BEING FILLED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT is an abiding state of Christian maturity showing Christ-like character. It means being led, empowered and controlled by the Holy Spirit as a general way of life.

In the earliest days of the Church, as recorded in the New Testament, the leaders looked for deacons to help with administrative activities. In Acts 6:3, they said, "Brothers, choose seven men from among you who are known to be FULL OF THE SPIRIT and wisdom." These people were not specially trained "theologians," but they had the necessary qualifications—effectively serving others and sharing their faith with the Holy Spirit's power. Barnabas, another leader, was described in Acts 11:24 as, "a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and faith, and a great number of people were brought to the Lord."

These people were identified by their lives and actions. Galatians 5:22-23 tells us, "the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control." Then these qualities are put together we see the character and personality of Jesus Christ. Those who are filled with the Spirit will (and should) become Christ-like. Thus, everyone who lives a Spirit-filled life demonstrates Christ-like character.

All of us came into spiritual life through the agency of the Holy Spirit. We were convicted of sin by the Holy Spirit. We were brought to repentance by the Holy Spirit. Faith was energised in us by the Holy Spirit so that we would respond to the preaching of the gospel. We were, then, brought to the place where we would submit to the Lordship of Christ by the Holy Spirit. And then we were regenerated by the Holy Spirit, which is we were recreated into new life.

At the time in which the Spirit of God regenerated us, He came to indwell us by His agency, we were baptised into the body of Christ; He gave us spiritual gifts; He then sealed us for eternal life and then separated us from sin. All of that is the work of the Spirit - a monumental work that lifted us out of the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of God's Son, and a monumental work that took us out of the mundane and earthly and set our feet in the eternal life with God. We, therefore, live a spiritual life. We are not of this world though we are in this world. Our citizenship is in heaven.

"We are not human beings having a spiritual experience; we are spiritual beings having a human experience." [Pierre Teilhard de Chardin]

The Holy Spirit offers us all of the perfecting resources that we need to live a God-glorifying life. The Spirit brings us into intimacy with God where is all the resource found. The Spirit illuminates the Scripture so we know exactly what the Word of God calls us to do. The Spirit then strengthens us in the inner man to do that. The Spirit glorifies Christ to us, both as our authority and our example so we know how to live and whom to be like. The Spirit then personally guides us as He moves within us through our conscience to do God's will. The Spirit then ministers to us through other Christians as He comes to us through them to touch our lives and bring us strength. And then finally the Spirit intercedes for us so that all things work together for good in our lives for God's purpose and His glory!
GETTING STARTED

Read Romans 8:9

One obvious truth that we frequently overlook is that there should be a huge difference between someone who has the Spirit of God living inside them and someone who does not.

Have you ever observed Christians and non-Christians interacting? In many cases, it is all but impossible to discern who has the Spirit and who doesn’t. Sure, the Christians may be a little nicer or more morally conscientious, but is that really all the Holy Spirit came to do in our lives? Shouldn’t the difference be supernatural (more than mere human efforts)? What do you think about all that has been said here? Let’s discuss.

DIGGING IN

In the busyness of our lives, we have developed a remarkable ability to miss the obvious. We over-analyse the things that don’t deserve a second thought, and we blow right past the clear, obvious, important things in life. We assume that we know what the Christian life ought to look like. Have you, however, ever sat down and considered the way Scripture describes the Spirit-filled life?

The following passages offer a brief overview of what the Holy Spirit does in a person like. Look up these passages and take some notes on what that looks like according to Scripture.

APPLYING NOW

1. Read Ephesians 5:15-20, what does the verse ask of us to do?

This is an important portion from God’s Word, which conveys to us the significance of being filled with the Holy Spirit. Paul is not merely encouraging the believers to be filled with the Spirit; he is commanding them to be filled. This is critical to all Christians.

2. Read Galatians 5:16-25

★ Based on what Paul says here, what should distinguish a Spirit-filled person from a non-Christian?

In v. 17, Paul gets specific and tells us about the conflict between the flesh and the Spirit. The flesh sets its desire against the Spirit. That’s why there’s conflict in the life of a Christian, which doesn’t exist in the life of a non-Christian. Why? The reason being is that he doesn’t have the Spirit within.

For more explanation, refer to “Have You Made the Wonderful discovery of the Spirit-Filled Life?”
TAKING HOME

Let’s pray that the Lord would press upon us daily the need to walk step by step in His Spirit, saturated with His Word, thinking His thoughts, communing with Him in prayer, saying ‘YES’ to His leading, submitting to His guiding, depending on His power to live out a Spirit-filled life so that we may not fulfill the lust of the flesh.

★

Many Christians try to overcome ‘the flesh’ or accomplish good things merely through human strength, but fail to keep it off. What did the Apostle Paul say as a means for Christians to be able to live a victorious Christian life?

In Galatians 5, the Apostle Paul shows the Galatians how to overcome the flesh by acknowledging that the key to Christian living is the Holy Spirit. He points to them that it is a Spirit-controlled life that is a victorious triumphant life. Only the Holy Spirit can harness the fallen flesh. Only the Holy Spirit can harness the fallen flesh. Every wrong action, every wrong word, every wrong idea, every wrong reaction, every wrong emotion, every wrong attitude is from the flesh. The Bible says that we’ve already been changed on the inner man by salvation. Some day, we’ll be changed in the outer man and be perfect forever. However, we are still on our journey to become more Christ-like and experientially we are being changed everyday by the power of the Holy Spirit who sanctifies us.

★

What does it look like to ‘walk by the Spirit’? How can we practically do that?

Pragmatically, one of the key things we can do is to ‘Study the Word of God’, which helps us know the mind of the Spirit and the will of the Spirit. Ephesians 5 says, “Be being kept filled with the Spirit.” And a parallel passage, Colossians 3:16 says, “Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly.”

“The Spirit alone gives eternal life. Human effort accomplishes nothing. And the very words I have spoken to you are spirit and life (John 6:63 NLT).” Being filled with the Spirit is the same as letting the Word dwell in us richly. As God’s Word dominates our thinking, attitudes and actions, we allow the Word to move through our heart and mind. It is that by which the Spirit of God directs our life. So as we spend time in the Word, in prayer, in communing with the living God, and in building an intimate relationship with the Spirit of God; and as we feed on the Word, and as we commune with God, we are in the position where the Spirit of God can move us down the path walking as He wants us to walk. The flesh wants to control us. It wants to have us think bad. It wants to have us feel bad. It wants to create anger, hostility, bitterness, jealousy, envy, and strife. It wants to make us sure that we have reason to fear. It wants to make us doubt God. It wants to take love out of our heart and replace it with hatred. It wants to make us do wrong things and fill our lives with guilt. The flesh lusts all the time desiring what is wrong, what is destructive. And the only hope of overcoming it is to walk in the Spirit.

The answer to overcoming the lust of the flesh is not pragmatics, methodology, and certainly not psychology. It's not some human effort. It's not somebody's good idea. It's not somebody's clever plan. It's not somebody's system. The way we overcome the driving compelling compulsions of the lust of the flesh is simply walking by the Spirit.

TAKING HOME

Let’s pray that the Lord would press upon us daily the need to walk step by step in His Spirit, saturated with His Word, thinking His thoughts, communing with Him in prayer, saying ‘YES’ to His leading, submitting to His guiding, depending on His power to live out a Spirit-filled life so that we may not fulfill the lust of the flesh.
Have You Made the WONDERFUL DISCOVERY of the Spirit-Filled Life?
very day can be an exciting adventure for the Christian who knows the reality of being filled with the Holy Spirit and who lives constantly, moment by moment, under His gracious direction.

The Bible tells us that there are three kinds of people:

1. **NATURAL PERSON**
   (One who has not received Christ)
   “A natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised” (1 Corinthians 2:14).

2. **SPIRITUAL PERSON**
   (One who is directed and empowered by the Holy Spirit)
   “He who is spiritual appraises all things… We have the mind of Christ” (1 Corinthians 2:15,16).

3. **WORLDLY (CARNAL) PERSON**
   (One who has received Christ, but who lives in defeat because he is trying to live the Christian life in his own strength)
   “Brothers, I could not address you as spiritual but as worldly—mere infants in Christ. I gave you milk, not solid food, for you were not yet ready for it. Indeed, you are still not ready. You are still worldly. For since there is jealousy and quarreling among you, are you not worldly? Are you not acting like mere men?” (1 Corinthians 3:1–3, NIV).

The following are four principles for living the Spirit-filled life.

<table>
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<th>Self-Directed Life</th>
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<td>S – Self is on the throne</td>
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<td>† – Christ is outside the life</td>
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<td>● – Interests are directed by self, often resulting in discord and frustration</td>
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<th>Christ-Directed Life</th>
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<td>† – Christ is in the life and on the throne</td>
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<tr>
<td>S – Self is yielding to Christ</td>
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<tr>
<td>● – Interests are directed by Christ, resulting in harmony with God’s plan</td>
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The following are some personal traits of the spiritual person that result from trusting God:

- Love
- Joy
- Peace
- Patience
- Kindness
- Faithfulness
- Goodness
- Life is Christ-centered
- Empowered by Holy Spirit
- Introduces others to Christ
- Has effective prayer life
- Understands God’s Word
- Trusts God
- Obeys God

The degree to which these traits are manifested in the life depends on the extent to which the Christian trusts the Lord with every detail of his life, and on his maturity in Christ. One who is only beginning to understand the ministry of the Holy Spirit should not be discouraged if he is not as fruitful as more mature Christians who have known and experienced this truth for a longer period.

Why is it that most Christians are not experiencing the abundant life?

Jesus said, “I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly” (John 10:10, NKJ).

“I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing” (John 15:5, NKJ).

“The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law” (Galatians 5:22,23).

“You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth” (Acts 1:8).

God has provided for us an abundant and fruitful Christian life.
Some or all of the following traits may characterize the worldly person—the Christian who does not fully trust God:

- Legalistic attitude
- Impure thoughts
- Jealousy
- Guilt
- Worry
- Discouragement
- Critical spirit
- Frustration
- Aimlessness
- Fear
- Ignorance of his spiritual heritage
- Unbelief
- Disobedience
- Loss of love for God and for others
- Poor prayer life
- No desire for Bible study

(The individual who professes to be a Christian but who continues to practice sin should realize that he may not be a Christian at all, according to 1 John 2:3; 3:6–9; Ephesians 5:5.)

*The third truth gives us the only solution to this problem…*
The Spirit-filled life is the Christ-directed life by which Christ lives His life in and through us in the power of the Holy Spirit (John 15).

One becomes a Christian through the ministry of the Holy Spirit, according to John 3:1–8. From the moment of spiritual birth, the Christian is indwelt by the Holy Spirit at all times (John 1:12; Colossians 2:9,10; John 14:16,17).

Though all Christians are indwelt by the Holy Spirit, not all Christians are filled (directed and empowered) by the Holy Spirit on an ongoing basis.

Jesus promised the abundant and fruitful life as the result of being filled (directed and empowered) by the Holy Spirit.

- The Holy Spirit is the source of the overflowing life (John 7:37–39).
- The Holy Spirit came to glorify Christ (John 16:1–15). When one is filled with the Holy Spirit, he is a true disciple of Christ.
- In His last command before His ascension, Christ promised the power of the Holy Spirit to enable us to be witnesses for Him (Acts 1:1–9).

How, then, can one be filled with the Holy Spirit?
We are filled with the Holy Spirit by faith; then we can experience the abundant and fruitful life that Christ promised.

You can appropriate the filling of the Holy Spirit right now if you:

◆ Sincerely desire to be directed and empowered by the Holy Spirit (Matthew 5:6; John 7:37–39).

◆ Confess your sins. By faith, thank God that He has forgiven all of your sins—past, present, and future—because Christ died for you (Colossians 2:13–15; 1 John 1; 2:1–3; Hebrews 10:1–17).

◆ Present every area of your life to God (Romans 12:1,2).

◆ By faith claim the fullness of the Holy Spirit, according to:

  **His command:** Be filled with the Spirit.

  “Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit” (Ephesians 5:18, NIV).

  **His promise:** He will always answer when we pray according to His will.

  “This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. And if we know that he hears us—whatever we ask—we know that we have what we asked of him” (1 John 5:14,15, NIV).

*Faith can be expressed through prayer*...
How to Pray in Faith to be Filled With the Holy Spirit

We are filled with the Holy Spirit by faith alone. However, true prayer is one way of expressing our faith. The following is a suggested prayer:

Dear Father, I need You. I acknowledge that I have sinned against You by directing my own life. I thank You that You have forgiven my sins through Christ’s death on the cross for me. I now invite Christ to again take His place on the throne of my life. Fill me with the Holy Spirit as You commanded me to be filled, and as You promised in Your Word that You would do if I asked in faith. I pray this in the name of Jesus. As an expression of my faith, I now thank You for directing my life and for filling me with the Holy Spirit.

Does this prayer express the desire of your heart? If so, bow in prayer and trust God to fill you with the Holy Spirit right now.

How to Know That You Are Filled (Directed and Empowered) By the Holy Spirit

Did you ask God to fill you with the Holy Spirit? Do you know that you are now filled with the Holy Spirit? On what authority? (On the trustworthiness of God Himself and His Word: Hebrews 11:6; John 17:17.)

Do not depend on feelings. The promise of God’s Word, not our feelings, is our authority. The Christian lives by faith (trust) in the trustworthiness of God Himself and the promises of His Word. This train diagram illustrates the relationship among fact (God and His Word), faith (our trust in God and His Word), and feeling (the result of our faith and obedience) (John 14:21).

The train will run with or without the caboose. However, it would be futile to attempt to pull the train by the caboose. In the same way, we as Christians do not depend on feelings or emotions, but we place our faith (trust) in the trustworthiness of God and the promises of His Word.
Spiritual Breathing

If you become aware of an area of your life (an attitude or an action) that is displeasing to the Lord, even though you are walking with Him and sincerely desiring to serve Him, simply thank God that He has forgiven your sins—past, present, and future—on the basis of Christ’s death on the cross. Claim His love and forgiveness by faith and continue to have fellowship with Him.

If you retake the throne of your life through sin—a definite act of disobedience—breathe spiritually. Spiritual Breathing (exhaling the impure and inhaling the pure) is an exercise in faith that enables you to experience God’s love and forgiveness.

1. **Exhale:** Confess your sin—agree with God concerning your sin and thank Him for His forgiveness of it, according to 1 John 1:9 and Hebrews 10:1–25. Confession involves repentance—a change in attitude and action.

2. **Inhale:** Surrender the control of your life to Christ, and receive the fullness of the Holy Spirit by faith. Trust that He now directs and empowers you, according to the command of Ephesians 5:18 and the promise of 1 John 5:14,15.

How to Walk in the Spirit

Faith (trust in God and His promises) is the only way a Christian can live the Spirit-directed life. As you continue to trust Christ moment by moment:

- Your life will demonstrate more and more of the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22,23) and will be more and more conformed to the image of Christ (Romans 12:2; 2 Corinthians 3:18).
- Your prayer life and study of God’s Word will become more meaningful.
- You will experience His power in witnessing (Acts 1:8).
- You will be prepared for spiritual conflict against the world (1 John 2:15–17); against the flesh (Galatians 5:16,17); and against Satan (1 Peter 5:7–9; Ephesians 6:10–13).
- You will experience His power to resist temptation and sin (1 Corinthians 10:13; Philippians 4:13; Ephesians 1:19–23; 2 Timothy 1:7; Romans 6:1–16).
If this booklet has been helpful to you, please share it with someone else.

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