

# The Local Church That God Blesses - Power for Christian Living

by Peter Brandon

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of the Holy Spirit in a Christian's life, highlighting the fullness of the Spirit, the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, and the purpose and evidence of a spirit-filled life.*

**Duration:** 1:03:13

**Scripture:** Ephesians 5:14

**Topics:** "Holy Spirit", "Christian Maturity"

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## Description

Peter Brandon emphasizes the necessity of being filled with the Holy Spirit for living a holy life and experiencing true Christian maturity. He explains that the Holy Spirit is not merely an influence but a divine person who empowers believers to walk in righteousness and grow in their faith. Brandon outlines the steps to being filled with the Spirit, including hunger for God, exposure to His presence, consecration, and faith. He highlights that a Spirit-filled life is characterized by love, joy, and submission to one another, ultimately leading to a vibrant and effective local church. The sermon calls for believers to recognize the power of the Holy Spirit in their lives and to allow Him to transform them into the image of Christ.

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## Transcript

Tonight we're going to look at the power to live a holy life and we're going to look at that expression to be filled with the spirit. Would you please turn first of all to Ephesians chapter 5. Ephesians 5 reading from verse 14. Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, or literally the dead ones, and Christ shall give thee light.

See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil. Wherefore be not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is. And be not drunk with wine wherein is excess, but be filled with the spirit.

Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing a making melody in your heart to the Lord, giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God. Now the next part of the chapter we're going to deal tomorrow night when we're going to speak on the subject, building a New Testament home in a permissive society. Now so that we get the qualifying verses in regard to being filled with the spirit, would you turn back to Romans 8 and read from verse 1. Romans 8 verse 1. There is therefore now no

condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walked not after the flesh, but after the spirit, and that last clause, as most of you know, is not in most of the original scriptures.

For the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do in it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, meaning a sin offering, condemn sin in the flesh. That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit.

For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh, but they that are after the spirit, the things of the spirit. For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and freedom. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God, it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.

So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God. That 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.

And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin, that the spirit is life because of righteousness. But if the spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his spirit that dwelleth in you. Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh to live after the flesh.

For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die. But if through the spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. For as many as are led by the spirit of God, they are the sons of God.

Now the Lord will bless to us those tall portions of his work. I think it's true to say that one of the most important subjects in the Bible is the subject of the fullness of the spirit. If we are going to see real restoration in these last days, each one of us must get back to the practical meaning of this little term being filled with the spirit.

Now before we can really discuss this, we must look at the personality of the Holy Spirit. Now if my memory serves me right, I believe that there are 14 titles given to the Holy Spirit. In fact, every title that has been given to the Lord Jesus, with the exception of two, has also been given to the Holy Spirit.

But the three major titles are as follows. He is called the Spirit of God. He is called the Spirit of Christ.

He is called the Spirit of Holiness or the Holy Spirit. Now the Spirit of God reveals to us his essential divinity. The Spirit of Christ reveals to us his unique objectivity.

And the Holy Spirit reveals to us his personal identity. Now the Spirit of God, when we think of the Holy Spirit, we must never think of him as an it. Always think of him as a him.

And we must remember that in every single detail, he is co-equal as God, and he is co-equal as the Lord Jesus. Sometimes we call him the third person of the Trinity, but you will never find that expression in the Old or the New Testament. This may be surprising, but the first divine person ever to be mentioned in the Scripture is the Spirit of God.

For instance, when the Scripture says, in the beginning God created the heaven and earth, the word God there is Elohim, and it refers to the Trinity. And when it says the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the deep, that shows to us that the first divine person ever mentioned in the Scripture is the Spirit of God. Now what makes God, God? Well he must be infinite.

That means he is not limited by time, space or matter. That is what the word infinite means. But there are three great attributes that show to us the essential deity of the whole Trinity.

Now what are they? God is omnipresent. That means he is everywhere. If I may put that quite simply, he is transcendent.

That means he is so great that he is outside of time and space and looks upon created matter as a small thing. Think of that. Then God is imminent.

That means God has projected his glory into everything that he makes so that the heavens declare the glory of God and the expanses show forth his handiwork. So is the Holy Spirit. David said, Whither shall I fly from thy spirit? Whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend into heaven, thou art there.

If I descend into hell, thou art there. In other words, he caught this great truth that the Spirit of God was omnipresent. And that means he fills the whole universe and at the same time can fill every single believer.

Secondly, the Holy Spirit, like God, is omnipotent. That means he has all power. And that causes our mind to boggle.

We must remember this, that Job said the Spirit of God created him. We must always remember this, that every single miracle in the Old Testament and every single miracle in the New Testament was performed and enacted by the Holy Ghost. Even the great miracle, perhaps the greatest of all, the incarnation, was the marvellous work of the Holy Spirit.

The Spirit of God shall come upon them. When the Lord Jesus was dying upon the cross, the Hebrew writer tells us that the Lord Jesus was being aided as he was making his atoning sufferings before God by the Eternal Spirit. When he was raised from the dead, Romans 8 tells us very emphatically that it was the Holy Spirit that raised him from the dead.

And when the Lord Jesus comes the second time, it will be the Holy Spirit that will change your body from the body of humiliation to the body of glory when he hears the triumphant shout. So can we see now that the Holy Spirit, like God, is all-powerful? Thirdly, the Holy Spirit is omniscient. Now what does that mean? God never thinks.

Can I repeat that? God never thinks, he knows. That means when he looks at creation, he says that he is the Alpha and the Omega. He looks upon the whole universe as though it was a simple yesterday.

You see, we think God knows, and therefore the Holy Spirit, says Paul writing to the Corinthians, and I want you to note this, searches the deep things of God. And that reveals to us the depth of his glorious infinite understanding. Now can we see when we talk about the Spirit of God, we're not talking about an influence, we're not talking about an active force, but we are talking about someone who is co-equal with God in every single detail.

Please do bear that in mind. Secondly, the objectivity of the Holy Spirit is quite simple. The work and the object of the Spirit is not to give you an it, but to give you a him.

In fact the Lord Jesus made it quite clear that when he would come, he would take of the things of Christ and reveal them to you. Therefore the purpose of the Holy Spirit is to make the Lord Jesus real to each

one of us. Now there are two ways in which you can learn of Christ, and this is very important.

If you have a good mind, you can study the subject of Christology, and you can know all about Christ through prophecy, you can know all about Christ through typology, you can know all about the attributes of Christ, and the sufferings of Christ, and the humanity of Christ, and the deity of Christ. You may have a vast understanding of the glorification of Christ, and all the prophecies relating to Christ, but that doesn't mean to say that you know Christ. It's one thing to know about him, it's another thing to know him.

And when the Apostle says that I might know him and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings being made conformable to death, he wasn't basically saying I want my mind filled with the doctrine of Christ, he had that of course, but he wanted to know the Lord Jesus intimately and experimentally. Now beloved, it's only the Holy Spirit that can make the book Christ that we find in the scripture, a living reality to you. And therefore, when you read of the disciples, you will find that when they were with the Lord Jesus, they were taught wonderfully well, but they all failed him.

But when the Lord Jesus was absent, and the Holy Spirit was present, they were transformed men and women. In fact they knew him far more intimately when he was absent than when he was present. They had a greater power, and they were far more like Christ.

Why? The Holy Spirit was making the Lord Jesus absolutely real to them. And beloved, the Holy Spirit can make the Lord Jesus as real to you as if Jesus Christ was standing before you, if we will let him. Now he wants to do that in two ways.

He wants to make Christ real to us objectively as a man who now lives at God's right hand, our great high priest. Now that's the Hebrew epistle. And then he wants to form the Lord Jesus in our bodies, so that the whole of our personality is invaded by the beauty and the loveliness of Christ.

And that is the subject of the Philippian epistle. And therefore the moment you become a Christian, the Holy Spirit comes into your life to make Jesus Christ real and precious and intimate. Objectively and subjectively.

Furthermore, he wants to move in a local church in such a way that the Lord Jesus becomes the sovereign head of that company. And therefore in that local church he wants to reveal the Lord Jesus in all his sovereign glory. So that year by year the members in that local church conform to his image.

That means if a brother came among you, shall we say in the year 1991, he would see Christ in you. Should he come back in two years time, he should see more of Christ in that local church. You see the church, or the local church, growing in conformity to Christ.

Or perhaps I should use a much better word, the local church being transformed by Christ. And then lastly, he is called the Holy Spirit. Now the Trinity is a mystery, and I'm so glad the Trinity is a mystery.

Wouldn't it be a terrible thing if our craniums could contain the Almighty God? How limited he would be. And isn't it wonderful to be able to preach someone that goes miles beyond your deepest thought. You see God is infinite.

The glory of God is transcendent. And yet he is so imminent that he can come and reveal Christ to you. Now in the Trinity there is one glorious Godhead.

Only one God comprised of Father, Son and Holy Ghost. You see you couldn't be saved apart from a Trinity. You say why? It was the Father that sent the Son.

It was the Son who came in manhood and died upon the cross for our sins. So that our sins might be forgiven. But it's the Holy Spirit that comes into you in order to bring the regeneration.

So you can see when God works, he always works in union. The Trinity moved in creation, and the Trinity moves in salvation. And the Trinity will move when there is a new creation again.

And you will notice this. Everything that God does is a triunity. You are a triunity.

You are body, soul and spirit. Time is a triunity. Past, present and future.

And everything that God makes, whether it's matter or the atom, is all in threes. Not fours, not fives, all in threes. Why? Because it was the Trinity that stamped itself upon the whole of creation.

I would like to go into that fact in detail, but of course we haven't got time for that tonight. Now how are we going to look at this subject? First of all, what is the fullness of the spirit? And I'm afraid I must make you work a little tonight, so that you turn to some scriptures and Ephesians to see how Paul uses this word, filled and fullness. Then we're going to have a look at how is the fullness of the spirit procured? And then we're going to look at the subject, the evidence, or if you like, the evidences of a spirit-filled life.

Now first of all, what is the fullness of the spirit? Would you go to the first chapter with me? And would you please look at Ephesians chapter 1, reading from verse 21. The Lord Jesus is far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come, and hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be head over all things to the church. Now the operative word there is head, and that refers to sovereignty.

Then he moves on and he says this, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all. So you can see in the first chapter, when he uses the word to fill, and he uses the word fullness that comes from the same root, it's associated with sovereignty. So when a person is filled with the Holy Spirit, he comes under the sovereignty of the Lord.

Now that's vital. Secondly, he uses the word in the third chapter, and I want you to note how he uses it. The third chapter, we'll look at his prayer from verse 14.

For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, that he would grant you according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man. That Christ may dwell in your heart, not by feelings, but by faith. That ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth and length and depth and height, and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, that ye might, note the word, be filled with all the fullness of God, and therefore being filled with all the fullness of God, now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us.

Therefore, we can see that the word fill, associated with the word fullness, is linked in that chapter, not with sovereignty, but with authority. And when a person is filled with the Holy Spirit, he has a new authority and a new power. Now that's marvellous, isn't it? But when we come to the fourth chapter, you will see that he uses the word again in a different way.

Look at verse 10. He that descended is the same also that ascended far above all heavens, that he might fill, the same word, all things. And he gave some apostles and some prophets and some evangelists and some pastors and teachers for the perfecting of the faith, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.

Now note verse 13. Till we all come to the unity of the faith, of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect, that means a matured man, unto the measure and the stature of the fullness of Christ. So you can see in the fourth chapter, he uses the word fill and it's not related to sovereignty, it's not related to authority, but it's related to maturity.

And that's the main meaning of the word. When we speak of a person being filled, we mean someone that's come into full maturity. I was once staying with a family and they had two boys in Canada.

And one boy was 18 stone, and you may not believe this, but it was perfectly factual, there wasn't an ounce of fat on him. He used to lift up these massive weights. And very stupidly, he was a Canadian and I was an Englishman and I thought he's not going to beat me.

But you know, when he wasn't looking, I tried to lift them up, I nearly got a hernia. I could write a book about that too. But you can see I was very, very foolish.

But I used to look at his brother who was much younger. And if I may say this, he looked a weed, thin and delicate. And one day the mother must have caught me eyeing the boys up and down.

And I was looking at this massive fellow and then I was looking at this boy. And then somehow she started to read my thoughts. She says, Peter, I know what you're thinking.

I said, what's that? How did they come from the same stock? Well, I was. And then she got a bit cross with me and she said, when he fills out, he'll be just like him. When he fills out, he'll be just like him.

Well, we received a photograph about two years ago of both these boys at a wedding. And would you believe it, he's filled out. And he's a massive boy.

But you see, when he was a lad, he was a weed, withered. But he filled out. Can I say this? There are thousands of withered Christians.

They have never grown. And it hurts the Lord Jesus. Do you know why? They're not filled with the Holy Spirit.

You see, and when people are filled with the Holy Spirit, they begin to grow, and they begin to come into spiritual maturity. And then you begin to grow from one degree to another, and there's no such thing in scripture as spiritual obesity. All growth is spiritual muscle in the New Testament.

Now, I think you can see by that, roughly, what it means to be filled with the Spirit. But we must be more basic. The first question I'm going to ask is this.

Is every Christian indwelt with the Holy Spirit? And the answer is yes. If we went through the book of the Acts, we would find ourselves in very deep water. Acts chapter 2 is different from Acts chapter 8. Acts chapter 8 is different from Acts chapter 9. Acts chapter 9 is different from Acts chapter 10.

And Acts chapter 10 is different from Acts chapter 19. So you can see in the book of the Acts, the Holy Spirit is coming. And there are contrasts.

But when you come to the Epistles, it's all fixed and settled. And this is what the Apostle says in the 8th of Romans. Now, if we have not the Spirit of Christ, we're none of his.

That means we're not saved. Again, when we come to the first chapter of the Ephesians, we find this. After, or as it should be rendered, since you believed, you were filled with the Spirit of promise.

Again, when you come to Galatians 3, the Apostle is arguing with the Galatians, and he says this to them. How did you receive the Holy Spirit? By the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith. And therefore, a person receives the Holy Spirit when they hear the gospel and believe.

And the moment you receive Christ as your Saviour, you're born again of the Holy Spirit, and you are indwelt by the Holy Ghost. Now that is absolutely vital and essential. But the second question is a little more delicate.

Is every Christian aware of the Holy Spirit? And the answer to that question is no. Let me prove it to you from the scripture. When Paul went to Ephesus, he found a group of disciples that were following John the Baptist, and they had been influenced by a great preacher whose name was Apollos.

And Paul could not identify whether they were Christian or not. Now what was his acid test? Did he say to them, have you been baptized by immersion? No. Did he say, have you got a letter of commendation? No.

Did he say, are you a member of the local church? No. What did he say? Now note, have you received the Holy Ghost since you believed? That's the question. Have you been born of the Holy Spirit? But when he writes to the Corinthians, who had really received the Holy Spirit at conversion, and some of them were living carnally, he did not say to them, have you received the Holy Spirit since you believed? Now note what he says.

What? Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit? Hadn't it dawned upon you that your body is the inner shrine of God's dwelling? How can you live a carnal life? In other words, he was saying, haven't you by divine revelation understood that the Holy Spirit is dwelling in you? Now my dear friends, every single Christian who is born again of the Holy Spirit has the Holy Spirit. But not every Christian is aware of it. That's why in Romans chapter 8 verse 2 the Apostle Paul says, For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made, not us, me free from the law of sin and death.

And even with the Apostle there came a moment when his eyes were opened to see that the Spirit of God was dwelling in him. Now this does not mean to say at that moment the Spirit of God came upon him. But his eyes were opened by divine revelation to see that the Spirit of God was dwelling in him.

Let me illustrate to get to the point. We were having a series of meetings in sleep, and I shall never forget this. And every morning we had these 7 o'clock prayer meetings, and I would come out about 10 to 8, and I would climb a little hill that was over a bridge, and I could hear a man coming along on a bike.

And he was puffing and panting and whistling and wheezing. I thought he had asthma. And I looked at the man, and he was trying to cycle over this bridge manually, and he had a moped bike.

Underneath him was an engine. Underneath him was power, but he was afraid of it. And he was using the bike manually, and you could see he was almost on the verge of having a heart attack.

And I felt like saying to him, Why don't you turn on the power? The next morning, I came out of the prayer meeting, and I was just climbing the hill, and I could hear his heavy breathing. And I looked, and the man was as red as a beetroot, sweating. And there he was, trying to get over the hill with his moped bike.

And I was amazed. But the last morning I was there, and quite frankly, I hate to hear a motorbike engine. That irritates me more than anything, and I was glad when our boys got rid of them.

I heard this pop-pop engine of a moped bike, and you know it was like a symphony orchestra. And I could hardly wait. Could it be him? And I looked, and would you believe it, there he was.

No redness in his face. No puffing and panting. And he was whistling in consentment, and he was going over the hill without any effort.

Why, he had learned to discover the power that was under him. Have you learned to use the power that's in you? Or may it be tonight that God will say to us, know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost? And quietly thank God for his indwelling. And if God opens our eyes to see that, that will be a blessing for us all.

But then what is fullness? Is awareness fullness? No, what basically then is fullness? Now there is a case of fullness seen in the book of the Acts that I believe is classical. Would you turn to Acts 4 and just read it with me just for a few moments. Acts 4, verse 23.

We won't read the whole narrative because of our limited time. And being let go, they went to their own company and reported all that the chief priests and elders had said unto them. Now verse 24.

And when they heard that, they lifted up their voice to God with one accord and said, Lord, or as it should be rendered, Sovereign Lord, Lord thou art God, which hath made heaven and earth and the sea, and all that in them is. Now come with me down to verse 31. And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together.

And notice this. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness. Now if you look at that first recorded prayer, you will notice that they never even prayed to be filled with the Spirit.

They prayed that they might heal in the name of that child Jesus, and that signs and wonders might be done through his name. And they prayed that they might receive boldness to speak the word. Why then were they filled with the Spirit? The secret is in the way in which they address the Lord.

They call him Sovereign Lord God. Now that word, Lord, is a jagged word. If you were a slave, you would be bought from at least 30 pieces to 8 pieces of silver.

And you would be taken into a Roman house, and you would address your master with that word, Sovereign Lord, Absolute Master. Now what did that mean? It simply meant that every part of your body belonged to your master. Beloved, when we can honestly say that the Lord Jesus is our Sovereign Lord, that means when we have laid ourselves upon the altar and fully given ourselves to the Lord, then we shall be filled with the Spirit.

And the more we give ourselves to the Lord Jesus, the more he will fill us. We cannot have more of the Spirit because he is a divine person, but he can have so much more of us. Wouldn't it be lovely if before we started the mission, we had a real consecration service.

And many of us got together and for the first time made the Lord Jesus Sovereign Lord of our lives. Then we should see God really working. But I know what you're saying.

Alright Brother Peter, we see now something of what it means to be full of the Spirit, but how do we get there? How do we get there? At the moment someone might say, I feel dry and spiritually dead. I feel that my life as a Christian is full of spiritual malaise. How do I move from a place of spiritual deadness to that place where I can say Sovereign Lord? Now if you're asking questions like that, God's going to meet with you.

First of all, there must be a hunger. The psalmist says, As the heart pants after the water brook, so pants my soul after thee. My soul thirsts for God, yea, the Living God.

Again, the Lord Jesus said in Matthew 5, the Sermon on the Mount, Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled. Again, the Lord Jesus said to the Jewish people at the Feast of Tabernacles, If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink, and out of his innermost being shall flow rivers of living water. This he spake of the Holy Spirit.

Now, can you see, the first step is thirst. Now I know this is a very difficult matter to share with a group of people, and please, beloved brothers and sisters, don't think that I'm using surgery on you. I want to speak night after night in love.

But in some places where we go, we cannot give ministry on the Holy Spirit. Do you know why? There's no hunger. No thirst.

They're quite satisfied with a mediocre Christian life. Why, we have mortgaged our time. If the Lord Jesus Christ doesn't come, we only have another 10 years in our life for this aggressive form of travelling and preaching.

And what we are saying to the Lord, and what the Lord is saying to us now, is this. Go to those places where the people of God are hungry. Don't worry about those places where the hunger's gone.

And in some places we go and there's a real hunger for God. In other places, the hunger's all gone. And all they long for are the things of the world.

May I say this in date, love? I trust that everyone in this room has a hunger for a deeper experience with God. Can I ask a question? Are you satisfied with your Christian life? Do you think you've got all that God wants to give you? Or do you read the scriptures and look at your own life and say, Lord, what's missing? And when there is that deep hunger, God can meet us. The next step is exposure.

There are three operative words. Resist not the Holy Spirit. Stephen uses that phrase when he speaks to the nation of Israel, Acts 7. And I do not believe for one moment there's any person here that would resist the Holy Spirit.

Then when Paul writes to the Thessalonians, he says, quench not the Spirit, despise not prophesying. That means, don't hinder the power of the Spirit in your local churches. Don't put fire or water upon the fire

of God's Spirit.

But when we come to Ephesians, he uses there an expression, grieve not the Holy Spirit. Now I think we ought to look at that because this is very important. And he will show to us the way in which we can grieve the Holy Spirit.

Let's turn to it, the fourth chapter. And this is so important that I'm not going to quote it. I'm going to read it so that we can see what he is basically saying.

Ephesians 4, verse 28. Let him that stole steal no more, but rather let him labour, working with his hands the things which is good, or the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth. Let no corrupt, unclean communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearer.

Ungrieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption. Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamour and evil speaking be put away from you with all malice, and be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you. Now can you see that the word grieve not the Holy Spirit is associated with bitterness, wrath, anger, clamour, evil speaking.

Now the word grieve is a very emotional word. And basically it means for a person to be in a state of mourning. Now you will notice this that we read in the Old and in the New Testament, the wrath of God, the wrath of the Lamb.

But you will never find in Scripture in relation to the Lord's people, the wrath of the Holy Spirit. But this word grieve means to deeply, deeply sad. How can I put this over to you? With both my boys we had to use psychology on them.

And it was the psychology of the slipper. And when they were naughty, they had the slipper. Spare the rod and you'll spoil the child.

Well one of our lads had been rather naughty, there was too much of his dad in him. And when I got home, I said to him, Andrew I hate to do this, but you have been a naughty lad. And I've got to give you three of the slipper.

And I said, you know, it hurts me far more than it hurts you. Well, he said, Dad, if it hurts you like that, I wouldn't do it. What do you think of that? Well, I gave him three of the best, but it did nothing.

I don't think he said amen. And, you know, I looked at him and I thought, well, I wonder if it's any good giving him the slipper. You see, his understanding was corned and it didn't worry him.

But he went into the lounge and he looked at his mother. Then he got closer and he almost put his nose on her nose and said, Mother, you're crying. What's that for? She said, because of you, Andrew.

And that broke him completely. He wept and wept. The slipper hardened him.

The tear broke him. Beloved, the Holy Spirit will not use a slipper on him, on you. But you can make him weep.

And there comes a time in your private life when you get alone with him and with God. And you say with the psalmist, Search me, O God, and know my heart. Show me, Lord, all the things in my life that are grieving them.

Point them out. No longer do I want to grieve the Holy Spirit. And when you are absolutely sincere, God will reveal those things in your life and in my life that grieve him.

You know, as I was preparing the address, I must tell you this in order to be honest with my congregation. The Lord gave me a hammering this afternoon. And I had to get from the seat and prostrate myself in that little room and ask God for forgiveness.

And we all need that. You see, our ministry is powerless whilst we are grieving the Holy Spirit. Now, after that time of exposure, and we do not want to have morbid introspection, for that is very dangerous.

But after that period of introspection, clean, cleansing that comes to us through the Lord Jesus, through the washing of the water by the Word. And then what? The third step is consecration. And when the scripture says, I beseech you, therefore, men and brethren, by the mercies of God, that he presents your body a living sacrifice.

Do it. Lay yourself upon the altar. But you say that's very costly.

I wonder. Do you know, isn't it sad when the world is more devoted to their pleasures than the Christians are to Christ? I'm thinking now of our next door neighbours who are lovely people. But they are so devoted to bowls that they're out every night.

Every night! Even in the winter. Indoor bowls. And then they travel all over the world and pay their own expenses.

And I've often said to my wife and my wife to me, My, if we were devoted like that to Christ, wouldn't there be blessing? I've often been in a public house to preach the gospel with two elder brethren. I always do that on a Friday night. And many have been saved.

I'm a total teetotaler. Wouldn't touch even an orange juice. But I go and preach the gospel and I've said this.

If we had 20 Christians who were addicted to the Lord Jesus, as these people are addicted to drink, we'd shake the world. I once stayed with some Christians outside Liverpool City football ground at Anfield. And when I saw those 50,000 people all going in, they were just caught up with it.

And when there was extra time, they didn't grumble and say, Our preachers are going over time. They enjoyed it. And you know, when they scored a goal, they didn't just say, Goal.

They did a bit of cheering, you know. And after the match, and although it was extra time, so they told me, there they were, so caught up with it, that they were showing their friends all that the centre forward should do. You see, they were caught up with it.

Why aren't we Christians caught up with the Lord Jesus? You see, and it's just normal Christian life to lay ourselves upon the altar for God, so that we might become a living sacrifice. And when we have laid ourselves on the altar, and our whole being belongs to Him, what's the next step? A simple act of faith. You see, the Christian life isn't a life of struggling.

Paul says, The just shall live by faith. Again, the Apostle Paul says, I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me, and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God. Not trying.

That's the law of life. It's trusting the Lord Jesus to make it. And if you've trusted the Lord Jesus to save you, He expects you to trust Him and the Holy Spirit to make you holy.

And He will, if you are totally committed to Him. You know, it's lovely to go among a group of people that have been really, genuinely filled, and to look down from a congregation and see the radiancy of the Lord. That's the most beautiful thing you will ever see.

A congregation of God's people, filled with the Spirit, and radiant with the joy of the Lord Jesus. So can we see those steps? Hunger, exposure, consecration, and faith. Now, what are the evidences? Well, they're all on the surface.

If we turn to Ephesians 5, we shall see it very clearly. And immediately a person is filled with the Holy Spirit, Christ becomes real to him. And that simply means the person or the sister that's filled with the Spirit will be able to say a minute, Hallelujah.

What a sight. And in your devotions, you will find the Lord Jesus becoming more real to you than ever before. But then, the second feature is love.

When a person is filled with the Holy Spirit, the fruit of the Spirit is love. And that means that your heart will be filled with love. Love for the Lord Jesus.

A love for the Word. Love for the saints. A love for one another.

And therefore, love is the hallmark of a Spirit-filled life. But if you look at the exegesis here, you will see it on the surface. Verse 19.

Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs. A psalm is a spiritual song that's accompanied by music or musicians. A hymn is a song that's addressed to God in worship.

A spiritual song is a devotional song that has to it a word of exhortation for the person who quotes it. But you will notice, they're not actually singing these psalms, they're speaking them. In other words, the literal meaning is this.

Addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs. Now what does that mean? We mustn't imagine in the first century that the Christians all had lovely Bibles like this. Actually, we've only had these Bibles for about 500 years.

In the first century, a few Christians would have one or two scrolls of the Old Testament and only a few. Therefore, what they had would be the psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. Now that was a hymn.

Great is the mystery of godliness. God was manifest in the flesh. And they would sing it and quote it one to another.

That was a hymn. Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures. He was buried and he rose again the third day according to the scriptures.

And what this basically means in a contemporary setting is this. The moment you are filled with the spirit, the word of God will become precious. Now we've all had the experience of reading the word of God and getting nothing from it.

I've had that experience. Sometimes in a carnal moment, I look at the scriptures and I get nothing from it. When God has had a deep dealing with me and the life is cleansed and filled again with the spirit, the word of God becomes precious.

And what happens? I want to share the word of God with others. And you can always tell a spirit-filled Christian, he doesn't talk to you about sports and about clothing and about brickwork. A spirit-filled Christian, when he meets you, he'll share something with you of the word of God.

And isn't it lovely to meet people where you see in them the radiancy of the Lord Jesus so that the word of God becomes precious. And then, secondly, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord and giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. And the second piece of evidence is singing, not speaking, singing.

And when you hear a person singing, invariably they're happy. And when a person is filled with the Holy Spirit, they're filled with joy. Now, I want to present a problem.

Why is it that we Christians are so miserable in our meetings? Why is it if someone says quietly, hallelujah, everyone looks round and says, charismatic? Isn't that fair? Did you know there are two kinds of Christians? The charismatics and the rheumatics. The charismatics have got too much movement and the rheumatics have got nothing. Now, isn't it strange how something has come over many local churches so that there's a sense of depression among the people? Now, that proves that we have never been filled with the Spirit.

As a young man, I used to go to a Bible reading when I was working in the city. And in that Bible reading, there was old Harold Singer, Samuel Rogers, that E.W. Rogers father, sometimes W.W. Faraday, Mr. J.B. Watson, J.M. Shaw, Mr. Vine used to slip in and about 30 of these men would study the Scripture. And I shall never forget it.

Sometimes they went right over my head, but they were studying 1 Peter, where Peter speaks of unspeakable joy. And I looked at those dear aged men and they were literally overwhelmed with the joy. They weren't miserable.

You could hear them quietly saying, Hallelujah, praise the Lord. And they all went into worship from the study of God's Word. I remember as a young man, when I first came into fellowship at South Grove, where God was mightily moving, when we worshipped Sunday morning, all over the building, about 150 believers, you could hear choir, praise the Lord, Amen.

You see, there was the real joy of the Lord among the saints. What did that show? That His people were filled with the Spirit, singing and making melody in your heart unto the Lord. And then lastly, submission.

Submit yourselves one to another in the fear of God. You see, when a person has been filled with the Spirit, he may be unconscious of it. When Moses came down from the mount, he wasn't conscious of his glory, but the others could see it.

But one of the hallmarks of a Spirit-filled life is not to talk about it. There is no scripture in the Bible where we're told to speak on the fact that we have been filled with the Spirit. The only testimony that we give forth in this day is that Jesus Christ is Lord.

If thou shalt confess with thy mouth, Jesus is Lord, and believe in thine heart, God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. And that simply means this. The moment you are filled with the Spirit, you will submit one to another in the fear of God.

Now, beloved, let's capture our imagination. Supposing now we had a local church with 30 people, just 30. And all those members had a broken spirit before the Lord.

They realised that they had left first love. They realised that the seeds of Laodicea, neither hot nor cold, was actually in their church. And they were broken before the Lord.

And supposing individually they had a time of exposure. When God filled each individual with the Holy Spirit, could you imagine a worship meeting with 30 Spirit-filled people? It would be heaven upon earth. Wouldn't it? Could you imagine those 30 people coming together, filled with the Spirit, and laying hold on God in believing prayer? Why, it would shape the area.

For the Scripture says, If two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that ye shall ask, it shall be done of my Father in heaven. And could you imagine 30 Spirit-filled people all bringing their unsaved friends to a Gospel meeting? Why, those people would see even in the meeting the glow and the glory of a Spirit-filled life. And souls would be saved.

And here's the secret. They were praising God, having favour with the people, and the Lord added to the church daily, such as should be saved. May God fill us afresh with His Holy Spirit.

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