

"FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT"

Eph. 5:18

In an effort to set forth a contrast between the old life and the new, Paul left the illustrations of darkness and light in V. 15 - and he moved on to a comparison between wisdom and foolishness.

Unwise men, the people who live without God, and who follow the world's wisdom, no matter how intelligent or competent a person may be, judged in the world - he or she is a fool if that individual structures his life without reference to God.

On the other hand, the wise person, determines his or her conduct by the character and purpose of a holy God. That person's life is dependent upon God. Conforms to his will and serves him.

The contrast between wisdom and foolishness, in the Bible sense, is in V. 17.

In V. 16 - The wise person makes the most of his time because the days are evil. That text is an interesting text. Time is translated here as an opportunity. Making the most - buying it up. Believers who live in a world dominated by corruption, are urged to live and act as wise people.

Now one expression here of foolishness in the 1st century world was drunkenness.

18 The people did not understand the effects of alcohol. Many of them believed that wine was the drink of the Gods. And they attributed the effect of alcohol on them to the power of the Gods. And the Spirits. And wine was often used in pagan worship. Paul's idea probably here is coming out of that background. He dismisses the pagan idea and classifies it for them.

The believer was not to get his inspiration and joy from wine. As the pagan sought - but he was to receive his inspiration and joy from the spirit of God. So the translation literally is - be filled in spirit. Be filled by the spirit. Here is a reference to Holy Spirit. That we are filled - emphasizes that God does the filling.

Now another point to be made - that it is imperative that this present time, it denotes a continuous action. Which Paul is talking about. It is not referring to a one-time baptism or filling of the Spirit - it is the continuous life of the Spirit whom the Christian receives with joy and his power. That is, keep on being filled by the Spirit. Now this, we find, that he says can be expressed in an appropriate way. He goes on to say by music. Singing in the heart. The proper meaning of the text here is - that music is not for a showcase. For an individual's talent - but for the praise of the Lord. It is not to magnify what a musician does in the church, but it is the people praising God with all of their hearts. So Paul emphasized here - that this is one of the ways that we could express our religious feeling. The great hymns of the church are concerned with the praise of God, rather than praise of the worshipper. Now they make sense. In contrast to maybe some modern music that praises a man - instead of praising God.

Things Paul says, are not to be confused--he choses this concrete example to make

fools of themselves. This is very dangerous - Paul says. And the opposite thing that a man is to do, is to be filled with the contents of the Spirit. Now, Dr. B. H. Carroll said one time he went to preach for a man who before entering the pulpit - he took a little poddy that would enable him to take ahold of things and make them lively while he was in the pulpit. He said, he was one of the most brilliant preachers of the South - but they made a ship-wreck of him. He says, I was called to preach in his church - the man got up and made some introductory remarks. He had been braced up with whiskey - and he said some very foolish things. He said, the man could move along the church at first - but then that he could get it nowhere. Now, whenever, we want to be stimulated - we should go off and pray. We are to be filled with the Spirit. We become enthusiastic. In this way, that is Spiritual intoxication.

Every Christian is baptized with the Holy Spirit, the moment he is born again. It is the quickening power of the Holy Spirit that regenerates his soul.

The work of the Holy Spirit is set forth in the word of God, as a work of the Father. And as the work of the Son. And every believer is indwelt. Gal. 4:5 - because ye are sons - God has sent forth a Spirit, into your hearts.

Now every believer is baptized with the Spirit as plainly stated in I Cor. 12:12. For by one Spirit - we are all baptized into one body. "And this Spirit is not an experience following conversion, but an experience that takes place as a Christian - as we come into the member of the body of Christ. Every believer is sealed with the Holy Spirit. And we know that we can grieve the Holy Spirit.

The Disciples led before and after the day of Pentecost. It was a memorable day.

When the Holy Spirit came upon believers in that power which was a miracle.

In Joel 2:28-29 - we find the marvelous prophesy. Of this day, and of grace, and the outpouring of the Spirit. And it shall come to pass afterwards - that I shall pour out my Spirit upon all flesh. And your sons and your daughters shall prophesy. Your old men shall dream dreams - and the young men shall see visions and also upon the servants and the handmaids. In those days, will I pour out my Spirit. The prophet says, there is a great day coming. When the Spirit of God will not fall upon just a leader, here or there. Like Sampson, or like David, or like Isaiah. But it will be poured out with that measure upon all flesh. Sons, daughters, old men, young men - even upon the slaves. There is no distinction here of the out-pouring of the Spirit.

There is a good illustration of the out-pouring of the Spirit in John Jasper. Many people have written about this great genius in the ministry of America. He was a Negro slave, and as he sorted out tobacco with his hands in the warehouse, the Holy Spirit of God became upon him. He became one of the greatest preachers in American history. Upon a visit to Richmond, Va., you might find people who would search and who come into that city, at the 6th Mt. Zion Baptist Church, in Richmond. It was the church where John Jasper, the people of Richmond said, we do not want to destroy this church. And so they built the highway around it. And they did not touch a brick in that church - and it still stands as a monument to the preaching of a slave. John Jasper. When one drives into the city of Richmond - down the freeway - he will make a great bend. And in the bend stands the 6th Mt. Zion Baptist Church. A monument to a slave. Upon all your sons and your daughters, old men, young men,

even upon your servants - God will pour out the Holy Spirit.

This text illustrates for us a wonderful revelation of God. The burden of the message. The Scripture always portrays the hope of the great day coming. It shall come to pass afterwards - that I shall pour out my Spirit upon all flesh.

In the Kingdom of God, there is necessarily advancement, progress, and development. God never receives, he never retracts. He explores and he moves on. In every age and in every dispensation. There is a foundation for one greater to follow. God's creation is followed by redemption. Redemption is followed by sanctification, and this by glorification. And these things, we find as he said - the whole spirit of triumph is coming in a great day.

I. THIS IS A PROPHECY FOR TODAY.

The prophesy is of a special and a deepening interest to us. In the age in which we live. We shall Acts 2 - the Pentecost story, where Simon Peter stood up and said, this is that which was spoken of by the prophet Joel. V. 16. It is this age, it is this day. This is the great hour which the prophet spoke. In our lives, we're right in the middle of it. Now Pentecost was the times set in Heaven - just as the incarnation. The birth of Jesus, it was a time set. Paul will say, when the fullness of time was come, God sent forth his son, made of a woman, made under the law. Gal. 4:4. The time was set in Heaven. When we find the Roman language and the Roman Empire - and the Jews had Moses to read about in every city, in the fullness of time - Christ came to be born of a woman. And then his crucifixion, death, was a set time.

God had a time when he raised him from the dead. And he also had a time at the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, a time when the message of Joel was sent from Heaven, that time was Pentecost. And what a time of experience.

It is something that happened in God's program - his kingdom development. It will never happen again. There will never be another incarnation. There will never be another one born in a manger. There will never be another one crucified. It was a one-time experience. So, also, there is one time that the Holy Spirit of God was poured out, upon the world. And that marked a new day - the age of grace. A new dispensation.

John the Baptist said, I indeed baptize you with water, unto repentance, mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear, he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire. Matt. 3:11.

And before the Lord ascended to Heaven, he repeated, John truly baptized with water, but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost, not many days hence. Acts 1:5.

And so the Spirit, the baptism of the Spirit, came with the pouring out - once for all at Pentecost.

John said, I baptize with water. Well, Jesus is the baptizer in the sense, that he poured out the ascension gift. Luke 24:49. The Lord said, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you. That you tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you be clothed and endued with power.

The baptism of the Holy Spirit is the ascension gift of Christ. When he returned to Heaven, after his death, burial, and resurrection. He went back to Glory and he poured out the Spirit. But since Pentecost - the baptizer is the Spirit. He baptizes us into the body of Christ and into the church. I Cor. 12:13. For by one Spirit, are we all baptized into one body.

When a man trusts Jesus, as Saviour, and looks in faith and repentance, the Holy Spirit baptizes him and adds him into the body of Christ. He becomes a member of the household of faith. It was a one-time operation. It happens when you are saved. You are added too and you are baptized into the body of Jesus.

Could one be added and then taken out. Could one be placed in the body of Christ and then be removed. And re-entered. Can you be saved and then be lost. Saved, and lost. Added and taken out, and then cut off.

It would be like cutting off your foot - and then putting your foot back on. Such an idea is fancy. And so it is - in the Holy Scriptures. There is no such thing in the Bible as being added to the body of Christ - and being taken out of the body of Christ. Back and forth. By one Spirit are we all baptized into the body of Christ. That is, the work of the Holy Spirit, when we are saved. Now this act of the Holy Spirit is the position. It is something that God does for us. It is like writing your name in the lamb's book of life. I cannot do that. It is something that God has to do. And so, the baptism of the Holy Spirit is something that God does for us. We are saved, we are added in.

But, what is it that happens to us experimentally. The thing that we feel. In re-counting the experiences of the Apostles - their converts in Asia. Without exception, they never varied. They never used the word baptized. To speak of the Holy Spirit. The only time baptized is found in the Epistles with reference to the Holy Spirit is a passage in I Cor. 12:13. For by one Spirit are ye all baptized into one body. The body of Christ. What is the word they use - without exception it is the word filled. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost. Acts 2:4. The baptism places us in the church, in the body of the Lord. It is like the symbol of water baptism. That brings us into the fellowship of the church. No one becomes a member of the fellowship of the local church who does not find himself walking through with the Lord, in the waters of the Jordan. There is an experimental part of salvation. Something we feel and we share. And it is something that God does when he writes our names in the book.

II. BE FILLED - AND COME ALIVE.

Now the experimental part, the pouring out of the Holy Spirit, is being filled with the Holy Ghost. The Apostle never departs from the word filled. At Pentecost they were filled with the Holy Spirit.

At Samaria, they were filled with the Holy Spirit. At Caesarea - they were filled with the Holy Spirit. At Ephesus, they were filled with the Holy Spirit. The Disciples were filled with the Holy Spirit. Paul was full - and filled with the Holy Spirit. Stephen was filled with the Holy Spirit. There is never any exception. Always - that one word - filled.

Now that is the word of the text - be ye not drunk with wine, wherein is excess.

But be filled with the Spirit. The Greek word here, filled - it is an imperative command. There is never a commandment that will be baptized with the Spirit. But there is a commandment that we be filled with the Spirit. It is imperative we are to be quickened - and we are to be alive.

A dead, lazy Christian - is a tragedy to the name of Christ and an insult to God. That is true, also of a Preacher, a Deacon, or any officer in the church. Our services ought to be most glorious and interesting. As anything, or any meeting here on this earth. There ought not to be any movie you ever saw, or show you ever attended, or any game you ever went too that would rivet your interest in the services of God. The Preacher, the Deacons, the Choir, the Teachers and Leaders - to every member here is a command. Be filled with the Spirit. We ought to spark with God. And we ought to be alive for God.

III. BE FILLED CONTINUOUSLY

Now this text, be filled. The verb is in the present tense. There is no other way in the English language for us to translate this system - but to use the tense here. In illness, we cannot talk without pigeon-holing everything in a tense. Verbs have to be past, present, or the future. One cannot speak English - without using tense to describe time, or action. But the Greeks did not do it that way - they used their description to describe times and actions. For example, the whole system here. It refers to just that fact of a thing. And it actually means a continuous action. And the present tense is used here in this text. We are to be filled with the Spirit

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Our poor human nature - we are up today - we are down tomorrow. When we are up, we can touch the angels. The next day, when we are down - we are dead and irresponsible. We are as a log. It was as though we never knew the Lord. We actually ought to be glad, happy, praising God and serving Him all the time. Today, tonight, Monday, Sunday, Saturday. It moves on and it is to be continuous.

IV. BE FILLED - ALL OF YOU

Now here is something else in this text - it is plural. It includes everyone. We all ought to share this marvelous, quickening presence of the Spirit of God. The man who works in an office - the man who works in a shipyard, a man who lays bricks, or picks up the garbage on this street, the man who sweeps the floors in this building, the lawyer, the doctor, all who are laboring - ought to be filled with the Spirit. And there is to be a quickening power that moves. And people ought to be able to see it.

V. BE FILLED - TO UTTERMOST - TO UTTER ABANDONMENT

Now, not only does this say to us in the imperative command, not only does it say in the present tense, continuous, plural in number includes us all. But there is also the passive voice. And the point of this subject - something happens to the subject really. Be ye filled with the Spirit. That the Spirit does to us.

Now Paul uses here in this text, an illustration, that is not really for us to understand. It is not easy to understand in the way that it is translated. Be not

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The comparison that he is making, as when a man is under the influence of alcohol, the word he is abandonment. He has abandoned everything. He is just someone else. He is a different personality. He give himself over totally and completely to something else. When he is under the influence of alcohol - he is a different man. He is a different someone else and one could hardly recognize him.

He is the fellow who was always neat, nice, and now - his clothes are in disarray and under the influence of the spirits of alcohol.

You know, the Panama Canal, is a great miracle. The machinery in running that Canal. And it's gates. After two generations, is identical to what the American engineers first erected. One reason it is a real miracle is that one government after another, attempted to build the Canal - and failed. One can see why they failed. In the ground about 800 yards away - the big scar is still there. But the American engineers were sent there and they completed the construction of the Canal. One of the outstanding things in the history of mankind. Now the engineers used to sing a song. Don't send us back to a life of tame again, we have shattered a continents spine - easy work. Oh, we couldn't do that again. Haven't you something that is more in our line.

Then they had another stanza that they used to sing - about any rivers that you say are not crossable - got any mountains, that you can't tunnel through. We specialize in the holy impossible. Doing, what nobody else could do.

What a Spirit, in those American engineers.

Now that is something of the exact Spirit that Paul here commands. Be ye filled with the Spirit. Doing what you never thought was possible - it was a marvelous, glorious prospect.

Be filled with the Spirit - do the impossible for God. Something that God does for us - in us - with us, and through us.

A few years ago, in New York, there was a great fire. The great building was so quickly wrapped up in flames, escape seemed impossible. The imprisoned people within the structure - came to the windows and called for help. Some became unnerved and through themselves out from the windows. Heroes developed at that time. Lt. Bonner - son of a former fire chief, ascending the almost red-hot fire escape five times. Four times he came down with a woman or child in his arms. The fifth time, he was making for the street with an unconscious woman - when his strength gave out. And would have fallen to death - had not a comrade come to his assistance.

As Bonner reached a 4th story window in one of his ascents, a little girl from a window, where she stood surrounded by flames, she pleaded with him to let her escape and go in, after her little brother - whom she had carried to the window. He had fallen unconscious and was roasting - she said. Bonner jumped through the window - it seemed as though from below, he was going into a furnace. He found the little boy just inside the window - carried him out - and it is inconceivable that a paid employee of the city should exhibit such heroism as this. Simply because the call was

sympathetic and the need was great. And when we think of the church and how people sit with folded hands in the church, and all about there are cries coming up with equal force as to this fireman. And Paul gives us the command, we can carry on and do this work.

1975 Child Born rare Birth defect -
No Breast bone - heart outside Body -
2 no cases recorded text -

2000 - Cow skin - 1 1/2 yr - 15 operations

1st 2 yrs - Taken home - hose oxygen -
able breath without ventilator.

9 yr girl - myxoma - hole wall separates chamber heart.
2 imperfect half heart valves -
operation - machine - 9 hrs -
3 days - moved - Return myxoma.

Zeph 36: 22-32
God give new heart - new spirit -