



THE FILLING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT (Week 3)

Opening Song (if you are able): *ROOFTOPS* (Jesus Culture)

OPENING: What is the most significant thing you have learned about the Holy Spirit from this series?

How to be filled with the Holy Spirit

While all believers are indwelt by the Spirit, not all are empowered by the Spirit, and not all are empowered equally. The concept of being empowered by the Spirit is often called, “*being filled with the Spirit.*”

1. Surface the Desire

Desire to bear His fruit. The truth is we need the Holy Spirit in everything we do. We need Him if we want to fully be obedient followers of Jesus and desire to bear His fruit in our lives (read Galatians 5:21-23 in which we learn about the character, or fruit, that the Spirit produces in our lives. Which of these traits do you lack, and which do you want to be true of you?)

Desire to live in His power. We all get frustrated with ourselves a lot, even the great Apostle Paul experienced such. Read Romans 7:7-25. This seems to express the frustration of trying to live out the Christian life without the Spirit’s empowerment, by sheer willpower. Can you identify with this struggle? How?

Desire to lead others to Him. Read Acts 1:8. Here we find the truth that it is the Holy Spirit that empowers us to lead others to Jesus and bring them to church. We must grow in our desire to let people know about the grace of God and His wonderful plan for their lives (John 3:16). Do you want to be used by God to lead others to Him? In what ways do you struggle inviting others and sharing your faith?

2. Live under His Influence.

In our previous sermon series, Pastor Jon taught us that *influence* means to flow. The Spirit can only flow out of us if the Spirit is flowing through us. Read Ephesians 5:18-20. There is a contrast being made between being filled with alcohol and being filled with the Spirit. There is also a similarity, which is the idea of influence. The metaphor of drinking can be a helpful one, in that it brings out the idea of influence. Under the influence of alcohol, people are emboldened to speak, express love, and become reflective. They also turn to alcohol for empowerment, comfort, courage, and companionship. However, alcohol is the short-term counterfeit, while the reality is found in being filled with the Spirit. So what causes a person to get more drunk, and to come more under the influence of alcohol? They drink more. The difference with the Christian is not that he or she needs more of the Spirit, but influence increases when the Spirit has more of them. While there are many things that affect the Spirit’s control of our life, there are four primary means by which the Spirit gains greater control, or influence, over our lives— where He consumes more of us.

Embracing His Lordship

Read Romans 12:1. What does it mean to be a living sacrifice? Read Colossians 1:18. What does it mean to make Jesus first in our lives?

Giving ourselves to Him and making Him first gives us the concept “lordship.” Our life is like a house with many rooms. The living room is where we receive things—the entry point. The dining and kitchen areas are where we prepare what nourishes us, the bedrooms symbolize their relationships. The recreation room, our social life. Which rooms do you let the Spirit move freely in? Which rooms do you keep to yourself? It is then important to bring all areas under the control or guidance of the Holy Spirit. Withholding rooms, areas of their lives, will severely impact the influence/flow the Holy Spirit has.

Spiritual Breathing

We all make mistakes, we still commit sin. By definition, when we sin, the Holy Spirit is not in control, we are. It is important to confess sin as soon as we become aware of it, this is called *spiritual breathing*. This helps our minds and spirits become more aware of the presence of the Holy Spirit in our lives and it constantly reminds us of the grace of God in our lives—His willingness to forgive and restore. It is critical to keeping the Holy Spirit in control of our life through *spiritual breathing*. There are strongholds in our lives that others we trust might need to know, so they can pray for us (read James 5:16). This is called spiritual accountability.

Reliance

The third exercise is “reliance,” which is turning to God throughout the day for enablement and empowerment. Most people turn to something in times of need. A chain smoker for example, every time they sense a need, they “light up.” If they feel lonely, they “light up.” We can find ourselves doing the same thing with food, music, TV, even coffee. Throughout each day we sense the need for empowerment, comfort, enablement, wisdom, companionship. We often turn to substitutes like food, film, sleep, caffeine, or even nicotine to meet these needs. God wants us to instinctively turn to Him throughout the day and ask for comfort, empowerment, wisdom, direction, etc. We should be turning to the Lord increasingly with their needs throughout the day. Read Proverbs 3:5 and Isaiah 26:6.

Abiding.

Read John 15:5. To *abide* means to dwell or live in. When we abide in Christ, we grow and bear fruit! If we want to always be filled with the Spirit, we must engage in activities that cultivate that intimacy with the Lord. This sets an atmosphere in your mind and heart and thus maximizes the Spirit’s influence in your life. Name activities that will help you abide in Christ and bear fruit. Which *abiding* activities do you need more of in your life?