

# Being Filled With the Holy Spirit - Part 1

by L.E. Maxwell

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*Being filled with the Spirit is not a new gospel, but rather an understanding of the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, which brings life and fullness to believers.*

**Duration:** 23:10

**Scripture:** John 3:3

**Topics:** "Spiritual Filling", "Holy Spirit"

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## Description

L.E. Maxwell discusses the significance of being filled with the Holy Spirit, emphasizing that this experience is for those who are born of the Spirit. He outlines the need for preparation and understanding of the Holy Spirit's role in the believer's life, cautioning against the misconception of a 'new gospel' centered on the Spirit rather than Christ. Maxwell highlights that while all believers have the Spirit, being filled with the Spirit involves yielding control to Him, which many Christians experience as a gap between their regeneration and filling. He warns against seeking the Spirit for personal success or recognition, urging believers to examine their motives for desiring the Spirit's fullness.

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## Transcript

This is message number five on the subject of the Holy Spirit, and in the process of preparing this message, it gets split into two. So that's number six for next Sunday, finishing off our subject today, which is being filled with the Spirit. That's our subject.

I have four main headings. For whom? And what is it? For what? And how? How remains for next Sunday, because we can't take everything in one sentence. Now, we've been giving time and consideration to preparations for being filled.

We mentioned how do we need to understand the meaning of the New Testament gift of the Spirit. Then we have three messages on preparation, especially the preparations of the disciples for the filling of the Spirit, and then the preparation of ourselves. What are the paths and the preparations necessary? Unless we have a prepared, broken-up, fallow ground, we should talk about any good seed sowing.

So we need some further studies on preparation, but that will also, those studies will come infiltrated into our consideration today and next Sunday. Now we want to speak on being filled with the Spirit. It's a very live and compelling subject.

It is overlooked by some, largely overlooked, because with many, Romans 8-9 is the Alpha and the Omega. If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. And having been regenerated, we have the Spirit, period.

That is about as far from a practical standpoint as many good, orthodox, fundamental folks go. That is partial teaching, inadequate, insufficient, and leaves God's people largely starved without the children's bread. On the other hand, there is the danger, which is being indulged, the subject of the filling of the Spirit being over-pressed by others, almost to the detraction from Christ.

We'll be having it in 1 John presently, but in 1 John we read that truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son, Jesus Christ. But that verse does not go on to say, and with the Holy Ghost. The omission in that instance is very illuminating and instructive.

Our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son, Jesus Christ. The Bible talks about the fellowship of the Spirit, talks about the communion of the Holy Ghost, but the Bible does not say anywhere, to my knowledge, about our having fellowship with the Spirit. There's a warning there, and I'll not go into it here at this time.

But the point is that our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son, Jesus Christ, leaving us directive in our worship and not localizing us for some perilous introspection, which might lead us to believe every spirit. Now, that's incidental, but I throw it in here. Now, in this subject, we do not introduce a new gospel of the Holy Ghost.

What do I mean? The gospel is concerning Christ, and when we talk about being filled with the Spirit, we don't want in the least to be detracting from Christ or in any way to be understood as preaching a new gospel of the Holy Ghost, which is the extreme to which some people verily go. Now, what do I mean? I simply mean this. If it is the Spirit of the Lord who gives us liberty and power and victory, remember this.

It is the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus who sets us free from the law of sin and death. So we don't have a new gospel of the Holy Ghost, but we do have an understanding that it is the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus to which we awaken and avail ourselves and make use of, which gives us liberty, freedom, power, and victory all along the way. Therefore, a word of caution, that in our mention of and teaching of the Holy Ghost, we are going to keep our directives right on the throne concerning God the Father and His Son, Jesus Christ, by the power or in the power of the Spirit who takes to the things of Christ to make them real to us.

Now, so there is no second gospel of the Holy Ghost any more than if I were to teach the subject of sanctification. I do not teach, even if I teach the sanctification of the Spirit, I do not teach a new gospel in sanctification. There is no new beginning to sanctification because regeneration is sanctification begun.

Similarly, I do not have a new gospel of the Holy Ghost. It's the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus. So I'm kept, captured, riveted, worshipful at the foot of the throne of the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb.

That's necessary, and some of you wouldn't think it is, but others may have experienced enough to know that there are perils. Now, for whom? For whom is the subject of the filling of the Spirit? For whom is the filling of the Spirit? Basically, let me just pass over it rather quickly, for those born of the Spirit, except the man be born of the Spirit. No man can say, that's John 3, 3 and 5, 1 Corinthians 12, 3, no man can say that Jesus is Lord but by the Holy Ghost.

It's the initial work of the Spirit to make Christ your Savior real to you. That is the birth of the Spirit. How are we so born? How are we so born? As many as received Him, John 1, 12, to them gave He power to become the sons of God which were born, not of blood, nor the will of flesh, nor the will of man, but of God.

Born of God, born of the Spirit. Now, those born of the Spirit are those who are conditioned, may I say, as candidates for the filling of the Spirit. Now, the Holy Spirit is the one that they which believe on Christ should receive.

That's plain John 7, 39. The Holy Spirit, listen, Christ, I've said before, Christ is God's gift to a sinning humanity. The Holy Spirit is the Father's gift to His born-again child.

There's the difference. Now, Peter at Pentecost laid down a simple condition. He said this, repent when they said, Brethren, what should we do? Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of the Lord Jesus, or in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and you shall receive the gift of the Spirit for the promises unto you, and so on.

Now, those born of the Spirit, then, are those for whom is the subject of the filling. They are candidates for the filling of the Spirit. Now, going on from that, what, what? For whom? Those born of the Spirit.

What? What do we mean by being filled with the Spirit? In John 10, 10, I read this, I have come, said the Lord Jesus, that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly. Now, if we who receive Christ are born of the Spirit, is it then true, is it then true that those who receive the Spirit are those filled with the Spirit? Yes and no. I'll take up no first.

No. I ask the question, is it then true that those who receive the Spirit are those filled with the Spirit? No. In this day, and since the gift of the Spirit, today, all we who have been born of the Spirit already have the Spirit as the gift.

Because having believed on Christ, you shall receive the gift. And we are, if any man, Romans 8, 9, if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His, hasn't been born again. So he couldn't be born again apart from the new birth of the Spirit.

Therefore his body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who dwells in him. Know ye not, we may be ignorant of it, but the fact is, we have had, have received the gift of the Spirit in the new birth. Now, that is no.

Yes. Is it true that those who receive the Spirit are filled with the Spirit? Yes. Here's the other side.

It is a receiving of the Spirit in the sense of turning over the controls to Him for His keeping, His guidance, His power, His strengthening, His undertaking. I take, He undertakes. Now, he who resides must come to preside.

For instance, you are here in this meeting this morning even as the Holy Spirit is locally present in your life, if you're born again. The Holy Spirit is locally present in you if you've been born again. But there's a difference between His being present and presiding.

There's a difference between your being locally present in this meeting, you're not emceeding the meeting. You're here all right, but you're not in charge. And there's that difference in many, in many believers' lives.

He's locally present. I don't know where He may be. He may be in the cellar or in the attic or in the old coal chute or somewhere of your life.

But the question is, He's not got all the keys, and He's supposed to have us, He's supposed to be at the control, completely at the control. Now, somebody as well said, It is not actually our receiving more of Him, but His getting more of us, His taking over and having more of us. Now this brings before us the question, Must there need be, must there need be an interval of time between our being born of the Spirit, receiving Christ as our personal Savior? Must there need be a gap of time, an interval of space, between our being born of the Spirit and our being brought under the complete control and filling of the Spirit? Is that a necessary interval and gap? Now, there was, I might mention two or three cases.

There was no gap of time in the house of Cornelius, for when Peter began to preach the gospel unto them, while I was presenting to them the gospel, the Holy Ghost came upon them, and they were filled with the Holy Ghost. We'll dwell on that in another connection later. And the Ephesian believers, when they heard about Messiah, were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus, filled with the Holy Ghost.

And in Acts 238, that we've just read, repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. Not necessarily any gap. There is therefore no reason why complete control by Christ and the filling of the Spirit should not accompany and follow immediately our capitulation to our complete surrender to Christ as Lord and Savior.

There's no doctrinal reason for any necessary gap between regeneration and being filled with the Spirit. There's no doctrinal reason for the same. We'll take that up, of course, again later in other connections.

In actual experience. Now, in actual experience, however, there is with most Christians, not all, but with most Christians there is a gap of time between their regeneration by the Spirit and their being filled with the Spirit. This has led some folks to conclude that there is a doctrinal connection, a doctrinal must-needs-be, which they would call a second blessing or a special experience subsequent to conversion, as a necessary, as we would say, sine qua non.

An absolute without which there is no filling of the Holy Ghost unless it be second and with a gap between. And there's quite an argument among the best of believers over something like this. Why is it? Why is it with most Christians there's a delay or gap of time? Why is it? Several reasons.

One, when we are coming to be saved by Christ, the Holy Spirit is dealing with us, not about our being filled. He's dealing with us concerning a sinning, guilty past, and you'd better take Christ as your Savior or perish. The Holy Ghost is convicting us of sin.

When it comes to being filled with the Spirit, we are dealing with Him concerning the fullness of Christ indwelling us. It's a different theme entirely. And in that sense, the subject being different, you can understand a different understanding.

And for that reason, knowledge is imperfect with most of us, and the subject of receiving Christ is different than being filled with the Spirit. So knowledge being imperfect, and furthermore, obedience is slow and sluggish, and most of us understand little about obedience to the Spirit of God when we come to bow the knee to Jesus Christ as Savior. We understand very little.

Our knowledge is imperfect. Our obedience is slow and sluggish. How to give the Holy Ghost fullness of way and sway in our lives is as a rule.

We're ignorant about that. We're disobedient. We're sluggish.

And faith is very slow and weak as well. Those are some of the reasons why there is a gap of time very often between regeneration and being filled with the Spirit in many Christians' lives. Now, this would be our third point that we'll develop a little more at length.

For what? For what? For whom? Those born of the Spirit. What do we mean by being filled? We've given a very, a very partial treatment to that. Now, for what? For what? Why or for what are we filled with the Spirit? Now, it's just here that mistakes, mistakes are made.

Motives, motives must be searched. Consider the subject briefly of mistakes. You and I, when we ask the question, for what am I wanting to be filled with the Spirit, we often have very strange, mistaken notions about the reason for being filled with the Spirit.

We consider the subject as a matter of success. We think of success as invariably attending a being filled with the Spirit, a great outward external success possibly. Here is where, here is where success is measured differently by God than it is by man, measured differently on a different scale and time.

This consideration should deliver us from being too sorely disappointed by some things in our own lives and in the lives of others. There are some things that do not always follow being filled with the power of the Holy Ghost. Now, listen.

It does not often produce, or does not always produce, great visible results in the world. No, seldom does this filling, seldom does this filling win the endorsement of the half-hearted believers of the country. In fact, they feel reproached so much they don't like you to be a spiritual believer around them.

They get unease. Now, there are many mistakes concerning the filling of the Holy Ghost. Such and such rhapsody, or such and such successors, making me a great one of some kind.

What mistaken notions we do get about this kind of thing. But greater is the mistake concerning our motive. Now, we want to consider the matter of motive.

Many people have their minds filled with a false, funny motive. They ask to be filled. They ask and receive not, because they ask amiss, lest that they might consume it upon their lusts, that they might enjoy this wonderful blessing.

Many people have their minds that way. They think of the Holy Spirit, fullest, as making them mighty and successful, and magnifying them, promoting their cause, building up their church, making me some great one, and others gyrating around me in admiration that I'm such a saint. Or there are many others who think of the filling of the Spirit as something to make them feel good or feel happy, and happy-fy them, and make them look and sound spiritual.

Still others, still others think of the fullness of the Spirit as enabling them to promote a cause or grow their church. I told you about Joe Stump, who had the idea if he only filled with the Holy Ghost, he could crack his whip over the congregation and make them line up and behave, forgetting that all the glory must belong to him, and that no place can glory in his presence. Do we forget that? In considering for what purpose we are to be filled, I want you to notice now some things that are illuminated.

Let us observe a series of pictures of men imbued with the Holy Ghost in both the Old and the New Testaments. Look at, listen to Elijah on Mount Carmel, a figure, a marvelous man, a splendid success, 400 prophets falling, unafraid, fearless, fighting the Lord's battles. A little later, under a juniper tree, praying he might die.

So you don't always find all the results of success in people that you'd like to see. You can see some disappointing results. Jonah, obedient to God's Spirit, faces all the might of Nineveh, demands repentance, and he sees the city kneeling, crying for mercy.

But the pouting prophet argues with God when the gourd vine withers up, and his preaching doesn't prove to be true. The city repents, and Jonah pouts. He wanted them destroyed, didn't he? I say they're going to die.

I'm a disappointed man. I'm a pouter. I said you're going to die, and I had a sneaky notion that God would be so good he'd give them repentance, and he did.

He's just like him. I'm a disappointed man. My reputation as a prophet has gone to pieces.

You mean that's the mighty Spirit-filled man that preached to Jonah, or preached to Nineveh? That's the man. So sometimes the results are not all you'd like to see in Spirit-filled men.

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