

## The Holy Spirit working in Uniquely You

### Lesson Three

#### Baptism of the Spirit in the Believer

##### Definition

The baptizing work of the Holy Spirit may be defined as that work whereby the Spirit places the believer into union with Christ and into union with other believers in the Body of Christ (1 Cor. 12:13).

##### Explanation

1. ***The baptism of the Holy Spirit is unique to the church age.*** The basic reference is 1 Corinthians 12:13, which states, “For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and we were all made to drink of one Spirit.” That this ministry of the Spirit began at Pentecost can be seen by comparing Acts 1:5, which indicates the baptizing work is still future, with Acts 11:15, which indicates the “beginning” of this work was at Pentecost in Acts 2. The baptizing work did not occur in the Old Testament; it is unique to the church age which began at Pentecost.
2. ***The baptism of the Holy Spirit includes all believers in this age.*** The emphasis that “all” are baptized by the Holy Spirit is stated in several passages. In 1 Corinthians 12:13 it indicates “we were *all* baptized.” In Romans 6 all who were baptized (v. 3) are those who have been united to Christ (v. 5), hence, all believers. In Galatians 3:27–28 it indicates “all of you” were baptized into Christ and became “one in Christ,” no matter whether they were Jew or Greek, slave or free, male or female.
3. ***The baptism of the Holy Spirit brings believers into union with other believers in the Body of Christ.*** There is absolutely no distinction concerning those coming into union with one another: Jews, Gentiles, slaves, free people, men, women—all come into union with one another (1 Cor. 12:13). It is also noteworthy that the spiritual condition of the believer is not a factor—the Corinthians were noted for their carnality, yet all were included.
4. ***The baptism of the Holy Spirit brings believers into union with Christ.*** The very ones that were “baptized into Christ” (Rom. 6:3) were also “united with Him” (Rom. 6:5). This truth prohibits the baptism of the Spirit from being a work subsequent to salvation.
5. ***The baptism of the Holy Spirit is not experiential.*** Since this is a work done to the believer and not by the believer, and since the baptism occurs simultaneous to salvation, it is not experiential.

#### Filling of the Holy Spirit in the life of the Believer

##### Definition

The basis for the filling of the Spirit is Ephesians 5:18, “be filled with the Spirit.” The command to be filled with the Spirit is given in contrast to the warning “do not get drunk with wine.” Drunkenness exhibits the inability of the person to control himself. The nature of the Christian’s life is to be in contrast to the nature of the uncontrolled drunkard. The meaning of “filled” (Gk. *plerousthe*) is control and influence.

## Explanation

The filling of the Spirit is necessary for two reasons.

(1) **It is essential for the believer's maturity** (1 Cor. 3:1–3).

Paul admonished the Corinthian believers as being “fleshly” (Gk. *sarkikos*), “controlled by the flesh.”

(2) **It is essential for the believer's service** (Acts 4:31). This passage illustrates the relationship between filling and service; it was the filling of the Spirit that enabled the believers to “speak the word of God with boldness.”

**Contrast between the spiritual believer and the carnal believer. According to 1 Cor. 2:9–3:4, what is the contrast?**

## Conditions

Even though Ephesians 5:18 is a command to be filled with the Spirit and there are inferences about conditions necessary for being filled, it is surprising that there is no command in Scripture to pray for the filling of the Spirit. Since the command relates to a right relationship to the Holy Spirit, the conditions governing that relationship must have to do with the filling of the Spirit. There are several commands that relate to a believer's being filled with the Spirit.

1. ***Do not grieve the Holy Spirit (Eph. 4:30)***. The context of Ephesians 4:30 relates to exhortations concerning sin. Believers are warned not to lie (4:25), not to prolong anger (4:26), and not to be bitter or unforgiving (4:31–32). When a believer does these things he grieves the Holy Spirit. Sin grieves the Holy Spirit and sin will prevent the believer from being filled with the Spirit.
2. ***Do not quench the Holy Spirit (1 Thess. 5:19)***. The context of this passage relates to ministry. The believer is exhorted to pray without ceasing (5:17), be thankful (5:18), and not despise prophetic utterances (5:20). When believers pour cold water on the fire of ministry they quench the Spirit. The Spirit's ministry is not to be hindered; Christians also should not hinder others in their ministry for God.
3. ***Walk by the Spirit (Gal. 5:16)***. Walk means to conduct one's life. Rather than living in the sphere or under the domination of the old nature, believers are exhorted to conduct their lives in the sphere of the Holy Spirit.

## Some Answers for some Questions

### *How often does a person need to be filled?*

That same verb in Ephesians 5:18, “be filled,” answers the question, for it is in the present tense which indicates that the filling is a repeated experience. “Keep on being filled” is a good way to translate it. In other words, a Christian may be filled and filled and filled again. This is illustrated in the experience of the apostles during the early months of the church. On the day of Pentecost they were filled (Ac 2:4). A short time later, after a prayer meeting for boldness, the same group was filled again (Ac 4:31). It is rather important to notice that the apostles did not need to be filled this second time because some specific sin had come into their lives but because they needed control in a new area (boldness to witness) in the face of a new problem (the prohibition

to speak by the Sanhedrin). In other words, repeated fillings may be necessary because new areas of life come to light which need to be brought under the control of the Spirit. Of course, it is also true that a Christian needs to be filled again and again when sin (which is ego control) breaks the control of the Spirit.

### ***What are the conditions for being filled?***

A lot of Christians think that filling comes in answer to some sort of tarrying or agonizing prayer. But we search the New Testament in vain to find an example of believers praying for the filling of the Spirit after the day of Pentecost. The nearest thing to such an example is Paul's prayer for the believers in Ephesus (Eph 1:17), yet even this is not a prayer for filling. Even though tarrying or agonizing in prayer are not required, there are conditions which must be met in order to be Spirit-filled.

1. First, if the filling involves control, then there must be a dedication of self to God for His use and control. So the first condition is a dedicated life. This involves an initial, crisislike act of dedication in which one gives his life to God for His will to be done through it. Although initial dedication may be brought about by some particular problem, it is not a dedication to do something or to give up something, but a complete settling of the question, Who will run my life?  
But there must also be continual dedication and commitment to keep on doing the will of God. When questions arise, the Spirit will guide us to make the right decisions (Ro 8:14), and He does that through our fellowship with Himself which enables Him to tell us what to do. Ideally, a dedicated person at the crossroads of decision does not debate whether or not he will do the will of God but only asks what is the will of God in order that he may do it.
2. Second, Spirit-filling involves not grieving the Spirit (Eph 4:30). What is it that grieves Him? The answer is sin, but specifically sins of speech, for in the immediate context of that verse the tongue and what it says are mentioned several times.
3. Third, the Spirit-filled life is a life of dependence (Gal 5:16). Walking by its very nature is a succession of dependent acts. When one foot is lifted in order to place it in front of the other one, it is done in faith that the foot remaining on the ground will support the full weight of the body. Each foot in turn acts as a support while the other foot is being moved forward. If you can't trust each foot to hold the other in turn then you will stand still. Progress can be made only by trusting. So it is in the Christian life. We make progress as we depend on the Spirit and let Him have full control. To be Spirit-filled is to be Spirit-controlled, and this means dedication of life, putting away sin, and constant dependence on His power. Prayer and human resolve may often be involved in meeting these conditions; but when they are met, the Spirit's control automatically follows. When the conditions are met, the filling will be experienced.

***What are the results of being filled?***

There are at least four results or characteristics of a Spirit-filled life.

1. The first is Christlikeness, for the fruit of the Spirit (inseparably linked to the filling in Gal 5) is Christlikeness.
2. The second is worship and praise, for the classic verse on filling (Eph 5:18) is followed immediately by a statement of the consequences of being filled—singing and being thankful.
3. The third is submissiveness (Eph 5:21). Spirit control affects all the relationships of life so that proper harmony will be experienced between husbands and wives, parents and children, employers and employees. Self-control will disrupt that harmony.
4. The fourth result of filling is service for the Lord. What kind of service? The all-inclusive answer is service which in the power of the Spirit uses one's particular combination of spiritual gifts. But, more specifically, Spirit-filling will result in people coming to the Lord in salvation. This was what happened in the book of Acts when people were Spirit-filled. Compare Acts 2:4 with 2:41; 4:8 and 31 with 5:14; 6:3 with 6:7 and 11:24.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Charles Caldwell Ryrie, *A Survey of Bible Doctrine* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1995, c1972).