

☞ **The Pursuit of the Holy Spirit, part two**

We are in pursuit of the Holy Spirit. We want more of his presence and power to be evident with us. I'm looking for more fruit of the Spirit in believers and more gifts of the Spirit in our Sunday Celebrations as well as out in the community.

☞ Last week focused on the initial event and **How to be baptized in the Holy Spirit: Believe, Desire, Ask, Expect**

This week we'll focus on how to keep on being filled with the Holy Spirit:

☞ **Ephesians 5:18-20**

Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit, 19 speaking to one another with psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit. Sing and make music from your heart to the Lord, 20 always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Drunk vs. Filled; Both: Walk differently; Talk differently; Act differently; Think differently; Feel differently. "Under the influence;" we want to be under the influence of the Spirit.

Basic question: How does a person get drunk? With a sip? If you carry the comparison, then to be filled with the Spirit requires more than a sip. God gives the Holy Spirit to those who are hungry and thirsty for his presence. To be continually filled with the Spirit we need to drink deeply of his presence.

Ephesians 5:18 ... be filled with the Holy Spirit...

Passive – "let yourself be filled"

Present – "let yourself keep on being filled"

Imperative – "I command you, let yourself keep on being filled"

☞ **How do you keep on being filled?**

v. 19... By singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs among yourselves, and making music to the Lord in your hearts. And give thanks for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

☞ **1. Exalt God** = singing; making music; praise and honor (...to the Lord)

☞ **Psalms** = **a song accompanied by an instrument** – we do this every Sunday morning; you can also play an instrument or a CD of worship songs. And, this can be just the instruments playing while we praise and worship God. You can even make up your own songs to the Lord. These are all psalms sung to God.

☞ **Hymns** = **a song of praise to God** or a prayer that is sung – pretty much all of our Sunday music falls into this category. We sing praises to God.

☞ **Spiritual songs** = any **song that is inspired by the Holy Spirit** – we would call this open worship, when the instruments play and we just sing spontaneously using whatever words come to mind. You can also use your spiritual language in this type of song.

1 Corinthians 14:15

I will pray with my spirit, but I will also pray with my mind; I will sing with my spirit, but I will also sing with my mind.

Also, there's a contrast in the original language between Hymns and Spiritual Songs. Hymns are typically part of the planned worship. Spiritual Songs have more of a spontaneous nature.

☞ **Sing and make music in your heart** = don't just go through the motions; don't just say the words; mean what you say; involve your heart.

John 4:23-24

Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. 24 God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in spirit and in truth.

We talk a lot about seeking after God. Here, we find that God is actually doing the seeking of certain people – People who will worship in spirit and in truth. If you are truly sincere in your worship and you are connecting with the Spirit as we sing, then God is looking for you!

This is a significant part of how we are continually filled with the Holy Spirit. If you are not participating in the music and worship, you're missing out on a fresh infilling of the Holy Spirit. Preaching speaks primarily to the mind. But worship with music connects your spirit with the Holy Spirit. So, to keep on being filled, Exalt God.

☞ **2. Express Gratitude** (v. 20 *Always giving thanks*)

Christians should be known as grateful people. Who has received better benefits than born-again believers?

☞ **Psalms 103:2-5**

Praise the Lord, O my soul, and **forget not all his benefits** — 3 who **forgives** all your sins and **heals** all your diseases, 4 who **redeems** your life from the pit and crowns you with **love** and **compassion**, 5 who **satisfies** your desires with good things so that your youth is **renewed** like the eagle's.

--*Vincent De Paul... We should spend as much time in thanking God for his benefits as we do in asking him for them.*

Let's practice... what are you thankful for?

1 Thessalonians 5:16-19

Be joyful always; 17 pray continually; 18 give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus. 19 Do not put out the Spirit's fire...

This suggests that an ungrateful attitude will actually work against the Holy Spirit continually filling you.

For everything = no matter what is happening in your life, be grateful and express gratitude ☞ to God. **There's always something to be thankful for.**

Romans 8:28

And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.

Knowing that God is always working for our good, let's always Express Gratitude and this will keep filling us with the Spirit.

☞ **Galatians 5:16-25** *(also gives us a couple of ways to keep on being filled)*

So I say, live by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature. 17 For the sinful nature desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the sinful nature. They are in conflict with each other, so that you do not do what you want. 18 But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under law. 19 The acts of the sinful nature are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; 20 idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions 21 and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God. 22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. 24 Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the sinful nature with its passions and desires. 25 Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit.

☞ **3. Eliminate the Sin**

I already mentioned that we can put out the Spirit's fire when we are ungrateful. And, Ephesians 4:30 says we can grieve the Holy Spirit when we are angry and unforgiving with each other. Now here, in Galatians 5 it is basically saying that sinful behavior is the opposite of being Spirit-filled. This seems like a no-brainer, but we need constant reminders.

v. 19 -21, 24 (Ephesians 5:3-12 and Colossians 3:5-10 are similar passages)

☞ **Sexual immorality** = any sexual activity outside of marriage; including pornography.

Impurity = anything evil; including thoughts and actions.

Debauchery = following your own evil desires to the point of having no shame.

Idolatry = allowing anything to take precedence over God.

Witchcraft = sorcery, spiritism and even the use of illicit drugs.

Hatred = extreme dislike; hostile intentions and actions.

Discord = quarreling; antagonism.

Jealousy = resentful envy; overly suspicious.

Fits of rage = explosive anger with violent words or actions.

Selfish ambitions = seeking power for yourself.

Dissensions & factions = lack of unity, sometimes to the point of having feuds.

Envy = resentful dislike of one who has something you want.

Drunkenness = loss of control due to alcoholic drink.

Orgies = a party involving drugs, alcohol and sex.

These all need to go. They are in conflict with the Spirit and will resist his infilling. It's good that Paul includes both those sins we might consider blatant as well as those which are more subtle. All need to go.

☞ v. 24 ... **crucify these things** = not just resist or filter, but outright kill.

Some cultures actually practice ritual crucifixion on themselves in remembrance of Christ. But they are removed from the cross before it's too late and can survive to do it again and again. Likewise, sin can survive if we keep removing it from the cross. We must continually nail our sins to the cross and once nailed there, not go back to them, and then they can die completely.

Let's not miss this point. Sin is attractive and most of us have favorite sins that we kind of like to keep around. But, in reality, sin is our enemy. It will kill us as soon as it can, or little by little over time. That's why we must eliminate it now. The Holy Spirit works to do this in us, but we must work alongside him in order to actually accomplish this point. Then, we can Eliminate the Sin.

☞ **4. Embrace the Spirit** = to cherish; to welcome; to include. Remember the difference between a sip and a large consumption? When it comes to things of the Spirit, we want to go all in and get all we can.

☞ **Live by the Spirit** = let your life be sustained by his presence. Be open and sensitive to his influence. Pattern your life after Jesus because the Spirit is all about promoting him.

Galatians 2:20

I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

☞ **Desire what the Spirit desires** = conform to him. These last two points (Eliminate the Sin and Embrace the Spirit) go hand in hand. You really can't just do one of these. If you try to Eliminate the Sin in your power, you will fail. And if you try to Embrace the Spirit while still holding on to your sins, you will fail. We've talked before about the need to Repent **and** Replace those attitudes and behaviors. It's both simultaneously.

Romans 8:5

Those who live according to the sinful nature have their minds set on what that nature desires; but those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires.

What does the Spirit desire? To bring glory and honor to Jesus in all things. So we need to be thinking about how we can bring glory and honor to Jesus in every aspect of our lives.

Romans 12:2

Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.

If we want to really be filled with the Spirit and truly transformed, we must renew our minds. And we renew our minds by diving into the Word of God. Then as we read the Word...

☞ **Be led by the Spirit** = follow him; surrender to him.

☞ v. 25 ...**Keep in step with the Spirit** = follow closely; take cues from him.

v. 22-23 cooperate with the development of Spiritual fruit!

--David Wilkerson... We are to walk in total submission to the Holy Spirit, just as Christ walked in constant, absolute submission to the Father... If we're able to grasp this one truth, we can enter in to a life that's free of distress, full of assured direction, and marked by perfect rest. The key is to "just say yes!"

The Holy Spirit is continually speaking and prompting you. Are you listening? Are you obeying? These are keys to keeping filled with the Holy Spirit.

Romans 12:1

offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God - this is your spiritual act of worship.

We started by saying that a significant part of keeping filled occurs when we Exalt God with singing and worship. Here, Paul says the truest way to exalt or worship God is by **offering**

☞ **yourself to him.**

"Lord, whatever you will..."

"Lord, whenever you will..."

"Lord, whoever you will..."

"Lord, wherever you will..."

"Lord, for whatever reason you..." "Lord, in whatever manner you will..."

"I give myself to you..."

☞ **Let's pursue the Holy Spirit and keep on being filled.**

Exalt God; Express Gratitude; Eliminate the Sin; Embrace the Spirit

Consuming Fire

Men's Huddle:

Worship and singing isn't just for the girls. David was a man's man and he wrote and sang songs like few others. Men, let's set the example of true worshipers! And, you be the first in your family to talk about things you're **thankful** for!

Men, let's talk about this idea of **eliminating the sin... Sexuality immorality** is a tough one for most men. Let's be diligent to guard our hearts and eyes. Let's make sure God always has first place in our lives and in our homes. And after that, put your family's needs ahead of your own. We're in this together, so we need to encourage each other, not compete with each other!

Men, we need to **surrender** our lives wholeheartedly to God! **Set the example** by following the lead of the Holy Spirit and being obedient to God's word. This is the kind of leadership I'm talking about! It's not about being the boss of your home; **it's about being the first to do the right thing!** Men, keep on being filled with the Spirit.