

Lecture VII. - on Being Filled With the Spirit.

by Charles Finney

Christians have the duty and the power to be filled with the Spirit of God, and their guilt is great if they do not, with consequences that include being a stumbling block to the church and the world.

Scripture: Proverbs 28:13, Luke 11:13, John 14:16-17, Acts 1:8, Romans 8:9, 2 Corinthians 13:5, Galatians 5:22-23, Ephesians 5:18, 1 Thessalonians 5:19, James 4:8

Topics: "Spiritual Growth", "Being Filled with the Spirit"

Description

Charles Finney emphasizes the necessity and duty of being filled with the Holy Spirit, arguing that Christians often misunderstand their obligation to seek the Spirit's influence. He warns against the dangers of complacency and hypocrisy, asserting that the lack of the Spirit leads to spiritual stagnation and guilt. Finney outlines the reasons many fail to be filled with the Spirit, including insincerity, worldliness, and neglect of known duties. He stresses that being filled with the Spirit is essential for spiritual growth, effective prayer, and fulfilling one's moral obligations. Ultimately, he calls for a sincere pursuit of the Spirit to experience true spiritual vitality and effectiveness in ministry.

Transcript

TEXT. --Be filled with the Spirit. --EPH. v. 18.

SEVERAL of my last lectures have been on the subject of prayer, and the importance of having the spirit of prayer, of the intercession of the Holy Ghost. Whenever the necessity and importance of the Spirit's influences are held forth, there can be no doubt that persons are in danger of abusing the doctrine, and perverting it to their own injury. For instance, when you tell sinners that without the Holy Spirit they never will repent, they are very liable to pervert the truth, and understand by it that they cannot repent, and therefore are under no obligation to do it until they feel the Spirit. It is often difficult to make them see that all the "cannot" consists in their unwillingness, and not in their inability. So again, when we tell Christians that they need the Spirit's aid in prayer, they are very apt to think they are under no obligation to pray the prayer of faith, until they feel the influences of the Spirit. They overlook their obligation to be filled with the Spirit and wait for the spirit of prayer to come upon them without asking, and thus tempt God.

Before we come to consider the other department of means for promoting a revival, that is, the means to be used with sinners, I wish to show you, that if you live without the Spirit, you are without excuse. Obligation to perform duty never rests on the condition, that we shall first have the influence of the Spirit, but on the powers of moral agency. We, as moral agents, have the power to obey God, and are perfectly

bound to obey, and the reason we do not is, that we are unwilling. The influences of the Spirit are wholly a matter of grace. If they were indispensable to enable us to perform duty, the bestowment of them would not be a gracious act, but a mere matter of common justice. Sinners are not bound to repent because they have the Spirit's influence, or because they can obtain it, but because they are moral agents, and have the powers which God requires them to exercise. So in the case of Christians. They are not bound to pray in faith because they have the Spirit, (except in those cases where his influences in begetting desire constitute the evidence that it is God's will to grant the object of desire,) but because they have evidence. They are not bound to pray in faith at all, except when they have evidence as the foundation of their faith. They must have evidence from promises, or principle, or prophecy, or providence. And where they have evidence independent of his influences, they are bound to exercise faith, whether they have the Spirit's influence or not. They are bound to see the evidence, and to believe. The Spirit is given not to enable them to see or believe, but because without it they will not look, nor feel, nor act, as they ought. I purpose this evening to show from the text,

- I. That Christians may be filled with the Spirit of God.
- II. That it is their duty to be filled with the Spirit.
- III. Why they are not filled with the Spirit.
- IV. The guilt of those who have not the Spirit of God, to lead their minds in duty and prayer.
- V. The consequences that will follow if they are filled with the Spirit.
- VI. The consequences if they are not.

I. I am to show you that you may have the Spirit. Not because it is a matter of justice for God to give you his Spirit, but because he has promised to give it to those that ask. "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?" If you ask [for] the Holy Spirit, God has promised to give it.

But again, God has commanded you to have it. He says in the text, "Be filled with the Spirit." When God commands us to do a thing, it is the highest possible evidence that we can do it. For God to command, is equivalent to an oath that we can do it. He has no right to command, unless we have power to obey. There is no stopping short of the conclusion that God is an infinite tyrant, if he commands that which is impracticable.

- II. I am to show, secondly, that it is your duty.
 1. Because you have a promise of it.
 2. Because God has commanded it.
 3. It is essential to your own growth in grace that you should be filled with the Spirit.
 4. It is as important as it is that you should be sanctified.
 5. It is as necessary as it is that you should be useful and do good in the world.

6. If you do not have the Spirit of God in you, you will dishonor God, disgrace the church, and die and go to hell.

III. Why many do not have the Spirit. There are some, even professors of religion, who will say, "I do not know any thing about this; I never had any such experience; either it is not true or I am all wrong." No doubt you are all wrong, if you know nothing about the influence of the Spirit. I want to present you with a few of the reasons that may prevent you from being filled with the Spirit.

1. It may be that you live a hypocritical life. Your prayers are not earnest and sincere. Not only is your religion a mere outside show, without any heart, but you are insincere in your intercourse with others. Thus you do many things to grieve the Spirit, so that he cannot dwell with you.

A minister was once boarding in a certain family, and the lady of the house was constantly complaining that she did not enjoy her mind, and nothing seemed to help her. One day some ladies called to see her, and she protested that she was very much offended because they had not called before, and pressed them to stay and spend the day, and declared she could not consent to let them go. They excused themselves, however, and left the house, and as soon as they were gone, she said to her servant, she wondered these people had so little sense as to be always troubling her, and taking up her time. The minister heard it, and immediately rebuked her, and told her she could now see why she did not enjoy religion. It was because she was in the daily habit of insincerity that amounted to downright lying. And the Spirit of truth could not dwell in such a heart.

2. Others have so much levity that the Spirit will not dwell with them. The Spirit of God is solemn, and serious, and will not dwell with those who give way to thoughtless levity.

3. Others are so proud that they cannot have the Spirit. They are so fond of dress, high life, equipage, fashion, etc., that it is no wonder they are not filled with the Spirit. And yet such persons will pretend to be at a loss to know why it is that they do not enjoy religion!

4. Some are so worldly-minded, love property so well, and are trying so hard to get rich, that they cannot have the Spirit. How can he dwell with them, when their thoughts are all on things of the world, and all their powers absorbed in procuring wealth? And they hold on to it when they get it, and they are pained if pressed by conscience to do something for the conversion of the world. They show how much they love the world, in all their intercourse with others. Little things show it. They will screw down a poor man, who is doing a little piece of work for them, to the lowest penny. If they are dealing on a large scale, very likely they will be liberal and fair, because it is for their advantage. But if it is a person they care not about, a laborer, or a mechanic, or a servant, they will grind him down to the last fraction, no matter what it is really worth; and they actually pretend to make conscience of it, that they cannot possibly give any more. Now they would be ashamed to deal so with people of their own rank, because it would be known and injure their reputation. But God knows it, and has it all written down, that they are covetous and unfair in their dealings, and will not do right, only when it is for their interest. Now how can such professors have the Spirit of God? It is impossible.

There are a multitude of such things, by which the Spirit of God is grieved. People call them little sins, but God will not call them little. I was struck with this thought, when I saw a little notice in the Evangelist. The publishers stated that they had many thousand dollars in the hands of subscribers, which was justly due, and that it would cost them as much as it was worth to send an agent to collect it. I suppose it is so with all the other religious papers, that subscribers either put the publisher to the trouble and expense of sending

an agent to collect his due, or else they cheat him out of it. There are doubtless, I do not know how many, thousands of dollars held back in this way by professors of religion, just because it is in such small sums, or they are so far off that they cannot be sued. And yet these people will pray, and appear very pious, and wonder why they cannot enjoy religion, and have the Spirit of God! It is this looseness of moral principle, this want of conscience about little matters, prevailing in the church, that grieves away the Holy Ghost. Why, it would be disgraceful to God to dwell and have communion with such persons, who will take an advantage and cheat their neighbor out of his dues, because they can do it and not be disgraced.

5. Others do not fully confess and forsake their sins, and so cannot enjoy the Spirit's presence. They will confess their sins in general terms, perhaps, and are ready always to acknowledge that they are sinners. Or they will confess partially some particular sins. But they do it reservedly, proudly, guardedly, as if they were afraid they should say a little more than is necessary; that is, when they confess to men the injuries done to them. They do it in a way which shows that, instead of bursting forth from an ingenuous heart, the confession is wrung from them, by the hand of conscience gripping them. If they have injured any one, they will make a partial recantation, which is hard-hearted, cruel, and hypocritical, and then they will ask, "Now, brother, are you satisfied?" And you know it would be very difficult for a person to say that he was not satisfied, even if the confession is cold and heartless. But I tell you God is not satisfied. He knows whether you have gone the full length of honest confession, and taken all the blame that belongs to you. If your confessions have been constrained and wrung from you, do you suppose you can cheat God? "He that covereth his sins shall not prosper, but whoso confesseth and forsaketh shall find mercy." "He that humbleth himself shall be exalted." Unless you come quite down, and confess your sins honestly, and remunerate where you have done injury, you have no right to expect the spirit of prayer.

6. Others are neglecting some known duty, and that is the reason why they have not the Spirit. One does not pray in his family, though he knows he ought to do it, and yet he is trying to get the spirit of prayer! There is many a young man who feels in his heart that he ought to prepare for the ministry, and he has not the spirit of prayer because he has some worldly object in view, which prevents his devoting himself to the work. He has known his duty, and refuses to do it, and now he is praying for direction from the Spirit of God. He cannot have it. One has neglected to make a profession of religion. He knows his duty, but he refuses to join the church. He once had the spirit of prayer, but neglecting his duty, he grieved the Spirit away. And now he thinks, if he could once more enjoy the light of God's countenance, and have his evidences renewed, he would do his duty, and join the church. And so he is praying for it again, and trying to bring God over to his terms, to grant him his presence. You need not expect it. You will live and die in darkness, unless you are willing first to do your duty, before God manifests himself as reconciled to you. It is in vain to say, you will come forward if God will first show you the light of his countenance. He never will do it as long as you live; he will let you die without it, if you refuse to do your duty.

I have known women who felt that they ought to talk to their unconverted husbands, and pray with them, but they have neglected it, and so they get into the dark. They knew their duty and refused to do it; they went round it, and there they lost the spirit of prayer.

If you have neglected any known duty, and thus lost the spirit of prayer, you must yield first. God has a controversy with you; you have refused obedience to God, and you must retract it. You may have forgotten it, but God has not, and you must set yourself to recall it to mind, and repent. God never will yield nor grant you his Spirit, till you repent. Had I an omniscient eye now, I could call the names of the individuals in this congregation, who had neglected some known duty, or committed some sin, that they have not repented of, and now they are praying for the spirit of prayer, but they cannot succeed in

obtaining it.

To illustrate this I will relate a case. A good man in the western part of this State, had been a long time an engaged Christian, and he used to talk to the sleepy church with which he was connected. By-and-by the church was offended and got out of patience, and many told him they wished he would let them alone, they did not think he could do them any good. He took them at their word, and they all went to sleep together, and remained so two or three years. By-and-by a minister came among them and a revival commenced, but this elder seemed to have lost his spirituality. He used to be forward in a good work, but now he held back. Everybody thought it unaccountable. Finally, as he was going home one night, the truth of his situation flashed upon his mind, and he went into absolute despair for a few minutes. At length his thoughts were directed back to that sinful resolution to let the church alone in their sins. He felt that no language could describe the blackness of that sin. He realized that moment what it was to be lost, and to find that God had a controversy with him. He saw that it was a bad spirit which caused the resolution: the same that caused Moses to say, "You rebels." He humbled himself on the spot, and God poured out his Spirit on him. Perhaps some of you that hear me are in just this situation. You have said something provoking or unkind to some person. Perhaps it was peevishness to a servant that was a Christian. Or perhaps it was speaking censoriously of a minister or some other person. Perhaps you have been angry because your opinions have not been taken, or your dignity has been encroached upon. Search thoroughly, and see if you cannot find out the sin. Perhaps you have forgotten it. But God has not forgotten it, and never will forgive your unchristian conduct until you repent. God cannot overlook it. It would do no good if he should. What good would it do to forgive, while the sin is rankling in your heart?

7. Perhaps you have resisted the Spirit of God. Perhaps you are in the habit of resisting the Spirit. You resist conviction. In preaching, when something has been said that reached your case, your heart has risen up against it and resisted. Many are willing to hear plain and searching preaching so long as they can apply it all to others; a misanthropic spirit makes them take a satisfaction in hearing others searched and rebuked; but if the truth touch them, they directly cry out that it is personal and abusive. Is this your case?

8. The fact is that you do not on the whole desire the Spirit. This is true in every case in which you do not have the Spirit. Let me not be mistaken here. I want you should carefully discriminate. Nothing is more common than for people to desire a thing on some accounts, which they do not choose on the whole. A person may see an article in a store which he desires to purchase, and he goes in and asks the price, and thinks of it a little, and on the whole concludes not to purchase it. He desires the article, but does not like the price, or does not like to be at the expense, so that, upon the whole, he prefers not to purchase it. That is the reason why he does not purchase it. So persons may desire the Spirit of God on some accounts; from a regard to the comfort and joy of heart which it brings. If you know what it is by former experience to commune with God, and how sweet it is to dissolve in penitence and to be filled with the Spirit, you cannot but desire a return of those joys. And you may set yourself to pray earnestly for it, and to pray for a revival of religion. But on the whole you are unwilling it should come. You have so much to do that you cannot attend to it. Or it will require so many sacrifices, that you cannot bear to have it. There are some things you are not willing to give up. You find that if you wish to have the Spirit of God dwell with you, you must lead a different life, you must give up the world, you must make sacrifices, you must break off from your worldly associates, and makes confession of your sins. And so on the whole you do not choose to have him come, unless he will consent to dwell with you and let you live as you please. But that he never will do.

9. Perhaps you do not pray for the Spirit; or you pray and use no other means, or pray and do not act consistently with your prayers. Or you use means calculated to resist them. Or you ask, and as soon as he comes and begins to affect your mind, you grieve him right away, and will not walk with him.

IV. I am to show the great guilt of not having the Spirit of God.

1. Your guilt is just as great as the authority of God is great, which commands you to be filled with the Spirit. God commands it, and it is just as much a disobedience of God's commands, as it is to swear profanely, or steal, or commit adultery, or break the Sabbath. Think of that. And yet there are many people who do not blame themselves at all for not having the Spirit. They even think themselves quite pious Christians, because they go to prayer meetings, and partake of the sacrament, and all that, though they live year after year without the Spirit of God. Now, you see the same God who says, "Do not get drunk," says also, "Be filled with the Spirit." You all say, if a man is an habitual murderer, or a thief, he is no Christian. Why? Because he lives in habitual disobedience to God. So if he swears, you have no charity for him. You will not allow him to plead that his heart is right, and words are nothing. God does not care anything about words. You would think it outrageous to have such a man in church, or to have a company of such people pretend to call themselves a church of Christ. And yet they are not a whit more absolutely living in disobedience to God than you are, who live without the spirit of prayer, and without the presence of God.

2. Your guilt is equal to all the good you might do if you had the Spirit of God in as great a measure as it is your duty to have it, and as you might have it. You, elders of this church! how much good you might do, if you had the Spirit. And you, Sunday-school teachers, how much good you might do; and you, church-members, too, if you were filled with the Spirit, you might do vast good, infinite good. Well, your guilt is just as great. Here is a blessing promised, and you can have it by doing your duty. You are entirely responsible to the church and to God for all this good that you might do. A man is responsible for all the good he can do.

3. Your guilt is further measured by all the evil which you do in consequence of not having the Spirit. You are a dishonor to religion. You are a stumbling block to the church, and to the world. And your guilt is enhanced by all the various influences you exert. And it will prove so in the day of judgment.

V. The consequences of having the Spirit.

1. You will be called eccentric; and probably you will deserve it. Probably you will really be eccentric. I never knew a person who was filled with the Spirit, that was not called eccentric. And the reason is, that they are unlike other people. This is always a term of comparison. There is therefore the best of reasons why such persons should appear eccentric. They act under different influences, take different views, are moved by different motives, led by a different spirit. You are to expect such remarks. How often I have heard the remark respecting such and such persons, "He is a very good man--but he is rather eccentric." I have sometimes asked for the particulars; in what does his eccentricity consist? I hear the catalogue, and the amount is, that he is spiritual. Make up your mind for this, to be eccentric. There is such a thing as affected eccentricity. Horrible! But there is such a thing as being so deeply imbued with the Spirit of God, that you must and will act so as to appear strange and eccentric, to those who cannot understand the reasons of your conduct.

2 If you have much of the Spirit of God, it is not unlikely you will be thought deranged, by many. We judge men to be deranged when they act differently from what we think to be prudent and according to common

sense, and when they come to conclusions for which we can see no good reasons. Paul was accused of being deranged by those who did not understand the views of things under which he acted. No doubt Festus thought the man was crazy, and that much learning had made him mad. But Paul said, "I am not mad, most noble Festus." His conduct was so strange, so novel, that Festus thought it must be insanity. But the truth was, he only saw the subject so clearly that he threw his whole soul into it. They were entirely in the dark in respect to the motive by which he was actuated. This is by no means uncommon. Multitudes have appeared to those who had no spirituality as if they were deranged. Yet they saw good reasons for doing as they did. God was leading their minds to act in such a way that those who were not spiritual could not see the reasons. You must make up your mind to this, and so much the more, as you live more above the world and walk with God.

3. If you have the Spirit of God, you must expect to feel great distress in view of the church and the world. Some spiritual epicures ask for the Spirit because they think it will make them so perfectly happy. Some people think that spiritual Christians are always very happy and free from sorrow.

There never was a greater mistake. Read your Bibles, and see how the prophets and apostles were always groaning and distressed in view of the state of the church and the world. The apostle Paul says he was always bearing about in his body the dying of the Lord Jesus. I protest, says he, that I die daily. You will know what it is to sympathize with the Lord Jesus Christ, and be baptized with the baptism that he was baptized with. Oh how he agonized in view of the state of sinners! how he travailed in soul for their salvation! The more you have of his Spirit, the more clearly you will see the state of sinners, and the more deeply you will be distressed about them. Many times you will feel as if you could not live in view of their situation; your distress will be unutterable. Paul says, Rom ix:1-3: "I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost, that I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart. For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh."

4. You will be often grieved with the state of the ministry. Some years since I met a woman belonging to one of the churches in this city. I inquired of her the state of religion here. She seemed unwilling to say much about it, made some general remarks, and then choked, and her eyes filled, and she said, "Oh, our minister's mind seems to be very dark." Spiritual Christians often feel like this, and often weep over it. I have seen much of it, and often found Christians who wept and groaned in secret, to see the darkness on the minds of ministers in regard to religion, their earthliness and fear of man; but they dared not speak of it, lest they should be denounced and threatened, and perhaps turned out of the church. I do not say these things censoriously, to reproach my brethren, but because they are true. And ministers ought to know that nothing is more common than for spiritual Christians to feel burdened and distressed at the state of the ministry. I would not wake up any wrong feeling towards ministers, but it is time it should be known that Christians do often get spiritual views of things, and their souls are kindled up, and then they find that their minister does not enter into their feelings, that he is far below the standard of what he ought to be, and in spirituality far below some of the members of his church. This is one of the most prominent and deeply to be deplored evils of the present day. The piety of the ministry, though real, is so superficial, in many instances, that the spiritual part of the church feel that ministers cannot, do not, sympathize with them. Their preaching does not meet their wants, it does not feed them, it does not meet their experience. The minister has not depth enough of religious experience to know how to search and wake up the church; to help those under temptation, to support the weak, to direct the strong, and lead them through all the labyrinths and mazes with which their path may be beset. When a minister has gone with a church as far

as his experience in spiritual exercise goes, there he stops; and until he has a renewed experience, until he is reconverted, his heart broken up afresh, and he set forward in the divine life and Christian experience, he will help them no more. He may preach sound doctrine, and so may an unconverted minister; but, after all, his preaching will want that searching pungency, that practical bearing, that unction which alone will reach the case of a spiritually-minded Christian. It is a fact over which the church is groaning, that the piety of young men suffers so much in the course of their education, that when they enter the ministry, however much intellectual furniture they may possess, they are in a state of spiritual babyhood. They want nursing, and need rather to be fed, than to undertake to feed the church of God.

5. If you have much of the Spirit of God, you must make up your mind to have much opposition, both in the church and the world. Very likely the leading men in the church will oppose you. There has always been opposition in the church. So it was when Christ was on earth. If you are far above their state of feeling, church members will oppose you. If any man will live godly in Christ Jesus, he must expect persecution. Often the elders, and even the minister, will oppose you, if you are filled with the Spirit of God.

6. You must expect very frequent and agonizing conflicts with Satan. Satan has very little trouble with those Christians who are not spiritual, but lukewarm, and slothful, and worldly-minded. And such do not understand what is said about spiritual conflicts. Perhaps they will smile when such things are mentioned. And so the devil lets them alone. They do not disturb him, nor he them. But spiritual Christians, he understands very well, are doing him a vast injury, and, therefore, he sets himself against them. Such Christians often have terrible conflicts. They have temptations that they never thought of before, blasphemous thoughts, atheism, suggestions to do deeds of wickedness, to destroy their own lives, and the like. And if you are spiritual, you may expect these terrible conflicts.

7. You will have greater conflicts with yourself than you ever thought of. You will sometimes find your own corruptions making strange headway against the Spirit. "The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh." Such a Christian is often thrown into consternation at the power of his own corruptions. One of the Commodores in the United States was, as I have been told, a spiritual man; and his pastor told me he had known that man lie on the floor and groan a great part of the night, in conflict with his own corruptions, and to cry to God in agony that he would break the power of the temptation. It seemed as if the devil was determined to ruin him; and his own feelings, for the time being, was almost in league with the devil.

8. But you will have peace with God. If the church, and sinners, and the devil oppose you, there will be one with whom you will have peace. Let those who are called to these trials, and conflicts, and temptations, and who groan, and pray, and weep, and break your hearts, remember this consideration: your peace, so far as your feelings towards God are concerned, will flow like a river.

9. You will likewise have peace of conscience, if you are led by the Spirit. You will not be constantly goaded and kept on the rack by a guilty conscience. Your conscience will be calm and quiet, unruffled as the summer's lake.

10. If filled with the Spirit, you will be useful. You cannot help being useful. Even if you were sick and unable to go out of your room, or to converse, and saw nobody, you would be ten times more useful than a hundred of those common sort of Christians who have no spirituality. To give you an idea of this, I will relate an anecdote. A pious man in the Western part of this State was sick with a consumption. He was a poor man, and sick for years. An unconverted merchant in the place had a kind heart, and used to send

him now and then something for his comfort, or for his family. He felt grateful for the kindness, but could make no return, as he wanted to do. At length he determined that the best return he could make would be to pray for his salvation; he began to pray, and his soul kindled, and he got hold of God. There was no revival there, but by and by, to the astonishment of every body, this merchant came right out on the Lord's side. The fire kindled all over the place, and a powerful revival followed, and multitudes were converted.

This poor man lingered in this way for several years, and died. After his death, I visited the place, and his widow put into my hands his diary. Among other things, he says in his diary: "I am acquainted with about thirty ministers and churches." He then goes on to set apart certain hours in the day and week to pray for each of these ministers and churches, and also certain seasons for praying for the different missionary stations. Then followed, under different dates, such facts as these: "To-day," naming the date, "I have been enabled to offer what I call the prayer of faith for the outpouring of the Spirit on _____ church, and I trust in God there will soon be a revival there." Under another date, "I have to-day been able to offer what I call the prayer of faith for such a church, and trust there will soon be a revival there." Thus he had gone over a great number of churches, recording the fact that he had prayed for them in faith that a revival might soon prevail among them. Of the missionary stations, if I recollect right, he mentions in particular the mission at Ceylon. I believe the last place mentioned in his diary, for which he offered the prayer of faith, was the place in which he lived. Not long after noticing these facts in his diary, the revival commenced, and went over the region of country, nearly, I believe, in the order in which they had been mentioned in his diary; and in due time news came from Ceylon that there was a revival of religion there. The revival in his own town did not commence till after his death. Its commencement was at the time when his widow put into my hands the document to which I have referred. She told me that he was so exercised in prayer during his sickness that she often feared he would pray himself to death. The revival was exceedingly great and powerful in all the region; and the fact that it was about to prevail had not been hidden from this servant of the Lord. According to his word, the secret of the Lord is with them that fear him. Thus this man, too feeble in his body to go out of his house, was yet more useful to the world and the church of God than all the heartless professors of the country. Standing between God and the desolations of Zion, and pouring out his heart in believing prayer, as a prince he had power with God, and prevailed.

11. If you are filled with the Spirit, you will not find yourselves distressed, and galled, and worried, when people speak against you. When I find people irritated and fretting at any little thing that touches them, I am sure they have not the Spirit of Christ. Jesus Christ could have everything said against him that malice could invent, and yet not be in the least disturbed by it. If you mean to be meek under persecution, and exemplify the temper of the Saviour, and honor religion in this way, you need to be filled with the Spirit.

12. You will be wise in using means for the conversion of sinners. If the Spirit of God is in you, he will lead you to use means wisely, in a way adapted to the end, and to avoid doing hurt. No man who is not filled with the Spirit of God, is fit to be employed in directing the measures adopted in a revival. Their hands will be all thumbs, unable to take hold, and they will act as if they had not common sense. But a man who is led by the Spirit of God, will know how to time his measures right, and how to apportion Divine truth, so as to make it tell to the best advantage.

13. You will be calm under affliction; not thrown into confusion or consternation when you see the storm coming over you. People around will be astonished at your calmness and cheerfulness under heavy trials, not knowing the inward supports of those who are filled with the Spirit.

14. You will be resigned in death; you will always feel prepared to die, and not afraid to die, and after death you will be proportionably more happy for ever in heaven.

VI. Consequences of not being filled with the Spirit.

1. You will often doubt, and reasonably doubt, whether you are Christians. You will have doubts, and you ought to have them. The sons of God are led by the Spirit of God. And if you are not led by the Spirit what reason have you to think you are sons? You will try to make a little evidence go a great way to bolster up your hopes, but you cannot do it, unless your conscience is seared as with a hot iron. You cannot help being plunged often into painful doubt and uncertainty about your state. Rom. viii. 9.--"But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now, if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." 2 Cor. xiii. 5.--"Examine yourselves whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves: know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobate?"

2. You will always be unsettled in your views about the prayer of faith. The prayer of faith is something so spiritual, so much a matter of experience and not of speculation, that unless you are spiritual yourselves, you will not understand it fully. You may talk a great deal about the prayer of faith, and for the time get thoroughly convinced of it. But you will never feel so settled on it as to retain the same position of mind concerning it, and in a little while you will be all uncertainty. I knew a curious instance in a brother minister. He told me, "When I have the Spirit of God, and enjoy his presence, I believe firmly in the prayer of faith; but when I have it not, I find myself doubting whether there is any such thing, and my mind offering objections." I know, from my own experience, what this is, and when I hear persons raising objections to that view of prayer which I have presented in these lectures, I understand very well what their difficulty is, and have often found it impossible to satisfy their minds, while so far from God; when at the same time they would understand it themselves, without argument, whenever they had experienced it.

3. If you have not the Spirit, you will be very apt to stumble at those who have. You will doubt the propriety of their conduct. If they seem to feel a good deal more than yourself, you will be likely to call it animal feeling. You will perhaps doubt their sincerity when they say they have such feelings. You will say, "I do not know what to make of brother such-a-one; he seems to be very pious, but I do not understand him, I think he has a great deal of animal feeling." Thus you will be trying to censure them, for the purpose of justifying yourself.

4. You will be had in reputation with the impenitent, and with carnal professors. They will praise you, as a rational, orthodox, consistent Christian. You will be just in the frame of mind to walk with them, because you are agreed.

5. You will be much troubled with fears about fanaticism. Whenever there are revivals, you will see in them a strong tendency to fanaticism, and will be full of fears and anxiety, or rather of opposition to them.

6. You will be much disturbed by the measures that are used in revivals. If any measures are adopted, that are decided and direct, you will think they are all "new," and will be stumbled at them just in proportion to your want of spirituality. You do not see their appropriateness. You will stand and cavil at the measures, because you are so blind that you cannot see their adaptedness, while all heaven is rejoicing in them as the means of saving souls.

7. You will be a reproach to religion. The impenitent will sometimes praise you because you are so much like themselves, and sometimes laugh about you because you are such a hypocrite.

8. You will know but little about the Bible.

9. If you die without the Spirit, you will fall into hell. There can be no doubt of this. Without the Spirit you will never be prepared for heaven.

REMARKS.

1. Christians are as guilty for not having the Spirit, as sinners are for not repenting.

2. They are even more so. As they have more light, they are so much the more guilty.

3. All beings have a right to complain of Christians who are not filled with the Spirit. You are not doing work for God, and he has a right to complain. He has placed his Spirit at your disposal, and if you have it not, he has a right to look to you and to hold you responsible for all the good you might do, did you possess it. You are sinning against all heaven, for you ought to be adding to their happy ranks. Sinners, the church, ministers, have a right to complain.

4. You are right in the way of the work of the Lord. It is in vain for a minister to try to work over your head. Ministers often groan and struggle, and wear themselves out in vain, trying to do good where there is a church who live so that they do not have the Spirit of God. If the Spirit is poured out at any time, the church will grieve him right away. Thus you may tie the hands and break the heart of your minister, and break him down, and perhaps kill him, because you will not be filled with the Spirit.

5. You see the reason why Christians need the Spirit, and the degree of their dependence. This cannot be too strongly exhibited.

6. Do not tempt God, by waiting for his Spirit, while using no means to procure his presence.

7. If you mean to have the Spirit, you must be childlike, and yield to his influences--just as yielding as air. If he is drawing you to prayer, you must quit everything to yield to his gentle strivings. No doubt you have sometimes felt a desire to pray for some object, and you have put it off and resisted, and God left you. If you wish him to remain, you must yield to his softest and gentlest motions, and watch to learn what he would have you do, and yield yourself up to his guidance.

8. Christians ought to be willing to make any sacrifice to enjoy the presence of the Spirit. Said a woman in high life, a professor of religion, "I must either give up hearing such a minister (naming him) preach, or I must give up my gay company." She gave up the preaching and staid away. How different from another case!

A woman in the same rank of life heard the same minister preach, and went home resolved to abandon her gay and worldly manner of life--dismissed most of her attendants--changed her whole mode of dress, of equipage, of living, and of conversation; so that her gay and worldly friends were soon willing to leave her to the enjoyment of communion with God, and free to spend her time in doing good.

9. You see from this, that it must be very difficult for those in fashionable life to go to heaven. What a calamity to be in such circles! Who can enjoy the presence of God in them?

10. See how crazy those are who are scrambling to get up to these circles, enlarging their houses, changing their style of living, furniture, etc. It is like climbing up mast-head to be thrown off into the ocean. To enjoy God, you must come down, not go up there. God is not there, among all the starch and flattery of

high life.

11. Many professors of religion are as ignorant of spirituality as Nicodemus was of the new birth. They are ignorant, and I fear unconverted. If any body talks to them about the spirit of prayer, it is all algebra to them. The case of such professors is awful. How different was the character of the apostles! Read the history of their lives, read their letters, and you will see that they were always spiritual, and walked daily with God. But now how little is there of such religion! "When the Son of Man cometh, will he find faith on the earth?" Set some of these professors to work in a revival, and they do not know what to do, have no energy, no skill, and make no impression. When will professors of religion set themselves to work, filled with the Spirit? If I could see this church filled with the Spirit, I would ask nothing more to move this whole mighty mass of minds. Not two weeks would pass before the revival would spread all over this city.

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