

# Are You Filled With the Holy Spirit?

by Shane Idleman

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*The Holy Spirit is essential for Christianity, and neglecting or abusing the Holy Spirit can lead to spiritual stagnation and false manifestations.*

**Duration:** 44:30

**Scripture:** Acts 1:1

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

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## Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of being filled with the Holy Spirit, drawing parallels to Jesus' obedience to the Holy Spirit and the need for believers to seek, ask, submit, and obey to experience the Spirit's power. It highlights the necessity of humility, seeking God's presence, and the transformation that occurs when one is truly filled with the Spirit, impacting every aspect of life.

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## Transcript

I want to get right to this point in Acts 1. It's Luke writing, he said, the former account I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began to do and to teach until the day in which he was taken up, after he, through the Holy Spirit, had given commandments to the Apostles whom he had chosen. Jesus, through the Holy Spirit. Now if Jesus needed the Holy Spirit, what in the world makes us think we can neglect this aspect of the triune nature of God? So are you filled with the Holy Spirit, is the most important question a Christian can ask.

Besides, are you saved, of course. But as a Christian, the most important question you can ask is, are you filled with the Holy Spirit? Balcony, this is for you too this morning. Even though you feel way back there, this is for you.

Are you truly filled with the Holy Spirit? Because this dictates everything. See, the Bible had many different writers but one author. The Holy Spirit authored the Bible.

The Holy Spirit. And it's not some little little spirit sitting next to your heart, or over by your lungs, or above your kidney. When the Holy Spirit, it's the triune nature of God, God's Holy Spirit residing in the believer, in their thought life, and in their spiritual, in the spiritual side of a person.

He comes to guard them, and guide them, and lead them, and direct them, and fill them with God's power, God's presence, God's authority from that Spirit. So if you neglect the Spirit, you are neglecting just about

everything that has to do with Christianity. Because you're not filled with God's Spirit.

And you cannot be filled with two things. If you're filled with the world, you are not filled with the Holy Spirit. And if you're filled with the Holy Spirit, you sometimes despise the things of the world.

They agitate you. It doesn't, I just, I just see, even, I'll be careful on this sermon. Last night I let loose.

But even driving through Hollywood yesterday, I was just, my daughter was in a gymnastic thing right at the Staples Center. And I was able to go down there real quick and get back for the service. But just seeing the billboards, and the beers everywhere, and Victoria's Secret, it's like, what? See, there's something shouldn't resonate.

I don't, the Spirit is crying, Abba Father, not give me more of the world. And you're going to be filled with one or the other. But as a Christian, you do battle with both.

The Holy Spirit wants more of you, and so does the flesh. But this is an interesting topic, because as we get into the book of Acts, the distinct mark of the early church, without even, it's not even a question in my mind, the distinct mark of the early church of a true, born-again, Spirit-filled Christian is Spirit-led. They are Spirit-led, led by the Spirit.

Their words are chosen carefully, led by the Spirit. Their actions are led by the Spirit. The choices they make.

See, the choices you make will determine if you're filled with the Spirit, or not. You can go watch Hillsong at the movie right now, or Jason Bourne. You can go watch Hillsong right now at the movie theater, or Bad Mom.

It's rated R, says Bad Mom, that's all I need to know. I don't need to watch the trailer. See, we make choices that we actually fill us with the Spirit, or quench and grieve the Spirit of God.

This is the most important aspect that we will ever cover in our lives, this area of the filling of the Spirit, and being submitted and surrendered to the Spirit. In Duncan Campbell's book, that I would recommend, I think written over a hundred years ago, The Price and Power of Revival, he said, how is it that while we make such great claims for the power of the gospel, that we see so little of the supernatural in operation? Is there any reason why the church today cannot everywhere equal the church at Pentecost? I feel this is a question we ought to face with an open mind and an honest heart. What did the early church have that we do not possess today? Nothing but the Holy Spirit, nothing but the power of God.

See, we need to wake up. You need to wake up. I need to wake up.

We were born for such a time as this. You were not born to just go through life aimlessly, and carefree, and not concerned with the things of God, and barely getting by in this thing we call Christianity. You were called for such a time as this to be filled mightily with the Holy Spirit.

Well, Shane, that's great. You're a pastor. Yeah, but you're a parent.

If we would have more parents, more parents filled with the Spirit of God, underscoring their words with love and truth, and being built up, and not tearing down. What about the spouse? If families were filled with the Spirit, the divorce rate would plummet. Calls into protective child care, you know, things and the state getting involved would be severely curtailed in the Christian community, because you need to be

filled with the Spirit just as much as I do.

It's Spirit-led, Spirit-directed. The Bible says that the Spirit intercedes, so He will intercede for you. He leads you.

He guides you. He teaches you, and so on. He enables and empowers us to hunger and thirst for righteousness, and boldly live for Christ.

Charles Spurgeon said, what can a hammer do without the hand that grasps it, and what can we do without the Spirit of God? That's why I want to camp out here for a while. I'm going to step on toes, and I'm going to ruffle feathers, because again, we need to wake up. This is the missing element.

This is why people don't want to come to a prayer and worship service. They can sit and study the Bible for two hours, but when it comes to the prayer and worship service, why? Because that filling of the Holy Spirit is not taking place, because the Spirit must worship. If it were up to me, I'll be selfish.

I'll just say, Gabe, you know what? Just stay on that song for the next 30 minutes. We're going to sit here. We're going to get our hearts right, because Holy Spirit, you are welcome here.

That's not bad theology. That's correct theology. If you, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your kids, how much more will God give the Holy Spirit to those who ask? How is that a bad thing? It just blows my mind that the whole point of the Holy Spirit has been either abused or neglected.

So why the neglect of the Holy Spirit, or why the abuse of the Holy Spirit? And I had two sides last night. I'm going to have two sides here too. You guys, I know you don't like it, but you'll be the side that neglects the Holy Spirit, and you'll be the side that abuses the Holy Spirit.

And that's what we see happening in the church. Aren't we sometimes afraid the Holy Spirit, uh-oh, weirdness is going to happen. Here's my struggle with this whole thing.

Some of what you, we can all agree that most of that is weird, right? But the group, like it's Wretched Radio, and Todd Freil, I think his name is, and I love this guy, and their stuff, and John MacArthur, and all that stuff. But what they do is they throw the baby out with the bathwater, and they'll throw like Hillsong into that group, or anything charismatic goes into that group. Watching our worship this morning, they would have thrown us in that group.

And I don't, not everything in there, some of it's taken out of context, different things. So I'm trying to find the middle ground. But that's what abuse looks like.

But when God truly visits a church, you'll be on your face before God. You'll be weeping. But repentance, repentance is what is forefront, not weird manifestations.

So that's what abuse looks like, the abuse side. But neglect is just as dangerous. It's just as dangerous.

I'm going to talk about three reasons why we either neglect the Holy Spirit or abuse the Holy Spirit. Number one, theology without experience. You have theology without experience.

And theology without experience is like faith without works. It's dead. So you can be straight as a gun barrel, theologically, but just as empty.

Put a round in the chamber and shoot that. If I had a shotgun up here and it was empty, what would you say? Oh, Shane, that's not a good illustration, but it's okay. You know, at least it's empty.

And I grab a round, put it in there, close it. How many of you are running for that door? And I'm getting fired this week. But that's what the Holy Spirit, you can be straight as a gun barrel.

You've got your theology down, but you're empty. You're not doing any damage. You can just set that gun there.

It's not doing any damage. So a person who has theology, I know about the Holy Spirit, but I've never experienced Him, they will neglect that area. Because when we read, let's say, for example, we're going to be reading in the book of Acts about the disciples, and everybody loves the book of Acts, everybody loves chapter two, and they were filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spoke in tongues.

You say that today, you must be filled with the devil. Well, it's in the book of Acts. Yeah, but not for today.

Well, Paul talks about it in 1 Corinthians 12. Yeah, but it's not for today. But they were, but it's not for today.

Why do they say that? Because they've never experienced it. So when we haven't, so, but our experiences need to line up with theology. Here's the key.

You don't interpret theology based on experiences. You interpret experiences based on theology. So if what happens lines up with what happened to Paul, that might be a good thing.

That there's nothing wrong with that. But this is why the Holy Spirit is often neglected, because people are, they've never experienced the powerful move of God. So they're, and here's the second point, when something is feared, it's often avoided.

See, I don't like a lot of that, so I don't even want to have anything to do with the Holy Spirit. Don't let them misrepresent the Holy Spirit any more than you allow Mormons to misrepresent the Bible. There's always a counterfeit, and why, why wouldn't the devil want to counterfeit or bring in false manifestations with something as important as the Holy Spirit? So my concern with this group is they throw the baby out with the bathwater.

And let me just say some points on this, because it'll help some younger people. This group is heavily identified, or they'll, this group of theology without experience really goes after, say, Jesus culture, or Bethel music, or even Hillsong. Now, in my opinion, what I'm seeing is you've got Bethel, you've got Jesus culture, they're singing songs about fill me up, Lord show me your glory, you're present, you're welcome here, the more I seek you, the more I find you.

These are all Holy Spirit songs. But this group often will just allow anything to happen. If it's odd, it's God.

There can be angel globes, there can be dust falling, there can be weird manifestations, doesn't matter. It's odd, it's God. Brother, just don't quench your spirit.

No, that's not good. So I would say that these groups need theology to come alongside of them, and somebody mature to guide them in what they're allowing to happen in these places. To allow somebody, don't just say these things and do these things.

So they have experience, but without theology. That's the other side. See, you can have experience and all these things going on, but without the character of God.

See, these guys, when they say drunk, toke in the Holy Ghost, I have a problem with that. You don't say the Holy Ghost is like taking a bong hit, and you're sitting there toke in the Holy Ghost. Brother, I feel you're drunk in glory, and you're acting all weird, and you're kicking people in the stomach for healing.

That's just wrong, theologically and practically. But let's not throw the baby out with the bathwater. And the reason this group doesn't like a lot of those songs is because they've never experienced the power of the Holy Spirit breaking them.

Because when I read those lyrics, I'm like, fill me up Lord, show me your glory. The more I seek you, the more I find you, the more I find you, the more I love you. That resonates with me.

I want that. I want that worship. So this side has theology, but not experience.

George Watson said, the true saints of God who have clear heads and pure warm hearts have in all generations had to walk between the two extremes of cold formality on one side and the wild ranting fanaticism on the other. Dead formality and the false fire of fanaticism are both Satan's counterfeits, and he does not care into which extreme the soul plunges. See, theology is important to Christian living, but so is experience.

When you are filled with the Holy Spirit, there's no way to get around this, for you who are conservative or politically correct, when you're filled with the Holy Spirit, your emotions are engaged. Is fire evident? If this church is on fire, who's gonna say, I don't know, is it? I can't really tell. There's a lot of big flames and things are happening, the fire trucks outside, I don't know.

Of course you know fire is evident, so is the Holy Spirit. When a person's filled with the Spirit, it's evident, it's clear, because he bubbles over, I guess is a good word. That's the baptism of the Spirit.

There's an overwhelming and over sense of the Holy Spirit in your life. So the worship, you love the worship, you love the Word of God, you love the things of God, where the things of the world irritate you. So if a person is more drawn to the things of the world and not the things of God, they are not filled with the Spirit.

They are quenching and grieving the Spirit. Quenching is like throwing water on a fire, so besetting sin. If you continue in a certain sin, let's just throw pornography out there, addiction, all these big ones.

We forget about the sins of the heart, such as pride and stuff, but let's say, and we're just, I'm gonna continue in this sin, you are quenching the Holy Spirit. That fire of God is not going to resonate inside of you. It's not.

And you grieve the Holy Spirit, it's a withdrawal, that sense grieving. Have you ever grieved your spouse and they withdraw? Same thing with the Holy Spirit. Same thing.

The power is not there. The presence of God is not there because we're quenching and we're grieving. And I'm not talking about quoting the Bible.

The devil can do that. I'm talking about knowing the Bible because you've experienced that power of God in your life. A.W. Tozer insightfully said, if the Lord's people were only half as eager to be filled with the

Spirit as they are to prove that they cannot be filled, the church would be crowded out.

I'm gonna have to say that again. You didn't get it. If the Lord's people were only half as eager to be filled with the Spirit as they are to prove they cannot be filled with the Spirit, the churches would be crowded out.

What he's talking about is, there are many people in Christianity who say, you got all the Holy Spirit at conversion, you don't need to talk about this topic Shane. You don't need to discuss it. This is not true.

And they prove that you don't have to be filled with the Spirit. And then it gets interesting. Man, there's just so much.

You have, say, charismatics. And that just comes from the word charisma in the Greek language, which means bestowing spiritual gifts. Nothing wrong with that.

Pentecostals, they believe like as in the day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit still moves in that way. So that's why you have these different denominations breaking apart from each other. And you see, that's stuff.

And you're like, okay, I don't want to be a part of that. And we polarize, we get to the other end where we just don't want anything to do with the Holy Spirit. And that's dangerous.

Because it's the Holy Spirit of God who's going to be giving you the love for others, the love of His truth, the love, the ability to overcome sin. It's through that Holy Spirit power. Also there's some confusion when a person says you need to be baptized in the Holy Spirit.

If you look up the incidents of that, the Bible talks about being baptized into the body of Christ. So as a believer, when you believe in Jesus, you're saved, you are baptized into the body of Christ. You have all of the Holy Spirit that you'll ever need, but the question is, does he have all of you? You see how that works? You have all the Holy Spirit you'll ever need, but does he have all of you? And you will read that Peter being filled with the Holy Spirit, and Paul being filled with the Holy Spirit.

Also very interesting, oh let me before I forget that point, let me go back to it. Baptism of the Holy Spirit is when a person is baptized in the body of Christ, but Paul talks about subsequent feelings of the Holy Spirit. Being filled with the Holy Spirit.

Be being filled. Don't be drunk with wine as in dispensation, but be filled with the Spirit. So it's a command.

So you don't say I'm filled with the Spirit, I'm good for the rest of my life. That's like saying I ate breakfast, I don't need to eat again. So it's an ongoing, the devil goes after that feeling of the Holy Spirit.

You can be on fire for God, he's gonna go after that. By bringing things into your life, they'll quench and grieve the Spirit's work. So I don't necessarily use the term baptized in the Holy Spirit, even though I personally don't have a problem with it.

I refer often to the word filling of the Holy Spirit. However, I like what R. A. Torrey said. He said I'd rather get the theological term wrong and have the Spirit's power, then get the terminology just right but miss the Spirit's power.

See that's it. We like to argue over all these little things and usually it's this camp with theology but no experiences who likes to argue all these little things. It's funny, I used to read books, or actually still read books, but written, gotta bring some humor here because this is this is weighty.

You guys are, we're stepping on some toes, but that's a good thing. When, do you know a Let's say when this church was looking for a pastor, or if they ever, you know, if we ever went that direction, they'd hire pastor search committee and different things and it happens. They search for a pastor.

Well, a hundred years ago they wouldn't ask does he have his PhD in theology, does he have a master's in counseling. They would ask one question, has he received his baptism of fire? That's, that's what the main, so you can get, I love theology, but if you, if all you come up here with is a sound doctrine with no power, you're gonna fall asleep. The Spirit's power is not gonna be there.

You need to have both of them. So they would, before they even call the pastor, they say does he, has he received his baptism of fire? Has he been empowered by the Holy Spirit of God? Is he filled with the Spirit? See, our choices allow us to be filled or we quench the Spirit. How good do you think this sermon will be this morning if I got up and put on CNN and Fox News and watch what's going on with ISIS and everything else in North Carolina and got on Facebook and started to gossip and then just strolled over to Victoria's Secret page? What, what would happen? The Holy Spirit is quenched and grieved to such a degree that you lose that connection with God.

You lose that, that power and that's what the enemy's going after. That's why I tell you he's got, the enemy's got his sights right here with the 30 hot sticks on me every single day. I'm well aware of what his schemes are.

Why does he want to do it? He wants to take the Spirit's power out. Think about, when is the last time you talked to anybody, anybody seriously about Jesus, let alone led them to the Lord? That's one thing about the Spirit. Everywhere I go, God seems to prompt me and the flesh hates it, but the Spirit, ask him about God, ask him about your, whether it's five in the morning or five at night, where you're at.

See, there's this feeling, it's feeling, what is in comes out. That's why this is the most important question we can ever ask. So if you're on this side and you have theology, you love to study about the Holy Spirit, but you don't know anything about the Spirit's power, you don't like to worship, you're a worker, not a worshiper, you don't, you don't have anything to do with emotionalism and these songs and this and that, you've got a, you've got a problem in the heart.

You need to have both theology and that spiritual power. Because when the Spirit cries, Abba, Father, that, when you see a baby born, are you not emotional? I hope so. What's the difference from the Holy Spirit within you crying, Abba, Father, and saying, God, I come before you and I sing these songs, Lord, your presence, you're welcome here.

And something is happening in your heart, you get all excited over the NFL. What's the difference? It's what you're filled with. It's what you're filled with, what I'm filled with.

So the second point, why the Holy Spirit is either abused or neglected, is they have experience, this side, but you have no theology. You can't just say, if it's odd, it's God, let whatever happen. Happens.

And just, God, take over and just don't let, just, just whatever. Well, Paul, John says to test the spirits. He says to discern all things.

And this group cracks me up, because when I, when I ask them about some of these things, hey, brother, it's, whatever, you're quenching and grieving the Spirit of God. And I said, when did discernment become quenching and grieving the Spirit of God? God gives us discernment to discern the spirits, because I don't

know what spirit you have, but I don't have that one. To be drunk in the Holy Spirit, to toke the Holy Spirit, all these weird manifestations.

They have, anything goes, it's odd, it's God. Now, again, I'm careful, because when God truly moves in a group of people, you, it's not gonna look, it's not gonna look normal. I've been in places where men are literally on their faces before God, on this altar, while I'm preaching sometimes.

People are crying, you can hear them sobbing, you can hear God working. Oh my, you can hear, this is not, Shane, this is not good, this is not conservative right. God is working, but the fruit is repentance, not hysteria.

That's the big difference. What is the fruit of what is happening? And we don't, nobody has perfect theology, nobody does. We don't, we don't know, because John MacArthur says the spiritual gifts don't exist anymore.

Jack Hayford says they do. Well, who's right? What's the Bible say? What's the Word of God say? So see, when I see the disciples in an upper room, praying, and fasting, and worshiping, and the Spirit of God moved mightily on them, and they changed the whole world upside down, and now they say, no, no, no, that today doesn't really happen. But if you've experienced that, it doesn't matter what this site says, you'll disagree, because you've experienced it.

So how can it be a bad thing if Paul experienced it? You can't have somebody worshiping God, and let's say like Paul says, I pray that you speak in tongues. So that doesn't exist anymore. Well, it existed for Paul's day, but now it's of the devil.

How do you make that connection? Now granted, there's been abuses. This is a very controversial topic, but I just want to be careful that we don't quench and grieve the Spirit of God, because last I checked, he's the same yesterday, today, and forevermore. There's no reason why the supernatural act, why could he go and somebody be healed during worship? Why? Because we're scared? Because we don't want this to happen.

So this group, experienced without theology, and I did see, I've seen guys kick people in the stomachs for healing. Just, bam, right in the stomach with a boot. Like, really? Again, the devil mimics a true work of God.

They allow very odd things, but fail to look at the Word. So here's three signs of false fire. Number one, people are acting bizarre without repenting.

Just alluded to that. Number two, sound doctrine is called divisive. Whenever you bring, oh, let's look at what this looks like at God's truth.

For example, that girl who said, you know, the Holy Spirit, Father, Son, is my genie in a bottle. Well, let's look what theology says. It doesn't say that's not, he's not your genie in a bottle.

He's the Lord Jesus Christ. You better bow your knee and confess and get correct theology. But when you tell them that they're just being divisive, no, I'm not.

How can looking what God's, see, you look at the character of God. You look at the nature of God, and that's what we allow to take place. Discernment is not of the devil.

Actually, the devil would love that nothing be discerned. Just let whatever happens. Number three, the so-called love replaces truth.

This site often says, but Shane, it's all about love and unity, man. Just, you chill out. You're quenching and grieving the spirit of God.

I'm like, well, that's what the hippies said in the 60s. Just love and unity, just chill out. Well, that's not God.

So see, they'll allow weird behavior. They'll say it's love and unity, leave us alone. They'll allow weird behavior and say, we don't want sound doctrines, divisive.

So this group is just as prideful and arrogant as that group, is what it boils down to. We don't want to submit underneath the guidance and direction of the Holy Spirit. The last I checked, a fruit of the Holy Spirit was self-control.

That's why Paul said, with this issue of tongues, have an interpreter. Don't do certain things because people are going to come in from outside and think you're out of your mind. That's what the Bible says.

So it tells me I've got to discern. Not every spirit is of God. I've had people come up, I've never met before, it's the first time, I've got a word for God for your church.

He said, no you don't. He didn't tell me anything. I don't know you.

It doesn't check out. It doesn't register with me. There's been other times where people wanted to do that.

And you've got to run that through the filter of discernment. Because God has given the leadership this enormous responsibility of making sure. And like some, I can gravitate to this more conservative side.

You know, I'd rather hide over here than hide over there. You know, there's people acting bizarre and different things. So with that said, let's go to the third point.

Theology without humility. Here's why the Holy Spirit is neglected or grieved. We have theology without humility.

So when you have theology but you're not humble, you're not obeying God's Word, you're not submitting to the work of the Holy Spirit, He's not going to fill you. Submission is a very difficult thing, isn't it? We don't want to submit to the work of the Spirit. We don't want to submit to certain areas of our lives.

We want to hang on to these things. And if you want to be filled mightily with the Spirit of God, listen, I know I'm not talking to this whole room. I know in this whole room there's going to be people that go back and nothing changes.

But I'm talking to the small percentage of people who want to wake up and be filled with the Spirit of God that you were called for such a time as this. Stop playing games. Stop being in a hurry and put God back on the pedestal.

Get yourself off that pedestal. It's not comfortable up there. And come down from that pedestal and humble yourself.

Just as, I like what Andrew Murray said, just as water, water ever seeks and fills the lowest place, so the moment God finds you abased and empty, His glory and power flow in. If that baptismal overflows,

where's it coming? Same thing with you. As soon as God finds you humble and abased, which means, it goes along with that scripture, humble yourself under the mighty hand of God.

In due time He will exalt you. You exalt yourself and He will abase you. That's a low, He's bringing you to a low, embarrassing point.

Has God ever embarrassed you and spanked you? Or is it just me? That's not fun. That's not fun. I'd rather humble myself.

Thank you, Lord, I will humble myself. And you don't, because that's what happens. He will humble you.

Just as water looks for that lowest place. If you get to the lowest place and you say, God, fill me with your spirit, I'm not leaving here. He will do that.

He's bound to do it. He says, if you seek me, you will find me. And if you find me, you'll continually seek me.

And then you'll have this seeking hunger. It's a hunger that is never satisfied. He who drinks of this water will never thirst again, Jesus said.

Out of your belly will flow rivers of living water. So it begs the question, where is this living water? All I see half the time is a cemetery from the churches across America. If they're filled with the Spirit, where is it? Where's this living water? Jeremiah said, his word is in my heart like a burning fire.

It's shut up in my bones. I have to give it out. Jesus said, believe on me as the Scriptures say, and out of your belly will flow rivers of living water.

So if we sit there and go, I don't know where these rivers of living water are, it's because you're not filled with the Spirit. Truth be told, same thing with me. Sometimes I wonder, was I even saved before I was filled with the Spirit? I would go to church, same thing.

Sing the songs, listen to sermons, sit in the back row, get out quick, come in late, miss his worship. You know, it's just nothing. God is, all right, I'll pray, find anything.

God was just not even on the top 10 list of agenda things. But I came to church because that's what good people do, right? I mean, good people go to church. And then when he humbled me, the spanking of God, thank God for it.

When he does it, humble yourself, don't argue, don't fight, don't make excuses, just humble yourself. And he filled me with his Spirit. I couldn't get enough worship.

I'm talking hours a day. I'm talking, God's word just came, I couldn't get it. I was just joy unspeakable and bubbling over all these things that Paul talks about.

The gifts of the Holy Spirit were revealed, and I'm just crying out to God, drawing closer to him. If that's of the devil, then I don't think that is. None of that's of the devil because you're drawing closer to God.

Anything that draws you closer to God is not of the devil, it's of the Holy Spirit. Make the distinction early on so you know. And so I was wondering, was I even saved? Was I even saved? The reason is because it's such a dramatic experience that you have to look back and go, I was living on this much water instead

of the whole baptismal being full.

When it talks about, John said he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire, that fire in the belly. That's why there's martyrs. They die for their faith.

They're filled with the Spirit of God. This is the most important thing and it's going to hurt. It's going to hurt.

It's going to take extreme submission. I'm an extreme kind of guy. I don't mind using that word because that cross was an extreme price.

To follow Jesus, pick up your cross, follow me, and die to self is very extreme. If I had time, I would show you what that looks like, and it's not pretty. It's extreme Christianity to die to self, but it's the most fulfilling because we live in the middle.

If it's not, we're miserable. Do you know how many Christians are just miserable? Miserable, and they're medicating because they're miserable. God says, just humble yourself.

Be filled with the Spirit of God, and I will restore that joy that you used to have. And if you're not sure, let me just go over this real quick. Are you filled with the Spirit? Well, Galatians 5. The fruit of the Spirit is love.

Do you have love or do you pounce on people? Are you loving? Are you a loving, gentle person? The fruit of the Spirit is joy. You can't suppress that joy as much as you can try to suppress Niagara Falls. It has to come out.

Joy filled, joy in the midst of adversity, or are you sour-faced? Fruit of the Spirit, love, joy, peace, or are you always disgruntled? Patience, or are you irritable and restless? Kind, or are you heavy-handed? Goodness, do you have sympathy for people? Do you truly have sympathy? Because there's a lot of sin sniffers. Did you hear? Did you hear? Did you hear? Let's apply Matthew 18 really quick. That's not good.

You don't have sympathy. You're not filled with the Spirit of God. Because the whole point of confronting somebody, or Matthew 18, for example, is restoration.

Not to go get them, church. It's restoration. So the fruit of the Spirit, faithfulness, are you loyal, gentle, or are you heavy-handed? And is there self-control? Well, we could put our names in there, couldn't we? Is Shane loving, joy-filled, peaceful, patient, kind, good, faithful, gentle, and has self-control? Or do we lack these things? You have to take the test.

You have to examine yourself. Often the Bible talks about examining yourself before God. Are you filled with His Spirit? And it does take some changes.

I'll just share a few. I remember D.L. Moody reading about his life. Many of you know who D.L. Moody is.

And he was in ministry, depressed. Nothing was happening. Nobody was coming to know the Lord.

And he realized that he was in ministry for the wrong reason. He was trying to build the name of D.L. Moody, not God's kingdom. He repented of that, and he asked God to fill him with the Spirit.

And he couldn't even, he had to run into a room, I believe it was in New York City, and just fell on his face before God. And he said, God, take your hand away from me. This love, this overpowering work of the

Holy Spirit is too much for me to bear.

And then he came out of that room a different man. Have any of you read *My Utmost for His Highest*? Most read devotional book of all time by Oswald Chambers. Many people don't know he was a seminary teacher, I believe, for four years.

He was miserable. He had theology, but not the Spirit. He repented, God filled him.

Who do we hear about now? I've read books and stories, and D.L. Moody lists different stories of people being filled mightily with the Holy Spirit. One I remember was this lady was so worried about her appearance, and her dress, and her make, everything, 1800s, I think this was. Did I make it back then? I guess so.

But anyway, she was so worried about her appearance, and God was convicting her of that. And once she repented, then she came to church on fire for God. She loved the Word.

Everything changed. She goes, just from allowing. See, we don't realize these are idols.

Anything you put before God is an idol, whether it's about ministry, or whether you're a worker, or not a worshiper, or whether, no, I'm not letting that go. Nope, I'm holding in this bitterness. My father did.

You don't know what he did. I'm holding in this bitterness, and this anger, and this rage until the day I die. Well, you won't be filled with the Spirit, because we have to empty ourselves completely and allow God to fill us with the Spirit.

Church, this is the most important topic we can face. Are you filled with the Spirit of God? Do you want more of God? And it's a good thing if you go, yes, you don't want that. Well, it requires four things.

You have to ask. You have to ask, Lord, I want to be filled with your Spirit. And He'll begin to show you things you might need to move, because we can't quench and grieve the Spirit, and then want to be filled with the Spirit.

I talk to people often who are hooked on certain things, addictions, pills, drink, whatever it is, and they just, I know, but I can't give that up. Well, you're not going to be filled with the Spirit of God. You can't hold on to the bottle and still be filled with the God.

Now, nobody is perfect, so as you're struggling sometimes through things, the Spirit can fill you, and you're struggling through these things, and the Holy Spirit actually comes to help you in the struggle. Paraclete, a comforter, it's actually an advocate to come alongside you. The Holy Spirit comes alongside.

The Holy Spirit seals me. The Holy Spirit saves me. The Holy Spirit convicts me.

The Holy Spirit draws me. The Holy Spirit is my comforter. He steals my anxious heart.

He will make the Scriptures become crystal clear. When I don't even know what to pray for, the Spirit makes groanings and things to the Father that I don't even know what to pray for. You see how vital the role of the Holy Spirit is? He's a person, the person of the Godhead.

Now, this is a whole other topic, but God is one. We don't worship three gods. We worship God the Father, the essence of God, but He reveals Himself in Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit.

Paul says it's a mystery. Let's just leave it at that, because the more I talk about it, the more I go, this doesn't make... I mean, I can't explain this adequately. I mean, I've heard people say it's like an egg.

You got the shell, you got the yolk, you got the white, or like water. You've got vapor, you've got ice, you've got water, but those analogies fall short. We can't understand, but we accept it.

We can't say that when Jesus was baptized, the Father spoke from heaven, and the Holy Spirit descended as a dove. So is all that really didn't happen? Was Jesus a ventriloquist? Because there's another belief out there, modalism, that would say oneness, Pentecostalism, or different things. That was Jesus only.

That God actually went on the cross. The God the Father, everything was on the cross. There's no God the Father.

It's just one, because they have a problem with worshiping three gods, but I tell them we're not worshiping three gods. We're worshiping God, who He is, the nature, the character of God, but He chose to reveal Himself as Father in creation, Son in redemption, Holy Spirit regenerating us. That's how He's shown.

It's throughout the entire Bible. I'm gonna leave you with this for food for thought. Jesus, we didn't even hear of Him for 30 years.

12 years old, decided to stay back, taught the rabbis a thing or two at 12 years old, just vanishes, nothing, and then He comes on the scene, and He says, John the Baptist, I want you to baptize me. Could you imagine? If Jesus, I would just, I would weep and run. I would just, there's not, it doesn't make any sense, but He said, suffer it so that all righteousness might be fulfilled.

I don't completely understand the concept, neither do theologians. If you read Calvin, if you read John Knox, if you read MacArthur, you read Jack, it doesn't matter who you read, nobody's really crystal clear on why Jesus had to get baptized other than a step of obedience. Suffer it so that all righteousness might be fulfilled.

So John the Baptist baptizes Jesus. Jesus comes up out of that baptism, led by the Holy Spirit, and the Bible is very clear on this, and Jesus being filled with the Holy Spirit. So He didn't begin His ministry until He was filled with the Holy Spirit.

So what, what in the world makes us think we can just get through this thing called life without the Holy Spirit? And if Jesus, Jesus was filled mightily with the Holy Spirit doing great miracles, now they hear of this man, and it was a step of obedience. So on that note, yes, I'm dying in baptism. That's because guess what we're doing afterwards with about five or six people, we're getting baptized.

I'm actually going to do something different. I'm just going to wear this. You want to know why? Because I'm inviting you, if you've never been baptized, or if you did it when you're four, and you don't remember a thing, or you did, I will encourage you, be baptized.

Take that step, because I drifted from God. I was baptized at 12. I don't know, I think my mom dunked me in a pool or with some people.

I don't really remember. But then at 30 years old, at Hope Chapel, in 2000, Christmas time, I said, I'm going to be baptized. I'm convicted.

I want to be baptized. But you know what stopped me? The opinions of people. Here's a 30-year-old man, I'm starting to write books, I'm speaking.

And I'm not going to get bad, like people are going to know, people are going to know. And just every scripture I read about, oh man, but once I finally took that step of obedience, and nobody cares, like oh, they don't even know. It was my own pride and arrogance.

Once I took that step of obedience, things changed. Even more, the Word of God came alive even more. The preaching, now instead of calling me from working with fitness, he called me to preach.

It was a step of obedience, came out filled with the Spirit of God. So baptism doesn't, isn't this thing you have to do to be filled with the Spirit, but if you're not being baptized, why aren't you? And I think it will inhibit the filling of the Holy Spirit because it's a commandment that's not being obeyed. Why wouldn't we want to get baptized if it wasn't just because of the opinions of others? So we have towels, you can wear what you're wearing now, it's still hot out, the water's like 80 degrees, and I would encourage you to be baptized.

Say, Lord, I don't care what people think, I'm taking that step of obedience. Because if you want to be filled with the Spirit, there's got to be a first step. What's the old saying? A journey of a thousand miles starts with that first step.

If you want to be filled with the Spirit and God is convicting you in this area to go before people, that's what baptism is. If Jesus Christ hung on a cross, suffered for the sins of the world, including mine and yours, if He went naked before the entire world, if the God of the universe humbled Himself to the point of being beaten and crucified, surely we can take that step and say, I don't care who's watching, I don't care what people think, I'm getting baptized. I'm making a public profession of my faith in Christ.

It's a very healthy thing. So those four things, quick, you have to ask for the Holy Spirit, you have to obey. You have to obey.

To be filled with the Holy Spirit without obeying is, it's like a car without an engine. You're not going anywhere. And you have to seek.

You have to seek that filling. You have to say, God, I'm seeking you. I'm going to search for you until I find you.

The Bible says, when you seek Him, you will find Him. And you have to submit. You have to submit to the work of the Spirit.

And this is the hardest point for many people. They don't want it. Life's comfortable.

We don't want to submit to the work of the Spirit. But God says, humble yourself. Humble yourself under the mighty hand of God, and He will exalt you.

It's hard. That's why I got here early this morning, 5:30 in the morning, and I just put on worship, and I'm here on the altar. I'm praying, and I want you to go, oh, that's so spiritual.

No, it's not. I need Him. I mean, I need Him.

I have to submit and surrender my life, my sermon, everything to God. You have to submit. Folks, how long are some of you going to keep playing church? Just to let you know, your spouse knows, and so does God.

And I probably do too. I can spot those, filled with the Spirit, and those who are not, just like a dog can spot a, you know what, rabbit, something, just like, right? Well, I take my dog jogging in the desert. He's gone.

I don't even know what he saw. He saw a little tiny rabbit, and he just chases him. But it's the same thing.

You can spot somebody filled with the Spirit. Fire is evident. Fire is evident.

Is it evident? If you're arrested for being a Christian, is there enough evidence in your life to convict you? Is there a fruit of the Spirit there? God is wanting to do, how can we begin the book of Acts and forget this point? We're going to talk about what the church could be, what the church should be, what the early church, the early church, and not be filled with the Spirit?

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