

# The Representative Man - Part 2

by G.W. North

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of being filled with the Holy Spirit, being led by the Spirit, and fulfilling scripture in one's life and ministry.*

**Scripture:** Isaiah 61:1, Luke 4:1, Luke 4:14

**Topics:** "Holy Spirit", "Empowerment for Ministry"

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## Description

G.W. North emphasizes the significance of being filled and led by the Holy Spirit in the life of Jesus, the Representative Man. He illustrates how Jesus, after His baptism and anointing, was empowered by the Spirit to fulfill His ministry, demonstrating that true leadership comes from within rather than relying on external signs. North encourages believers to seek the fullness of the Spirit, as Jesus did, to overcome temptation and fulfill their God-given purpose. He highlights that Jesus' ministry was marked by compassion and power, urging Christians to embody the same Spirit-filled life in their own ministries. Ultimately, North calls for a return to the example of Jesus, who was both fully God and fully man, showing that through the Spirit, believers can also live out their calling effectively.

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## Transcript

### Power

But not yet; not quite yet, for in the life of the Representative Man everything had to be just perfect. At the beginning of the chapter and directly following the record of His baptism and anointing we read, 'And Jesus being full of the Holy Ghost....' There it is. So we learn by this that the Holy Spirit's fullness has not reached its greatest degree and dimension and possibility in any of us until we are anointed. He was the Child of the Spirit. He was anointed of the Spirit. He was full of the Holy Ghost. Let us be very honest now. How many men of our acquaintance are full of the Holy Spirit according to this standard? His is the standard. God's only standard is Jesus. There He is, set forth before us full of the Holy Ghost, with Father saying, 'I'm ever so pleased with you, Son.' Bless the Name of the Lord.

I want this precious One to bring me out of all my lack, and out of all the littlenesses of men, that would scale me down to something dwarf-like while preaching greatness to me, saying that is What is meant by being filled. I need someone to raise up my heart and send it soaring up and away unto the ideal of God -- Jesus. I do not want anything less. If I have anything less it can only be allowed in me temporarily as a stepping-stone to this. But I do not want to stop there. If I be less than God's man it may only be permitted because in the time-order of growth I must have a beginning. But there must also be a growing; and, oh, I

must have a going on and up into all the fullness of God. Amen! Father, be pleased with me. Oh, to wrap my arms around Father's neck and love and love Him, and be pleased with Him and He with me. How can a man wish for anything better? The inner craving to be about Father's business always arrives at a point of culmination, a moment when it is brought to fullness. God always brings a man to a place where He pours forth from heaven upon him in sacred anointing, when the lovely Dove-Spirit comes down upon him, and his empowering is all from that Dove. Empowering is hereby seen to be by gentleness added to gentleness, grace upon grace, power coming upon power, Spirit coming upon Spirit, God coming upon God. Hallelujah! This is the thing that God is after in each life. The Holy Ghost lost the distinctive shape of the Dove and took the form of a man, even Jesus. Glory be to God. Why do we all live and breathe if not for this?

Excepting this event we are not told anywhere that Jesus was full of the Holy Ghost. This is not to suggest that He was not full of the Spirit either before or after this remark, but to point out the precise and special things that take place in a person at such time. God is especially drawing our attention to the fact that Jesus was a Spirit-filled person at that time; and now, filled, anointed, He returns from Jordan, 'and was led by the Spirit.' In these words is revealed to us the secret of a fully-used life; 'led by the Spirit.' Many people today are seeking guidance. Among the most popular books upon Christian bookstalls are those about guidance. All men seek guidance. Many are the requests that come seeking prayer for guidance. Jesus did not need guidance; when He was filled with the Spirit, He was led of the Spirit. From that moment His path was assured. He was to be the Way. Born; filled; anointed; led. That is the order of truth. The feature of Jesus' life following His anointing was the leading of the Spirit. The Holy Ghost comes to be Leader. When He comes to us He comes in Jesus' name to bring leadership to our lives. Failure to understand this fundamental point has resulted in much squandering of life and time, beside dissipation of power. On all sides from people seeking guidance one hears such expressions as, 'I have put out a fleece.' Apparently a place has been reached where guidance is needed before another step be taken, so in some way or another something is laid out in much the same way as Gideon of old laid out his famous fleece because he needed assurance about God's word. It seems everybody has a fleece out. One man (and that in the old covenant, mark you) put out a fleece, and apparently set the fashion for all time -- for all God's children. They think this is a good, proper, scriptural way to receive spiritual guidance. But he who needs this kind of guidance lacks leadership. It seems that with the coming of the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost all such extraneous means of guidance passed away. Certainly the reference to casting lots in Acts 1: 26 seems to be the final one in the entire Bible. The reason for this is that guidance is usually dependent upon outward 'signs', 'words', etc., but leadership is from within. The Holy Ghost guides from within, leading with power from the inward man. The Lord Jesus is both our Leader and Example in this. We must look to Him, not to the Old Testament examples, great as they were.

Reading that verse in Isaiah 53, which says 'He was led as a Lamb to the slaughter,' we may conjure up visions of horrible men leading Jesus on to death. But He was not really led of them, He was led of the Spirit. That He was led by those 'awful' Roman soldiers was purely of secondary importance. He was led by the Spirit as a Lamb to the slaughter. No wonder His Father had insisted that in those days of youth He stay in Nazareth and grow in grace and wisdom and be strong in Spirit. Let us see and understand this very clearly. Too many people are wanting to push out too many others before they are strong enough to go, with the result that they crack up or break down. So many pitiful wrecks are to be found strung out round the world, smashed and ruined, because these great cardinal truths have not been recognised.

Perhaps the most surprising thing about this leadership is where the Spirit led HIM. It may be that we have never seen that the Holy Ghost sometimes leads into the wilderness. What He never does is lead us into the wilderness of sin nor leave us in the wilderness of carnality, but He does at some time lead all God's sons unto the wilderness of temptation, a place of conflict with and victory over the devil. We are not led of the Spirit and lost in the wilderness at the same time.

Jesus was not lost, or going round in frustrating circles in the wilderness, but led of the Spirit to accomplish the next thing chosen by His Father for Him to do. Forty days and forty nights He was there with the wild beasts. Tempted, tempted, tempted; no food day in, day out: in the presence of wild beasts and under the power of the devil. But how can this be? The Spirit-filled Son of God; surrounded by wild beasts; 'that cannot be right,' one is tempted to think. But it was right.

For the next few years He was always to have wild beasts around Him, and in far worse conditions than these, and the beasts were to be men; human beings existing in a spiritual wilderness. Look at Peter. Look at Judas. Listen to John, the beloved disciple, talking like a son of thunder and saying in effect, 'Let's kill them; let's call down fire from heaven; that's the way, let's blast a way through for our Lord.' These were the favoured apostles, chosen to be the foundation of the Church.

Further, He was absolutely surrounded by wild beasts on the cross. Psalm 22, with reference to His cross, speaks of bulls of Bashan and unicorns. All His life He was hounded by Herod, a man that was a fox. So a Lamb went out with the wild beasts and proved that all the wild beasts could not eat Him, nor men touch Him, for the gentle, tender Dove was upon Him and in Him. Hallelujah! All this time He was learning obedience. He was still full of the Spirit out there in the wilderness.

He had been led there by the Spirit for those forty days of terrible testing that culminated in the three great temptations which summed up and pointed all the devil could at that time level at Him. This is why He went out there all alone except for God. He must meet the devil and defeat him for the purposes of the ministry to which He was called and which He must fulfil. It was all in order that the Man in whom God is well-pleased should enter the ministry having personally defeated that old serpent the devil, for in the course of that ministry He had to be able to say to demons, 'Come out,' and be sure that they would come out of their victims.

And this is precisely what did happen. His ministry in this field was really only a mopping-up campaign. He had won the decisive battle out in the wilderness; the dragon had been overcome there. This is why you never read of Jesus saying to a demon, 'I bind your power,' or some such thing. He bound it in the wilderness long before He attempted to loose people in the land. He bound the strong man in the desert. He says that you cannot get into a strong man's house until you first bind the strong man.

It is truth. So He went out there and bound the strong man. He went to the cross finally and destroyed him, the Hebrews' letter says -- 'He destroyed him that had the power of death' -- but in the wilderness He bound him that had the power of bringing sicknesses, and diseases, and dementia, and lunacy, and depressions, and darkneses on people.

In this ministry He was a Man full of the Holy Ghost, dictating to the devil. You may say, 'But surely He did this because He was God.' Yes, that is quite right, but God humbled Himself, to teach us how every man should do it. He humbled Himself, we are told, and took upon Himself the form of a slave. 'Being found in fashion as a man' He did not go around saying, 'Look here, I'm God!' His favourite description of Himself was 'Son of Man.' Jesus Christ did everything as a Man by the same means by which men like you and I

can do it. He was born of the Spirit; anointed by the Spirit; full of the Spirit; led by the Spirit; and by the Spirit victorious over that great opposing spirit, the devil. That is how you and I can do it. We all can do it providing we will go God's way.

At this point let us pause to gather comfort for our souls in contemplation of the ways and experiences of this wonderful God-Man. When we are sorely tormented, and tossed, and tried, and not knowing which way to look or where to turn, remember Jesus. It may not be generally realised that our blessed Lord, during the time of these awful tests at the devil's hands, was actually under Satan's power, but He was. Who carried Jesus away and put Him on a pinnacle of the temple? None other than the devil. Jesus did not go there Himself. We are not told that angels took Him there, and He most certainly did not climb that pinnacle Himself. It says that the devil set Him on that pinnacle of the temple. It is astonishing to believe that He was actually under the power of Satan for that purpose. Do not read too much into it but believe what the scripture says. The devil put Him there, your Bible says so. The devil also took Him up into an exceedingly high mountain; not in His imagination; there is nothing imaginary about this thing, it was actual. See! When the devil got Jesus there upon that temple steeple he said, 'Cast yourself down.' In other words Jesus was at that moment tempted by the devil to commit suicide!

'Go on,' says the devil to many a man, 'cast yourself down, destroy yourself.' We know how the devil falsified the word originally intended as blessing to us from God; he did it oh so subtly; he just omitted a few vital words from the original promise, that is all. It sounded right but it was wrong. But even if the devil actually quotes the word of God verbatim it is still wrong, because it is he who is quoting it. Do not make too much of it if in quoting the Bible you accidentally leave out a word or two; it is the deliberate omission or addition of words that is wrong. This was evil; because as well as being manipulated it was quoted from a wrong motive in the heart of him who said it. It is the motive in the heart and the end in view that decides what is really being said, and whose word it is, God's or the devil's. The spirit in which a thing is said, the attitude of the heart, is the deciding factor as to what is meant.

But the glory of all this is that at the vital point of decision, the precise moment preceding the end in view or the action aimed at, Jesus said, 'No.' In this He has given us the example and shown us the way to act in temptation. When the tempter's power is strong and we are being powerfully operated upon by him, and seem irresistibly borne along under his will to terrible depths of sin, or heights of pride or desire, the sin has not marked us if at the crucial moment we say 'No.' Temptation has no meaning and is of no value unless it has power to attract or impel or carry toward the object of desire. But having accomplished this it has not yet become sin in us. Our will and consent must be procured in the matter before sin is either practised or imputed. The Lord Jesus is our example here. So the devil left Him. Apparently on top of the temple. How He got down we are not told. But we do know that angels came and ministered to Him, so perhaps they got Him down. The devil had tempted the Lord to step outside the angels' charge over Him, and had He obeyed Satan He would have missed the true angelic ministry. By presuming to act as though He could not fail to have it He would surely have lost it. The ministry of angels is for people who live in the Spirit, and walk in the Spirit, and are led of the Spirit. Amen! All heaven's hosts crowd around to minister to the sons of God. What a glorious thing this is! Abiding there, how safe you are.

We will proceed one step further and see the end of this great truth, in verses 13 and 14. 'When the devil had ended all the temptation, he departed from Him for a season. And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit.' There is the word again, 'the power' (Greek -- 'dunamis'). After that He was the Man of power among men. Hast thou power? Jesus' first use of power was to bind the devil. That is the example set by Jesus; first render the devil impotent to prevent your works. How far reaching all this is. How many of us

have done it? We will not resort to any 'trumpet-blowing', but how many of us have done it? Herein lies the secret of the successful ministry of Jesus; this was how He got glory on earth among men. This is the truth, the way and the Life of the Spirit of God as set forth by the Lord Jesus Christ.

## Ministry

Let us observe Him now as He returns in the power of the Spirit into Galilee. We read that His fame goes out through all the region round about. 'And He taught in their synagogues, being glorified of all.' How truly He has earned it. In any man wisdom, grace, power deserve fame, especially when he has defeated the devil. So He goes home to Nazareth. That is the place to go when you are talking of wisdom, grace and power; go to the place where you have been brought up. It is there first you must stand the test and show that you are full of the power of the Spirit.

'I've got the power,' says someone, 'I'm going out to the Amazon!' The first place to Visit, beloved, is your Nazareth. They will know there whether or not you have the power. Perhaps before any of us try miracles we ought to try something like this. He went back to the place where He had been brought up and everybody knew Him. He had lived with them, so to them He had to return; He went home; it is as simple as that. Going back among the people that knew Him, in the power of the Spirit, it was soon clear to all that this power He now had was utterly consistent with the grace that had been upon Him all His life.

Now, one of the first things to learn about the use of power is apparently the correct way to interpret and relate the scriptures to oneself. He comes to Nazareth (v. 16), 'Where He had been brought up: and, as His custom was, He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up for to read. And there was delivered unto Him the book of the prophet Esaias. And when He had opened the book, He found the place where it is written, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because He hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor.'" One can almost hear Him saying, 'I've been longing to do it for these years, but now I come in the Spirit of the Lord to do so.'

He stood there, anointed to preach the gospel to the poor, wanting to heal the broken-hearted, ready to preach deliverance to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, and to set at liberty those that were bruised. Oh, how willing He was to preach the acceptable year of the Lord to them, and now the moment had arrived! When he had read this scripture the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on Him (v. 20). Not on the Bible, note, but on Him. He closed the book; not finally for all time, but finally for that occasion.

He opened it again afterwards, of course, because the book was written about Him. But the words and the action were significant enough to cause the eyes of everybody in the synagogue to fasten upon HIM; watching, and listening, and waiting. 'He began to say unto them, "This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears.'" That, just that, is what every Spirit-anointed man must be able to do. He was fulfilling the scripture; the word in flesh right there in their presence, able to do the thing He read, their eyes and ears being witness that He had said it.

Herein lies the essence of all Bible reading in public by such men. We must learn to take up scripture more for its application to the needs of the moment and its fulfilment in men than for our summarising, or preaching, or teaching. The Spirit-born, -filled, -anointed, -led, -empowered man is the man who fulfils scripture. That, primarily, is His ministry.

One night, following a meeting in a room, two young ladies remained behind after everyone else had gone. Both had demons in them. One knelt for ministry, and as the demon left her she screamed as much in terror as under the torment of the horrible thing that had been indwelling her. The other girl, sitting and watching, was absolutely terrified. She had never seen or heard anything like it before. She could have been told, 'This day is scripture being fulfilled in your ears!' This is what happened when Jesus moved amongst men and women. It is true scriptural ministry. Jesus did not stand up and preach a sermon to them in Nazareth, He just read scripture and said, 'Now this is fulfilled.' Beloved, if you are a preacher of the word, fulfil it in the eyes and ears of the congregation. This is what Spirit-filled men will do. Fulfil the word. Unless it is fulfilled, both the scriptures and all you say will be thought to be empty words. All must be completely filled out by a life: and only the Spirit-empowered life can do that. The letter kills; only the Spirit gives life.

From Nazareth Jesus went out over that land on a mission of fulfilment; he opened the eyes of the blind, delivered the captives, and ministered to the broken-hearted; because He was so full Himself He could fulfil scripture to them. Do you see Him as His heart goes out to that poor woman following the corpse of the son who is borne dead (as his father before him) to the grave? Imagine the infinite compassion of this Man of the Spirit as He halts the funeral procession, raises the young man from the dead and gives him back to his mother; Jesus' own mother was a widow, and He was her eldest son! Heart-healing is the most wonderful ministry. Have you got such a desire and ministry to build Father's House? Have you met anyone like a man who is really anointed and filled with the Spirit of God, living and moving in power and compassion? Have you ever met a man like Jesus? Have you? He came back in the power of the Spirit from His victory over Satan. He was full. He had always been full of grace it seems. He had been growing and 'increasing in that for thirty years. Now for three years He was going to move in 'the power'. In those three years He swept over His country like fire from heaven. Oh, God raise up such ministers! Where are they? Put down all others, Lord; put them down. We need men and women filled with the Spirit of God moving only in the leadings of the Spirit.

Maybe it is strange to us today that the assertions Jesus made at Nazareth should evoke such murderous thoughts in His neighbours' hearts. But people do not like the dead letter closed by a living hand. Leave them with their scriptures and their dreams and hopes and all is well. Say you have come to fulfil them and interest will turn to hate in some quarters. But a man must follow his Lord. Nobody ought to start his preaching career until he can start where Jesus started both geographically and socially, beside scripturally, especially in regard to power. The tale of the desolation all over the whole wide world is the tale of unanointed preachers. Our gospel is not words, it is the power of the Spirit working with and through the preached words unto demonstration in human lives.

This is not the end of the references in Luke's Gospel to the person and work of the Holy Spirit. We have briefly looked at the beginnings of the ways of God in the life of the Man from heaven, believing that the inspired writer presents Him unto us in a representative manner; our Example. If you have been latterly born of the Spirit, do not start blaming yourself that you are not yet ministering as Jesus. Being born of God -- that is, being baptised in the Spirit -- set your heart to be all that you may be in His name as outlined in these scriptures. Birth is unto growth and manhood of grace and wisdom and power. The anointing, and the leading of the Spirit is your privileged heritage, that you too may move and fulfil your part in this precious, powerful ministry of the Lord. Though others' lives do have bearing upon our own, look not to others for your prime example, but to the Lord Himself. By the Spirit He will live out the same glorious life and works through us as He did Himself, accomplishing His same powerful ministry within and

through all those chosen, as He, to do His Father's will.

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