

A Series on Ephesians
Sub-Series: How to be a Gospel-Centered Charismatic
“How to be Filled with the Holy Spirit”
Ephesians 5:18-20
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I. Introduction

Good morning! Welcome to New City! My name is Kevin Haah, and I am the lead pastor here.

We’ve been going through the book of Ephesians. Last Sunday, we started a sub-series called “How to be a Gospel-Centered Charismatic.” Today, we’ll be talking about “How to be Filled with the Holy Spirit” and next Sunday, we are going to talk about worshipping in the Spirit. By-the-way, after this series, we are going to start a four-week series called Gospel Driven Marriage. We are going to dig into marriage. It is going to be a teaching on marriage for both married and unmarried people.

Let’s read Ephesians 5:18-20:

¹⁸Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit. ¹⁹Speak to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord, ²⁰always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

We will talk about: (1) the experience of being filled with the Holy Spirit; (2) the results of being filled with the Holy Spirit; and (3) how to be filled with the Holy Spirit.

I. First, the experience of being filled with the Holy Spirit.

Our kids often come to our bed when they wake up. They just snuggle up in between Grace and me. The other day, Bennett, our 6 year-old, jumped into our bed in the morning. I was just delighted to see him and looked at him and asked:

- Do you think I love you because you are so handsome? He said no.
- Do you think I love you because you are super smart? He said no.
- Do you think I love you because you are a super good boy? He said no.
- Do you think I love you because you are nice to your sisters? He said no.

- Then, I asked: why do you think I love you? He said “because I’m your son.”
- I said, “That right! I love you because you are my son. I will always love you no matter what, even if you are not nice, even if you are not smart, even if you are not so cute, even if you are not so good. I will always love you no matter what because nothing could ever change the fact that you are my son.” Then, I gave him a big hug and tickled him.

Last week, we said that living by the Spirit means living as loved sons and daughters, beloved child of God, in an intimate relationship with him. It means to know that we are adopted as sons and daughters of God. It means we can climb up to his bed and enjoy the pleasure of his intimacy.

So, to be filled with the Spirit means to be filled with God’s beautiful presence, unconditional love, grace, freedom, joy, power. It means to experience the Kingdom of God right here right now.

Being filled with the Holy Spirit ultimately has to do with God’s love in our heart. It is an experience of His love in our hearts. That’s why Paul says in Romans 5:5b says: **“God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom He has given us.”**

I think sometimes, it is difficult for some of us to appreciate God’s love because we didn’t have a father like God. Some of our fathers abused us, some left us, some were never around, some manipulated us, some didn’t approve of us, some abandoned us, some really tried hard but left the impression that you had to perform in order to get his approval and if you didn’t do a good job, you are not approved. But, our God is not like that.

And sometimes, it is difficult for us because many of us thought of God as a stern disciplinarian who is ready to punish us at the first sign of doing wrong. We have this impression that he is angry with us, that he is disappointed in us. We don’t really feel anything for this God. We do try hard to do the right thing because we want to feel approved, but we always feel like we are not living up to the standard.

But, our God isn’t like that at all. You have to get rid of your false images of God. The Bible says that Jesus is the fullness of divinity. It says that if you want to know what God looks like, look at Jesus. Look at his love, look at his embrace of those who are lost, look at him on the cross forgiving the sins of those who crucified him, look

at Jesus on the cross forgiving your sins, look at his power. To be filled with the Holy Spirit means to experience his love for you.

When Jesus was baptized, he was filled with the Holy Spirit. Do you know what he experienced when the Holy Spirit came upon him? Luke 3:21-22:

²¹When all the people were being baptized, Jesus was baptized too. And as he was praying, heaven was opened ²²and the Holy Spirit descended on him in bodily form like a dove. And a voice came from heaven: "You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased."

Jesus experienced his Sonship, God's love, and God's pleasure. That's what it means to experience the filling of the Spirit. The more you experience the reality of your sonship, the more experience the reality of God's love for you, the more you experience God's pleasure, the more you are filled with the Spirit.

When I was growing up, our house didn't have central heating. It had these wall heaters that had a pilot light on all the time, but when we turned on the heater, it would go: "poowah" and the whole thing would light up and generate heat. When we came to realize God's love and received his love, a pilot light came on. The Holy Spirit came into our lives. But, when we experience the fullness of our new identity in Christ—that we are Sons and daughters of God, that we are loved no matter what by a perfect father, that we give him pleasure, that God is pleased with us, everything changes. We become a "poowah" Christian. We are excited. We fall in love with God. We begin to share in the delight of his presence. It's so good.

Being filled with the Spirit is to be saturated with God's grace, love, pleasure, intimacy. The language of being filled with the Spirit is love, intimate love. As we talked about last week, many times in the Bible, when people are filled with the Spirit, they experience being controlled by the Spirit. We are either controlled by the Spirit or we are controlled by something else. Don't be drunk with the Spirit; don't be controlled by anything else but be controlled by the Spirit. Be controlled by His love, His presence, His acceptance, His approval. Drink the water of the Spirit. In fact, get drunk on the water of the Spirit. Jump into the stream of life. The Spirit is the water that never shall make you thirsty again. Allow yourself to be free in the Spirit and drink.

It's interesting that it's not just the early church in the Book of Acts that experienced the filling and drunkenness in the Spirit. It is also the early church. They called it "sober intoxication of the Spirit." Augustine talked about it. Ambrose talked about sober intoxication. Cyril, the bishop of Jerusalem talked about. There was a lot of sober intoxication going on.

Now, this is really fun. But, it's not just about soaking in His love, getting drunk, and having a party. Yes, Christianity starts from a party. It's a drinking party. And we all get spattered in the Spirit. We get soaked in the Spirit. But, we are not called to get turn internally and focus on having a good time.

II. Then, what is the result of being filled with the Spirit?

When we are filled with the Spirit, our lives change, we are empowered to do the work of the Kingdom.

The Scripture talks about the gift of the Spirit and the fruit of the Spirit.

The Spirit gives us the fruit of the Spirit. Galatians 5:22 says, "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control." In other words, character, happiness, heaven. Isn't this something we are all looking for? If we look for happiness, we will not find it. If we look for love, we will not find it. If we look for peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control, we will not find it. They are a product of the Spirit, of living by the Spirit, and being filled with the Spirit.

The gifts of the Spirit are abilities to make an impact in the Kingdom and in the world. It could be a gift of healing, gift of prophecy, gift of leadership, gift of speaking in tongue, gift of teaching, gift of helping, gift of mercy, goes on and on. The Spirit gives us gifts so that our lives will make an impact in this world for the Kingdom of God.

In Luke 4:16-21:

¹⁶He went to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, and on the Sabbath day he went into the synagogue, as was his custom. And he stood up to read. ¹⁷The scroll of the prophet Isaiah was handed to him. Unrolling it, he found the place where it is written:

¹⁸"The Spirit of the Lord is on me,
because he has anointed me
to preach good news to the poor.

He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners
and recovery of sight for the blind,
to release the oppressed,
¹⁹to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."

²⁰Then he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant and sat down. The eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fastened on him, ²¹and he began by saying to them, "Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing."

When we are filled with the Spirit, we are empowered to preach the good news to the poor. He said, "the Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach the good news to the poor." We are sent out to boldly and with wisdom proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ to all those who are hungry for good news. Many times in the Book of Acts, when Christians were filled with the Holy Spirit, they became bold and preached the gospel. Acts 4:31 says: "³¹ After they prayed, the place where they were meeting was shaken. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God boldly."

When we are filled with the Spirit, we also proclaim freedom for the prisoners. There are so many people who are imprisoned by their own addictions, their own greed, by their own idols, by their own pride. When the Spirit comes upon us, the Holy Spirit has the power to free us. There is power in the Holy Spirit to release us from the bondage of sin. There is power to release us from the trap that the devil has set.

When we are filled with the Spirit, we can empowered to heal people in the name of Jesus. He says, "recovery of sight for the blind." God is calling us to lay hands on people and heal them. After Peter and the disciples were filled with the Holy Spirit, they healed the crippled man in front of the temple. People were getting healed just by touching them. The power of the Kingdom of God has opened up. Since I came back from the healing conference, I have been much more intentional about praying for healing. And it has been amazing in a few occasions. People were actually getting healed. Nothing major yet, but headaches, stomach pains, shoulder pains, and things like that have disappeared. I saw people getting healed of partial blindness, deafness. I along with a couple of guys prayed for this guy with knee pain, and after we prayed for him, he said the knee stopped hurting. I was really surprised. Not everyone we prayed for got

healed but I started to experience actually healing from God. I believe God is calling us to go out and pray for healing. I want to organize a team of people to just walk around the neighborhood asking people if they want prayer for healing. Spirit filled people go out there and lay hands on people and heal them and deliver them from any oppression.

When we are filled with the Spirit, we also go out there and release the oppressed. I think a part of what this means is that we are called to fight against social injustice, racism, poverty, sex-trafficking, the low retention rate for graduation, unemployment, homelessness, drug addiction. All of these things. God calls us do something about it. When we are filled with the Spirit, we proclaim the year of Lord's favor. This is the year when everything is restored, everyone is freed, when the New City has fully come.

Being filled with the Holy Spirit is fun, soaking in His love is fun, but it always leads us to action. If we don't get that, we become selfish and consumeristic, emotionally seeking Christian. We just want to feel good. Now, it's great to feel good, but the Spirit leads us into action.

III. Now, how can we be filled with the Holy Spirit?

This is not something we do just once. It is something we do over and over again. In fact, the verb used is the continuous sense. So, this passage literally says to be filled with the Spirit over and over again.

It's something that is done to us (that's why it's in a passive—"be filled"; it's the Spirit who is doing the filling not you); but, it is a command to be filled. So, there is something you can do to be filled; otherwise, it would not make any sense to command it.

How can you experience God's love, how can you soak in God's love? Sometimes, when you pray, particularly with other people, people get filled with the Spirit. Before the Pentecost, there were about 120 people praying together for the coming of the Holy Spirit. It also says in Acts 4:31 that when they were praying, they were shaken and filled with the Holy Spirit. So, prayer has a lot to do with the experience of the filling of the Holy Spirit.

Now, to be filled with the Holy Spirit essentially means to surrender to the Spirit everything, and just allow your mind, heart, thoughts, every part of your body to be saturated by His love, His pleasure, His freedom, His joy. It is to ask God to fill us and

receive it with faith. To receive it with faith means to take a hold of the gift and receive it. Don't wait until everything can be seen; just raise your hands and receive His love. Thank him for his love. Just dive into His love. Faith is asking, yearning, asking, more, more Lord! Then, receiving, which I think means to take some risks. We can't directly see these things. But, we take action to receive it. **We should completely surrender our bodies to the Holy Spirit.**

- Letting our inhibitions go. Free ourselves to experience the love of God through the filling of the Holy Spirit.
- Sometimes, we are like a dry sponge. The things of this world makes us hard in our hearts. Even after you put the sponge in water, when it is dry and hard, it doesn't take soak any water until you leave it in the water for a while. But, eventually, the water soaks into the sponge.

Would you like to be filled with the Spirit?

Let's open up to Luke 11:9-13

This passage tells us some of the common hindrances to being filled with the Spirit.

The first is doubt.

- Luke 11:9: **"So I say to you: Ask and it will be given to you"**
- *You say: I don't know.*
- Jesus says again, **"seek and you will find"**
- *Not sure and you are a little skeptical,*
- Jesus says it again in a different way, **"knock and the door will be opened to you."**
- May be you, but not me. I can see it happening to you, but I am not sure about me.
- So, Jesus continues (Luke 11:10), **"For everyone who asks receives; he (everyone) who seeks finds, and to him (everyone) who knocks, the door will be opened."**

And everyone (used 6 times) includes you and you and you.

The second common hindrance is fear—fear about what we will receive.

- Will it be something good?
- Jesus continues:
(Luke 11:11-13)“Which of you fathers, if your son asks for a fish, will give him a snake instead? Or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion? If you then, though you are evil (he says we are pretty much an evil bunch compared to God), know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the **Holy Spirit** to those who ask him!”
- If we are not going to treat our children like that, it is inconceivable that God will treat us like that. Here it is a promise. If we ask for the gift of the Holy Spirit, we will receive this wonderful gift.

The third hindrance is inadequacy.

- We do need to ask God for forgiveness for all of our sins. We need to examine our hearts to see if there are any unconfessed sins. We also need to make some decision about turning our back to all that we know is wrong.
- However, many of us feel inadequate even after we did that. We have this vague feeling that God will not give us anything or that we don't deserve it.
- You might think God will give the gift to some advanced Christians but not to you. That is not true.
- Verse 13 does not say: “How much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to all very advanced Christians.”
- Jesus says, “How much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him.”

Shall we ask him?

[Give a chance for those who want to become a Christian a chance. Sorry—
Thank you—Please.]

[Direction on prayer team]. We have some time. So, you can spend as much time as you need to pray. If you don't feel comfortable praying with others, you can pray on your own.

If you are praying on your own:

1. Ask God to forgive you for anything that could be a barrier.
2. Turn from any area of your life that you know is wrong.
3. Ask God to fill you with His Spirit. Go on knocking, seeking. Knock until he opens the door. Seek God with all of your heart.

Remember, being filled with the Spirit is not a one time experience. Peter was filled with the Spirit three times in the space of Chapters 2-4 in Acts.

Lord, I pray that your Holy Spirit would fill this room and fill the heart and lives of each and every person who wants to receive you.