

# Ministry in the Spirit - 4. Be Continuously Filled With the Holy Spirit

by Michael Flowers

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*To live a life that is pleasing to God and to minister effectively in our gifts, we must be continuously filled with the Holy Spirit and maintain a relationship with Him.*

**Duration:** 27:51

**Scripture:** Matthew 6:33, Acts 7:51, 1 Corinthians 12:12, Ephesians 5:15-21

**Topics:** "Holy Spirit"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of mutual ministry and community in the body of Christ. He quotes Irenaeus, a second-century theologian, who said that the glory of God is a human being fully alive. The preacher then explores the keys to being fully alive, using Ephesians 5:15 as a guide. He highlights the need to live wisely and understand the will of the Lord. The sermon also delves into 1 Corinthians 12, focusing on the analogy of the body and the church. The preacher emphasizes the interconnectedness of the church and Christ, and the importance of mutual submission and ministry within the community. The sermon concludes with a reminder to continually ask, seek, and knock in our relationship with God, as He is the source of all life.

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## Transcript

All right, if you are following with me on your phone or in your Bibles, let's turn over to 1 Corinthians 12. And what we're going to do is we're going to take a little journey through parts of 1 Corinthians 12. And today I'm going to jump down to verse 12, actually, 1 Corinthians 12, 12 and start there.

I have good warrant for that because the first word in 1 Corinthians 12, 12 is four. It's like a therefore. We call it one baptism, but many fillings.

Let's begin reading in verse 12. For just as the body is one and has many members. And all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ.

And you would think he would say, so it is with the church. That would make sense because he's making the body and the church analogy here. But because the church and Christ are so intertwined, organically intertwined, he equates the church and Christ together here, even though there are differences.

We're not saying they're one in the same. OK, so it is with Christ in his body and his church, you could say. For in one spirit, we are all baptized into one body, one body, many members.

And now in this one spirit, we are all baptized into one body. And then it's a big diversity here where all the barriers have been broken down in this baptism and in this new family, in this new creation reality. Jews and Greeks, slaves are free.

We were all made to drink of one spirit. It's a beautiful analogy of the spirit being like the water of life, new birth comes through water, Jesus says, and spirit, water and spirit. These two go together.

In fact, water is a symbol. In a sense, becomes a sacrament because the Holy Spirit comes upon the water and blesses the water and makes it a sacramental grace for us. And I would just say this morning, we are what we drink.

Now, I'm not saying that we're God, but we are what we drink. We we become God like as we drink of God. We become holier as we drink of the Holy Spirit, just like we become inebriated if we drink too much wine.

We've been all made to drink of one spirit. It's a beautiful expression of life and sustenance. Remember, the water came forth from the rock in the wilderness, you know, and Moses hit the rock and water gushed forth.

And then Paul later on says, and the rock was Christ. We're drinking of Christ. You see, it's just this is a spiritual understanding of God being our source of life.

And we have to drink to receive that source of life. We have to drink and we've all been made to drink of one spirit. If water baptism is receiving the Holy Spirit, which Peter in Acts 2 says, what must we do to be saved? Repent, be baptized, and you will receive the Holy Spirit.

That's why we believe there is one baptism, but many fillings and many encounters of the Holy Spirit. And so if water baptism is receiving the spirit, then the baptismal life is a fellowship in the life of the Holy Trinity, a life which calls us to ask, seek and knock in childlike dependency. And I just can't stress enough when Jesus is talking about the Holy Spirit and prayer in Luke 11, 9, 13.

Jesus says, so I say to you, ask, and it's in the present tense and in the Greek, the present tense is a continuous tense, it's not a one time asking, it's a continual asking and receiving. And so I say to you, ask and it will be given, it will be given, search or seek and you will find, knock and the door will be open for you. And all of these are in the present tense, the continual present tense.

Keep on asking, keep on searching, keep on knocking and the door will be open for you. Yeah, you know, if you've walked with Christ long enough that every year you're asking and seeking and knocking for so many critical things in your life, you want to bring God into your lives right down to the most fundamental issues of life. You know, we're dependent on him to open doors, to provide jobs, to to heal our bodies, to do so much.

He's the source of all life. And so this asking and seeking and knocking is such a vital attitude to maintain. For everyone who asks, receives and everyone who searches finds may take a while, just have fun searching.

You're searching for treasure when you're searching for God. You're searching for this amazing treasure. So make it fun.

It's fun. And asking is fun, right? Unless you know and play the role of God and you know when it should be delivered and exactly how it should be answered, then it won't be fun. It'll be very frustrating when we ask in that way, because we already have the idea of how God is going to do it and should do it.

Right. So just just blow all that away. Right.

And just ask and remain open. That's the key to having fun asking. He who asks, receives and everyone who searches finds and for everyone who knocks, the door will be open.

And then he says, if anyone among you who if your children ask for a fish, if your child asks for a fish, will give a snake instead of a fish. Or if the child asks for an egg, will give a scorpion. He says, if you then being evil know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him? Isn't it beautiful? In speaking to baptized people, I still think this applies, right? Even though we've received the Holy Spirit, we have to keep asking for more.

And that's a quantitative word, which is problematic, but it's it's as good as I can give you right now, because we can't contain eternity. But as we ask and as we seek and as we knock there, as it were, some sort of increase of God's presence in our lives, there can be an increase of God's presence in our lives. There can be a more powerful manifestation of God's presence in our lives.

There's varieties of gifts. There's varieties of manifestations. Right.

And it's all dependent on a people who are asking and seeking and knocking how to give good gifts to one another, how to release our gifts that we have that God has given us. For the common good policy, for the common good, that's what the gifts are for. We're a gifted people who give gifts to one another.

That's what the body of Christ is. It's a family. It's a it's not a one way gift, but it's a two way gift.

It's a reciprocal gift. I minister to you and you minister to me. You minister to someone else.

They minister to you. If our mission could be stated very simply as helping other people become fully alive in Jesus Christ, we get that from Irenaeus, the second century, that the glory of God is a human being fully alive. So what are some of the keys to being fully alive? Ephesians 5 15.

Be careful then how you live. OK, not as unwise people, but as wise, making the most of the time because the days are evil. So do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is.

Do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery. But be filled with the spirit. As you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs among yourselves, singing and making melody to the Lord in your hearts, giving thanks to God, the father at all times and for everything in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Be subject to one another out of reverence for Christ. OK, and then he goes on and he elaborates on being subject to one another. But even that's our submission in our congregation is mutual.

You're submitted to me. I'm submitted to you. It's a mutual submission.

Husbands and wives are mutually submitted in this new community that Paul is talking about. And so that mutuality is so important to get for community life, for family life, for worship. Because as God gives to us, we give back to God, giving him thanks.

It's not like a one way relationship. I think God really loves our gratitude. You know, when the 10 lepers were healed by Jesus, he was amazed that the only one came back and said, thank you.

Where are the other nine? You know, it really is not a one way giving relationship with God. He expects something in return. And it's something that we can all give.

It's not like a rich person giving this extravagant gift to a poor person, expecting something in equality given back. It's not like that. It's like it's like this extremely, eternally rich being giving to us something and then expecting something that we can all get back.

We can all pull it off no matter how poor we are. And it's called gratitude. It's called Thanksgiving.

It's called giving him glory and praise. That's all he expects. And he expects it because he loves it.

I mean, it ministers to him, you know, we can minister to the Lord. That's what we're doing this morning. We're ministering to the Lord.

And so be filled with the spirit is one way we want to consider this today of helping people become fully alive. I need to be filled with the spirit to be fully alive. And I can't depend on my baptism.

Forty two years ago, that's the beginning of a life where I seek to live fully alive in Christ. Well, in pairing overindulgence of alcohol, don't be drunk with wine, with the spirit. He's pairing these two things.

We're dealing with a question of influence. OK, don't be drunk with wine. That would be debauchery, he says.

But be filled with the spirit. He's going to say, what does it look like to be filled with the spirit? We're going to look at that. Right.

But be filled with the spirit. So it's a question of influence. Maybe you've gotten a DUI, I don't know.

But it's you know, what is that? What is a DUI? What does that mean? Driving. Driving under the influence, right? And we we must minister under the influence, right? We must minister an MUI, right? A MUI. We must minister under the influence of the Holy Spirit.

And that's how you all minister. Right. Under the influence of the Holy Spirit.

So it's not about drinking too much wine, but we can't drink too much of God. Right. You've all been made to drink.

So get to drinking. That's what this is saying. Get to drinking.

Come on. The influence and power of the Holy Spirit takes on a variety of manifestations within ministry, within service, ministry and service of the same thing. But it's always holy.

It's not debauchery. It's always holy, contrasting debauchery, excessive indulgence in impurity. That's what debauchery is.

It's just an excessive indulgence. Be filled. That word has this sense of always being filled to the full, always being filled to the full.

It's a command. It's in the imperative mood. OK, in the Greek, if you look at the grammar of this, Paul is saying be filled with the spirit.

It's not optional. He's not saying that if you like, if you want to be filled with the spirit and he's talking to baptized Christians. OK, let's let's get this straight.

He's talking to the Christian community. Right. And he's saying be filled with the spirit.

Paul, I thought I was filled with the spirit baptism. Yeah, there's one baptism, but many feelings, many feelings, endless feelings. Be filled with the spirit.

It's an exhortation. It's not optional. And then it's in the plural form, it's not just for a few of us, it's for all of us, all of you, all of God's people, be filled with the spirit post-baptism.

And then it's in the present tense. OK, we saw that with ask, seek, knock. It's keep on, never stop being filled with the Holy Spirit.

Isn't that great that God just keeps giving this eternal flow of life is just coming to us and we can open our arms to that eternal flow. We can close our arms to the eternal flow. We can resist the Holy Spirit.

It's easy to resist the Holy Spirit. I've resisted the Holy Spirit a lot in my life. I know what it's like.

I know what it's like. Act 751 says, and this is Stephen speaking, a sermon that got him killed. And you can imagine why when I say this, you stiff neck people.

That's what he's addressing. He's talking to circumcised Jews, OK, and he says, your hearts and your ears are still uncircumcised. You are just like your ancestors.

You always resist the Holy Spirit because the Holy Spirit doesn't control us. We can't be controlled by God. God doesn't control anybody.

Right. I believe we have to participate under the influence of the Holy Spirit. But it's easy to resist that.

We can also quench the Holy Spirit. First Thessalonians 5:19. What does that mean? Quench.

How do you quench the Holy Spirit? What does that mean? It says, do not quench the spirit. Do not despise prophetic words, but test everything. Hold fast to what is good, abstain from what is evil.

OK, so what does that mean to quench to it means to extinguish the flame, but put out the fire. And so in this sense, he's used he's playing with the symbol of fire. Passion, purity, you know, all of that.

The fire of God is to purify us. Right. Our God is a consuming fire.

And so do not quench that consuming fire. Do not quench. Don't put out the flame of the Holy Spirit.

Well, how do we do that? Can we put out God's flame? Yeah, in our lives we can. As much as it depends upon us, we can put out the flame. We can quench the Holy Spirit.

It's a command. Don't do it. So, OK, how do we do that? Well, one of the things that was happening in the community at Thessalonica is that they had these off prophecies probably.

And it was like crying wolf after a while because that there's had so many prophecies that were off that they were beginning to despise the prophecies. Right. And Paul is saying, wait, wait, wait, don't despise prophetic utterances.

Right. Give grace to the prophetic people. They need grace.

They need grace, but test everything. You must test every prophetic word. We're going to deal with prophecy a couple of weeks.

OK, so we'll deal more with this. But it's one way to quench the Holy Spirit is to say no more prophecy. Don't despise prophecy.

Paul is saying because that will put out the spirit's fire because that's how God speaks to us. It's one of the utterance gifts. And Paul says, I want you to eagerly desire the greater gifts.

And he says prophecy is the greatest gift. So we'll get there. It's also possible, though, like in Ephesians 4:30 to grieve the Holy Spirit.

This is all about the Holy Spirit being a person. This is the personality of the Holy Spirit. It's not a force.

It's not an it. It's the person of the Holy Spirit who can be quenched or his flame, his passion put out in your life. It can be resisted.

No, I don't want any more of that. Or he can be grieved in the Holy Spirit. You know what it feels to be grieved, you know, where you've been cut here in your hearts is going like, oh, you've been it's a real hurt and you know where it feels.

It's just somewhere in here in the gut, right? It's there. Sometimes we'll just go. And that's what the Holy Spirit can be like.

He can just be going. Oh, Michael said that I was repenting all week of some things that I said, even in my in my message last week, you know, this is like, oh, Lord, why did I say that? Unless we have a relationship with God where we're going constantly, I said it again or I did it again, then these things pile up and we need to learn how to keep short accounts with God and understand that that's how grace works with us. Right.

If we it's OK to tell daddy that you blew it, it really is. It's OK to let him know what grieved you. It's really OK because he already knows it.

Right. And I think pulling away and resisting that kind of relationship with God can actually grieve him. Right.

It can grieve him. We don't want to grieve the Holy Spirit says, let no evil talk come out of your mouths, but only what is useful for building us up as there is need so that your words may give grace to those who hear. And then the next sentence context is everything you guys.

He's talking about sins of the tongue and do not grieve the Holy Spirit, because that's how we do it, by criticizing and judging and, you know, not being forgiving and being angry. All of these things grieve the Holy Spirit because the Holy Spirit is in all of us. Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with which you were marked with a seal for the day of redemption, put away from you all bitterness.

Context is everything here. How do you grieve the Holy Spirit? Being bitter and not giving it to him. Right.

Put away all bitterness and wrath, put anger away and wrangling like that. And slander together with all malice and be kind to one another. Oh, yeah, because the Holy Spirit's like a dove.

It's almost as if his presence departs, even though it never departs. Right. He's everywhere.

He fills all things. Be tenderhearted, forgiving one another as God in Christ is forgiving you. Hmm.

It's a very close communion that he wants where we don't grieve him. And when we do, we recognize it and we confess it. We don't resist him.

But when we do, we say, Lord, I have been resisting what you want me to do here. Like the Holy Spirit may put in you like the knowledge that you need to go talk to somebody that you've offended or that you've heard. And that's the spirit's voice.

Let me tell you, the devil will never tell you to go ask for forgiveness. You don't have to worry about that. Is that is that you, Lord? There's just certain things you don't have to pray about.

Right. Isn't that good? You don't have to worry about everything because, you know, the things that we've been told and revealed to just do them, you know, under the grace of God. But yeah.

And so the prompting, that would be a prompting. I need to talk to that person. There's a prompting here, just like when you feel that you've been hurt.

But it's that still small voice is what it is. It's a still small voice. It's not an audible voice.

Right. It can be. But I don't hear the audible voice of the spirit or of God, but I get the promptings.

And so I can say, no, I'm not going to do that. It's going to cost me too much. So this is learning how to walk in the spirit, because these things are these are intertwined with ministering in the gifts of the spirit.

We can more powerfully minister in the gifts of the spirit if we have this kind of relationship with our own stuff, with the spirit. Right. It's not just about ministering prophecy to people, but it's also about letting the prophetic God speak to you about what things need to be changed in your life.

And when God says it, there's grace there and we can all hear the Lord. My sheep know my voice. And so it's that willingness to be corrected.

Alongside that willingness to step out in faith, right, and go to another person and bless them as well, it's not just keeping short accounts and asking for forgiveness, that's that's a part of it and it has to be a part of it. But that is maintenance so that we can do the stuff. There's maintenance and then there's doing the stuff, ministering in the Holy Spirit, ministering in our gifts so that when you lay hands on someone, you've got a clear conscience.

It's very important. So it's a command to be filled with the spirit. It's for everybody.

It's in the plural form and it's continually being filled. It's in the present tense. And so why would Paul tell Christians who have already been filled with the spirit to be filled with the spirit and be filled continually? Because there is a tendency.

There's a tendency here of being low. Of drinking, you know, we can just go like, I don't want any more, I don't want more or I'm resisting or I'm avoiding, you know, spending time with God in order to get filled up. Wouldn't it be great if you could just fill your tanks up at the pump and you never have to go back? It'd be so awesome.

Just one tank of gas the rest of your life. I was out driving Liz's SUV the other day and I just I had to use the SUV for a purpose of hauling something. And so I didn't check the gas gauge, you know, because I don't drive the car.

Have you ever gotten in your spouse's car and you're out driving because you've not checked how much gas is in there? And it's all of a sudden it was it was basically on empty. Okay. And so then eventually I'm driving out and I'm seeing the light come on.

It's great. I said, thank you for warning lights. I used to have an old VW that I would go back and forth to college in.

That was my first car when I was 16. And of course, those VWs were it was a Beetle. Right.

And they're notorious for the gas gauge going out. Has anybody had that experience? Right. Yeah.

So I would drive back and forth from Florida to Tulsa. With no gas gauge. And I was looking at the odometer trying to figure out, you know, how OK, how much farther can I go? And I ran out a couple of times on the side of the road.

Yeah. And that's the way our lives can be sometimes. Right.

Here's the difference. You can run out of gas with your car, but you can never run out completely of the Holy Spirit once you're baptized. In other words, he's always there in that situation where he's always there.

Yeah, you're secure in Christ. I know I'm saved. I just don't feel that fullness.

And I don't want to pray for anybody right now because I don't have faith for that. That kind of thing, you know, where you're avoiding. I don't have faith for that.

You avoid. It's kind of like, please, Sherry, don't ask me to be on the team today because, you know, I had a bad week or something like that. Right.

A lot of times we have to just press on with the bad week in our dependency and ask and seek and knock. Right. And do it in our weakness.

Because really, we're always missed. Are we ever strong? Be strong in the Lord. The flesh wants to be strong in place of the Lord.

And so we listen to that. Well, I'm not feeling like I should do this. I'm tired of, you know, it's kind of like once a baptized Christian is participating in Jesus, even though they're feeling a little low in the tank, they

just press on in faith.

I walk by faith and not by sight. Yeah. Walk by faith and not by sight.

Signs of being filled with the Holy Spirit as you sing songs and hymns and spiritual songs. Worship, that's the fastest way to come into a fullness of the Holy Spirit is to recognize the power of worship when you start worshiping him and giving out of your low tank. I don't feel like worshiping today.

That's the exact time you need to really just press in and just do it. I will bless the Lord. Sometimes it's an I will bless the Lord, not when I feel like raising my hands or serving the Lord or no, it's I will do that.

And then the power comes a lot of times I've noticed in my life, not always, but a lot of times God meets you halfway. It's this connection to the Lord in our hearts, giving thanks to God, the father at all times. It's at all times.

I will bless the Lord at all times. And for everything in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. And so being full of the Holy Spirit.

It's completely tied in with worship, it's completely tied in with having an attitude of gratitude and it's completely tied in and affects our relationships, submit one to another is the next phrase. And so Paul elaborates on that. I'm not going to go there, but those are some of the signs of being filled with the Holy Spirit.

The proof of being full of the Holy Spirit is not speaking in tongues. That's not the evidence of being filled with the Holy Spirit. You may speak in tongues.

Paul's saying be filled with the Holy Spirit. And he doesn't mention any of the gifts here, speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, making melody in your heart, being having this attitude of gratitude to the Lord. That's what it means to be full of the Holy Spirit there in that passage.

There's so many ways when we're full of the Holy Spirit. There's so many possibilities that open up in our lives. Right.

And so let's let's pray and just ask the Holy Spirit to give us a heart that's hungry, that we would continually ask and seek and not knowing that our heavenly father will give the Holy Spirit to those who ask. And we need to continually be filled continually. And so, Lord, we just thank you.

Let your grace abound.

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