

“The Fullness of God Overflowing”
Ephesians 5:15-21

Introduction: Pg. 978

Vision review... Today... God wants to fill you with himself. The question is: how badly do you want him to fill you?

Cup Filled with Water - Live Picture

- Imagine that this glass is your life. (Glass with a little water)
- Imagine that this ___ oz. Water bottle is the Holy Spirit.
 - This is a good analogy, because (John 7:38-39)
 - This is a bad analogy because God is an infinite fountain, have the ocean at my side would not paint an accurate picture. That is why I found the biggest bottle I could. :)
- To what degree are you experiencing the Fullness of God in you?
 - Add some water.
 - Add some water.
 - Add some water.
- Are you full to the point where you are not just spilling over on occasion, but consistently overflowing with the reality of God?

Vision - Part 2 Vision Slide - The Fullness of God in us Overflowing through Us

FCF:

The Point: Be filled continually with God's Spirit to overflow with him everywhere.

Context:

- 1:1-3:21 - Doctrinal: identity, prayer, salvation, united peoples, Paul's ministry, prayer
- 4:1 "walk worthy" how? "walk in love" (5:2), "walk as children of the light" (5:9) & "Walk wisely" (5:15)

Though we are going to focus in on verse 18, I want you to see how Paul is building to that instruction in vv. 15-17

- Paul sets up three contrasts...
 - Wise not unwise
 - Understanding not foolish
 - Full of the Spirit not wine

As we consider this encouragement to “Be filled continually with God’s Spirit,” I want to ask three key questions in our time together:

1. What does it mean to be filled with the Spirit?
2. How are we filled with the Spirit?
3. What happens when are filled with the Spirit?

I. Be filled continually with God’s Spirit... (Eph. 5:15-18)

First Question: What does it mean to be filled with the Spirit?

- When someone God gives someone the gift of salvation, they are made new by the Spirit and are given by God the Holy Spirit to dwell in them. So... if you believe in Jesus and have received his salvation by grace through faith, you have the Spirit. He is in you!
- I know it's hard to wrap your mind around the Spirit dwelling in us and filling us, but it is similar to when a piece of iron is placed into the fire. Though they are two distinct substances, the fire penetrates the iron, so that not only do you have the iron in the fire, but the fire in the iron. (Tozer)
- But he wants us to be full of his Spirit. This is God’s goal for you (3:19, 4:13) [as we saw in our Vision sermon last week,]
- Sam Storms says: **"To be filled with the Spirit is to come under progressively more intense and intimate influence of the Spirit."**

T: Look at what we learn from this verse.

- This is for everyone.
 - Paul is addressing the entire church. This is for you. This is for you. This is for you. I wish I had time to call you each by name.
 - Do you believe that?
 - There is no such thing as two class Christianity: Ordinary Christians and Spirit-filled Christians (as if it were reserved for a select class). It's just Christians with varying degrees of the Spirit filling us.
 - To continually be filled with God's Spirit IS NORMAL CHRISTIANITY.
 - God wants. MORE for us. We should expect it and pursue it, but we won't pursue if we don't think it's for us.
- This is a command, not a suggestion. We must seek the Spirit's continual filling.
- If you are like me, there have been seasons in your life where you have unintentionally minimize the role of the Spirit in my life (maybe out of ignorance, maybe out of . . . Consequently, we regularly miss out on the Spirit's fullness.
 - Paul understood that every good thing in our lives comes because of the Holy Spirit.
 - Go study Romans 8 & Galatians 5. In Gal. 5, we find four different commands that help us understand how the Spirit works and what someones life looks like filled with the Spirit. It tells us to:
 - "Walk by the Spirit" (16) – Be "led by the Spirit" (18) . . . not like children playing follow the leader in a single file line going to recess but like a locomotive on a train.
 - "live by the Spirit" (25) - He gives spiritual life and sustains us/invigorates us.
 - And "keep in step with the Spirit." (NIV) [When I was a kid, I loved snow days... no school *and* basketball practice with my dad. We got to get to Old Blue.. 89' Areostar van.]
- This command directs us to come under the constant influence of the the Spirit.
 - Think about the contrast Paul sets up: "Do not get drunk with wine"
 - When someone does drink to the point of drunkenness, they have come under the influence of that substance. It now controls them in a destructive way. It impairs their ability to think, talk, and be themselves.
 - Because of the excessive amount of alcohol, it results in "debauchery:" wild and undisciplined living, readily yielding to temptation in its various forms.
 - Conversely, when we take in the Spirit, we don't lose control, but we come under his influence and control.
 - The most technical translation is: "Be being filled with the Spirit." It is continuous.
 - Because we are taking in more and more and more of the Spirit, we are increasingly coming under his influence.
 - But I hope you see, this involves surrender. God, my life is a blank check. Whatever you say, goes. Whatever you want, I want.
 - This is something that should repeatedly be happening to Christians.
 - To follow Jesus is everything or it's nothing. And here's the good news, unlike alcohol
 - He serves, not as a depressant, but a stimulus, invigorating us with the life of Christ!
 - He stimulates every part of us: mind, emotions, affections, desires, and actions!

T: How do we take him in?

II. ... through a relentless pursuit of God (5:18) rw?

- A believer cannot be void of the Spirit, but we can be devoid of his fullness.
- There are degrees of filling (or gradations) of being filled with God's Spirit.
- The hope is that we are increasingly filled, and as we grow into the fullness of Christ, our capacity for fullness grows as well.
- Balloon analogy: This balloon can be full of air, and yet expand to make it "more full/fuller."

T: How are we filled with the Spirit? There is no formula! But let me give you a few encouragements in this relentless pursuit.

1. **Cultivate a deeper hunger for God.** OR Cultivate greater hunger for God through humility. OR Let humility before God lead to a deeper hunger for God.

- God fills the hungry. What is your appetite like for God?
- Two reasons we don't hunger for God:
 - We don't think we need him. We think we're good spiritually. We're doing just fine.
 - We don't want him, because we want other things more.
 - Can I shoot straight with you? If you consistently say: "I didn't have time for God or couldn't find the time," here's the reason. You didn't want to. Can we take that out of our vocabulary?
- Here's the irony: as God satisfies our hunger, he causes our hunger to grow all the more. (Infinite pursuit!)
 - Personal testimony... In this season of personal revival in my life, I think the biggest takeaway has been to realize just how much I need him.
 - Fan the flame.. Fan it. Over and over and over again.
 -

2 Pray for the Spirit to work in you daily.

- Everything we want to happen happens by the Spirit. So how can pray at all if we are not implicitly praying for the Spirit?
- Luke 11:13 — The idea is persistence, keep asking again and again... fresh impartations!
- Tuck away. Get to those "desolate places," (Jesus) "prayer closet" (Jesus), but also pray with others.
- This should be our constant prayer. I hope we are praying for more of God's Spirit at work in us and through us every week in our Groups.
- **"God, fill us until we overflow with you."**

3. . Fill your mind with God's Spirit inspired Word.

- Quote 2 Timothy 3:16-17. "*All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable...*"
- 2 Peter 1:21 makes it explicit: "No prophecy [of Scripture] was her produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit."
- **"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly,** teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs with thankfulness in your hearts to God." **(Col 3:16)**
- If you don't dwell in the Word, I don't have a lot of hope you will be consistently filled with God's Spirit.
 - Reading, Hearing, Meditating, Talking about the Word with one another...
- Listen, when revival happens... we experience the old things with new life, ordinary things in extraordinary (wow. Whoa. MMM. C'mon. Gotta share that!)
- Take a step: Shrink the Steps
 - Bible Reading Plan (Acts)
 - Word dwelling: Copy, paste, send... (Women in the Reddy CG are great at this!)

T: Lent is going to be a critical seasons of fasting and feasting. Emptying of ourselves from the things of the world to seek more and more and more of God, which leads us to increasingly...

4. Follow wherever the Spirit leads.

- The Spirit will always lead in ways that are consistent with what he has already revealed in Scripture.
- Are you daily seeking to live in line with what God shows you in his Word?
- Are you consistently putting off the junk and sin in your life, so that you can put on Christ?
- Emptying precedes filling. If you need help working through the junk, and sin that is holding you back, we are here for you.
- Listen: we can resist the Spirit and quench the Spirit's work.
 - We resist the Spirit either from what the Scriptures have told us or the subtle promptings of God saying reach out to them, love them, do this, don't do that.
 - We can hear a sermon on Sunday and be stirred by the Holy Spirit to live differently but never move on it when it comes Monday.
- When we do that we grieve the Spirit (Eph. 4:30) and our fellowship and that filling takes a hit.
 - Remember, this is about relationship.

- We grieve the spirit and we can quench the Spirit, but not only is God green when we can disregard what he wants for us and promos he also gets lit up when we follow what he wants for us. Your love for God and your obedience to God, the thrills God!

III. ... to overflow with God everywhere. (Ephesians 5:19-21)

What does it look like?

God's Presence.

- First and foremost, the Spirit-filling us means we are overflowing with the very Presence of God.
- We are more aware of his presence in him. This is all about a personal relationship with God.
- If we are more concerned about what God produces through us than the simple fact God loves us and desires to walk with us every moment of every day, we're off center.
- It's called enjoying the gifts more than the giver. It's called idolatry.
- So important if you're new to Christianity - the invitation is to a relationship.

T: But it is so true that his supernatural presence brings us supernatural power.

God's Empowering Presence Overflowing.

- Acts 1:8 - "But you will receive POWER when the Holy Spirit has come upon you."
- The Spirit strengthens us (as we saw last week in Ephesians 3:14-19) with new desires, new affections, and new abilities.
- And because God's power is in us, the potential to overflow goes wherever we go. Let me give you four ways God's empowering presence of God empowers overflows through us. *This is not an exhaustive list.

God's Empowering Presence Overflowing in Praise.

- *Verse 19-20.*
- Our lives should be characterized by consistent praise. Look back and see all that God has done for us! Think about this at two levels: corporate and personal.
- Paul's focus here is when the church is together. When we sing together, we are not only giving God the recognition he deserves (you are amazing, above all, abundant in all your attributes), but we are also building one another up with the truth we sing.
 - This is one of the reasons why Sundays are can't miss moments (and how great was our Worship Night), but more than that... My hope is that you are singing these songs throughout your week.
 - Set a Fire... Unstoppable God... Come Behold the Wondrous Mystery... Before the Throne... Jesus Paid it All... (not about styles - about soul stirring truth: psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs)
- Our corporate praise should be the culmination and catalyst of our personal praise. You hear me?
 - Praising into Sunday (culmination)
 - Praising out of Sunday (catalyst)
 - We link the songs we sing in a playlist every week in our newsletter. Listen on your commute. Listen in your home. Buy a bluetooth speaker and bump that praise!
 - Get in the habit of taking praise breaks - if you can't sing - sing silently or pray.
- Overflow involves praise *and* thanksgiving always and for everything. Wow!

God's Empowering Presence Overflowing in Purity.

- God's Spirit is most often referred to as the HOLY Spirit.
- Fruit... of the Spirit - what looks like Jesus. The divine life consistently flows out of us (love, joy, peace, patience . . .)
- Want to know if someone is full of the Spirit, look for the Fruit of the Spirit. Pretty simple.
- When the Spirit is filling us, we increasingly display purity of motive and action. For more on this, read the context before and after 5:18.

God's Empowering Presence Overflowing in Partnership.

- New power to serve one another. Read Romans 12 and 1 Corinthians 12 to see how the spiritual gifts, in all of their various manifestations, serve to build up the body.
- Specifically, *in verse 21*, it's about submitting to one another because of our love and reverence for Jesus. Living in the order and design God instituted in the home and at work. How's your relational health?
- And all of the one another commands.

God's Empowering Presence Overflowing in Proclamation.

- New power to serve all people with the news of Jesus.
- Acts 1:8 - "But you will receive POWER when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses." I believe the primary reason Christians don't talk about Christ is because they lack a sufficient filling of God's Spirit.

As God fills us with his Spirit, we will experience his moment by moment leadership.

- Be sensitive to the promptings of the Spirit. Personal God... He leads us. He's our good shepherd.. Wait, but not moment by moment? (Overflow)
- Jonathan Dodson describes the work of the Spirit in this way: "I'm discovering that most of the time the power of the Spirit is subtle, not showy. The Spirit is present in our subtle inclinations to serve our spouses, do what's right, read the Bible, love the marginalized, make disciples, and commune with God. . . . He is the one who prompts you to pray for others. He is the one who restrains you from clicking on that image on the Internet, making that purchase, or silently judging someone. He prompts you to encourage a friend, to praise the good in a coworker, or to rejoice in God's remarkable grace. If you are in Christ, you have the Spirit, and he prompts you all the time. We simply need to surrender to his prompting!"

Conclusion:

Call the band up... **The fullness of God in us Overflowing through us.** Breakthrough year...

Pic: Blank Check