the attack killed 168 people and injured over 600. It was the deadliest act of terrorism within the United States prior to the September 11 attacks, and remains the most serious act of domestic terrorism in United States history. McVeigh was executed by lethal injection. Before his death, Timothy McVeigh defiantly chose as his last words the famous poem by William Henley, entitled *Invictus* (unconquerable). It is the expression of a man who refuses to be under God's control:

Out of the night that covers me
 Black as the Pit from pole to pole,
 I thank whatever gods may be
 For my unconquerable soul.

In the fell clutch of circumstance
 I have not winced nor cried aloud.
 Under the bludgeonings of chance
 My head is bloody, but unbowed.

Beyond this place of wrath and tears
 Looms but the Horror of the shade,
 And yet the menace of the years
 Finds and shall find me unafraid.

It matters not how strait the gate,
 How charged with punishments the scroll,
**I am the master of my fate;
 I am the captain of my soul.**

Dorothea Day, a believer in Christ, wrote a parallel poem which answers the *Invictus* poem line by line. The conclusion of her poem is quite different:

Out of the night that dazzles me,
 Bright as the sun from pole to pole,
 I thank the God I know to be
 For Christ the conqueror of my soul.

Since His the sway of circumstance,
 I would not wince nor cry aloud.
 Under that rule which men call chance
 My head with joy is humbly bowed.

Beyond this place of sin and tears
 That life with Him! And His the aid,
 Despite the menace of the years,
 Keeps, and shall keep me, unafraid.

I have no fear, though strait the gate,
 He cleared from punishment the scroll,
**Christ is the Master of my fate,
 Christ is the Captain of my soul.**

As believers we thank God that Christ is the Captain of our souls, but the problem is that we do not always allow Him to steer the ship. We like to be in control. And often we refuse to yield to His control, and thus we refuse to submit to His leading and we quench His working.

The question we want to answer is this: How can I recognize whether or not I am filled with the Spirit? What are the evidences of the filling of the Spirit? In other words, if I am filled with the Spirit, how will this be evidenced? How will this be recognized?

The Bible makes it clear that we should be able to recognize whether or not a person is filled with the Spirit. In Acts chapter 6 the believers were told to select seven men who would serve tables: "Wherefore, brethren, look among you for seven men of honest report, full of the Spirit and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business" (Acts 6:3). In choosing these seven, the men had to meet certain qualifications, and one of the qualifications was that the man had to be filled with the Spirit, a spiritual man. It is apparent from this passage that it is possible to recognize whether or not a person is full of the Holy Spirit. They were to select such a person, a person who gave evidence that the Holy Spirit was controlling His life.

The Bible also makes it clear that we should be able to recognize when a person is controlled by the flesh. Galatians 5:19 says, "Now the _____ of the _____ are manifest...." The word "manifest" means "open to sight, visible, evident." If someone is walking in the flesh, you should be able to easily spot this. It is something that is clearly seen. It is dirty laundry hanging out for everyone to see.

[Note: While the works of the flesh are often visible and evident, they can also be deceptive. We cannot see what is going on inside a person's heart and mind. A person can appear to be spiritual, but his heart may not be right and his mind and thinking may be corrupt.]

The works of the flesh are often manifest and visible. See the list in Galatians 5:19-21. If you are guilty of adultery and unfaithful to your spouse, then we can safely say you are not filled with the Spirit. If you go out and get drunk (verse 21), then you are not filled with the Spirit (compare also Eph. 5:18). If you are walking in the flesh, you are not filled with the Spirit. The two are contrary one to the other. The flesh produces certain things; the Spirit produces certain things, and as you see the results, then it should be evident what the source is.

If the believer is walking in the Spirit and if the Spirit of God is controlling the life, what should be the result? "But the _____ of the _____ is love, joy, peace, etc." (Gal. 5:22-23). This is what the Spirit of God produces and we should be able to recognize this fruit, first in our own lives, and also in the lives of others. The fullness of the Spirit is evidenced by the fruit of the Spirit. If there is no fruit, then there is no filling. The filling results in fruit, that fruit which only God can produce.

Fruit is something that is visible and easily seen. It is easy to see the grapes or the apples or the pears. Fruit is not something that is hidden; it's out in the open. The eyes see it and it is manifest to all. "Let your _____ shine before men that they may _____ your good works and glorify your Father which is in heaven" (Matthew 5:16).

The disciples were to select servants or deacons who were filled with the Spirit, and this qualification should have been very evident to those with spiritual discernment.

The Context of Ephesians 5:18

In Ephesians 5:18 we find the important command to be _____ with the Spirit. We studied this in detail in our last lesson. The results of being filled with the Spirit are seen in the following verses. If a believer is really filled with the Spirit, then what should be true about his life? How will the fullness of the Spirit be evidenced?

Ephesians 5:19

Notice what it does **not** say, "Be filled with the Spirit, speaking to yourselves in tongues or in strange ecstatic utterances." Those of the Charismatic persuasion teach that speaking in tongues is the evidence of the filling of the Spirit and that if you have not spoken in tongues, then this indicates that you have not been filled with the Spirit. This is not what the Bible teaches.

What does Ephesians 5:19 teach? When God is in control, He gives a song in the heart. The Spirit filled believer is a joyful believer. The Holy Spirit is the Master Musician who creates beautiful melody in the heart of the trusting believer. It matters not if you can carry a tune. You may never be able to sing in a choir. There are believers who cannot carry a tune but they are able to make melody in their hearts to the Lord. The fruit of the Spirit is joy, and the Spirit filled believer is able to sing and to rejoice in the Lord always, even when passing through deep trials. God gives songs in the night.

Ephesians 5:20

The Spirit filled believer is a thankful believer. If you are unthankful, then you are unfilled. How thankful we can be that God is at the helm and guiding the ship of our life. How thankful we can be that He is in control of everything that comes into our lives and is able to work all things together for our good.

Ephesians 5:21 and the verses the follow

God is looking for a submissive heart. Every believer is to be submissive to Him. Wives are to be submissive to their husbands. Children are to be submissive and obedient to their parents. The employer is to be submissive to his boss. To find a submissive, Spirit-filled believer, where should I look? Not at church on Sunday morning when everyone tries to be on their best behavior. Not during a Charismatic prayer/praise session when everyone seems to be on a spiritual high. The best place to look is right where the believer lives during the week. For example, how does the believing employee react when the boss is having a bad day? When the husband comes home from work after a long and hard day and interacts with his wife and children, do we see him under the influence and control of the Holy Spirit at that time? How does the wife do after she has had a challenging day with the children, when she's totally worn out, and her husband comes home in a grumpy mood and

complains about the supper? Is she longsuffering ("the fruit of the Spirit is....longsuffering") or does she explode like Mt. Saint Helens? So the place to see the filling of the Spirit is right in the home, right in the work place, right where the rubber meets the road.

Barbara Ryberg wrote a poem entitled *The Greatest Test*:

Help me to walk so close to Thee that those who know me best can see
I live as godly as I pray and Christ is real from day to day.

I see some once a day, or year; To them I blameless might appear;
'Tis easy to be kind and sweet to people whom we seldom meet.

But in my home are those who see too many times the worst of me.
My hymns of praise were best unsung if He does not control my tongue.

When I am vexed and sorely tried and my impatience cannot hide,
May no one stumble over me because Thy love they failed to see.

But give me, Lord, through calm and strife a gracious and unselfish life;
Help me with those who know me best, for Jesus' sake, to stand the test.

Boldness to Speak the Word

Another evidence of the filling of the Spirit is boldness to speak God's Word without fear of consequences. We find this repeatedly in the book of Acts.

Acts 1:8 A witness is like an arrow. An arrow does not want to be seen; it merely wants to point to some other object. The arrow says, "Don't look at me; look at what I'm pointing to." The Holy Spirit gives the believer power to be His witness, to point to Christ, by life and by lip.

Acts 4:31. They were all _____ with the Spirit, and what was the result? They spoke the _____ of _____ with _____. They were bold witnesses for Christ. They were not afraid to speak of Him and share the good news with others. And remember, their boldness was very costly. They could easily have ended up in jail for speaking the gospel boldly. In fact, these believers had just been in jail because of their fearless preaching, and in chapter 5 they were going to end up in jail again!

Acts 4:8-12 Peter's bold message can be paraphrased: "You crucified Him! You rejected God's Stone! You murdered the only Saviour!" The filling of the Spirit resulted in very bold and fearless preaching.

Acts 13:9-10 Paul had boldness to confront the enemies of the gospel.

Acts 7:55 Stephen had boldness in the midst of persecution, and steadfastness even when being put to death by stoning.

An Example From Church History

Thomas Cranmer was the moving force of the Protestant Reformation in the middle of the 16th century in England. In 1555 he was excommunicated by the Roman Catholic Church in Rome. As pressures mounted Cranmer weakened and he even signed a statement in which he denied the Christian faith. At this time in his life he took his eyes off the Lord, and it's safe to say that he was not filled with the Spirit. Later, however, he renounced his denial and he did it in a way that his executioners would never forget. He was to be burned to death by orders from Queen Mary (who was strongly Catholic and who caused almost 300 people to be burned, thus earning for herself the name "BLOODY MARY"). Cranmer renounced his denial, and once more and in the strongest terms declared his faith in Christ. In dramatic fashion he showed how he felt about his denial of the principles of the Reformation. The hand which had signed the denial he held firmly in the flames until it was burned to a crisp. Then the flames scorched his body, and he died the death of a martyr. He could not have endured this kind of death apart from being filled with the Spirit. Cranmer was similar to Peter in that he failed his Lord but then later recovered in a wonderful way. See our study on [Peter's Three Denials](#).

Faith

Acts 11:24 Barnabas was "full of the _____ and of F_____." The fullness of the Spirit and faith go together. When God is in control, the heart of the believer is trusting and resting in a great God. "My heart is leaning on the Word, the written Word of God." The Spirit filled believer is known by his faith; the fleshly believer is known by his unbelief, his failure to trust God. The Spirit filled believer is protected by the shield of faith, and by the sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God.

The Ministry of the Holy Spirit

"He shall glorify me: for He shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you" (John 16:14). The main ministry of God the Holy Spirit is to **glorify the Son**, lift up the Son of God. When the Spirit of God is at work in my life, what will be the result? The Lord Jesus Christ will become more precious to me and so will His Word, the Bible. The Spirit-filled person is the person who is filled with Christ--occupied with Him, delighting in Him, rejoicing in Him, resting in Him, trusting in Him. A Christ-centered person is a Spirit-filled person; a self-centered person is a person who is walking in the flesh. The flesh wants to glorify self; the Spirit wants to glorify Christ.

Romans 14:17

We must never lose sight of what is essential and what is not really important. If a believer does not eat a pork chop, out of love for a fellow believer, he has not lost or

sacrificed anything essential. If a believer loses or sacrifices righteousness, then this is a serious problem. Whether or not you eat a hamburger is not important. However, if you are missing God's joy or God's peace, then this is a great concern to the person who is commanded to be constantly filled with the Spirit (Eph. 5:18 and compare Gal. 5:22-23). What is really important is not the FOOD that goes in but the FRUIT that is produced by God.

The "kingdom of God" in a general sense is wherever God reigns. In the future God will actually reign on this earth. At that time:

RIGHTEOUSNESS will be a reality in the world (Jeremiah 33:15).

PEACE will be a reality in the world (Isaiah 9:6-7).

JOY will be a reality in the world (Isaiah 65:18-19; compare the hymn "Joy to the World the Lord is Come," which is really a second advent hymn, describing the second coming of Christ more so than the first coming). Also Matthew 25:21,23 addresses those about to enter the kingdom with these words, "enter into the **joy** of the Lord."

Today where does God rule? He rules in the hearts of believers. Christ came the first time to set things right in the hearts of men. Christ will come the second time to set things right in the world. Today righteousness and peace and joy are not realities in our world, but they can be realities in our personal lives by way of the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23, "love, joy, peace"). Is righteousness a fruit of the Spirit? See Ephesians 5:9 and Philippians 1:11. "Oh, for the days when righteousness and love shall reign on this earth! But it will not be till the righteous One shall come back to judge iniquity and establish equity. Do not fancy otherwise, but read Scriptures about it. Only remember that the Holy Spirit is in you, believer, and He will bring forth Kingdom things, even now, in you" (William Newell, *Old Testament Studies*, Vol. 1, p. 219).

Question to Ask if the Results of the Filling of the Spirit are not Found in My Life

Is there unconfessed sin in my life? Is there any sin that I need to confess to others?

Am I grieving the Spirit by persisting in certain sins? Am I refusing to let go of certain sinful pleasures?

Am I clinging to certain habits which I know are not pleasing to the Lord?

Am I spending quality time with the Lord each day, by searching the Scriptures and by meeting with God in prayer?

Am I using my leisure time in profitable ways that will enhance my walk with the Lord or am I spending too much time with television or with my computer in ways which feed the desires of the flesh?

Am I walking in the Spirit? Am I depending upon the Lord for His help and ability, or do I go through the day trying to make it on my own? Do I recognize my need for His resources or do I depend upon my own resources? Do I recognize that without Him I can do nothing? Do I recognize that except the Lord build the house, my labors are in vain? Do I recognize that it's not by my might or by my power, but by the Spirit and by Him alone?

Am I quenching the Spirit? Am I hindering God's working in my life? Am I refusing to say "YES" to what God wants? Am I willing to do God's will no matter what it is? Is there an area of my life that I am not surrendering to Him? Does He have all of me, or am I holding back in some areas? Do I surrender to Him each day and say, "Lord, here I am, mold me, fill me, use me."

