

How to be Filled with the Holy Spirit

By Paris Reidhead*

Shall we go to the Lord in prayer. Now, Our Father, as we come to Thee with this most important theme before us. We ask that we may be taught by the Holy Spirit. We would ask, our Father, that Thou wilt guide the brain and lips of the one who would speak, that it might be not his ideas but Thy truth communicated. We thank Thee that Thou dost condescend to use lips of clay, to use nothing to bring to naught something, and to accomplish Thy purpose. Then we pray, our Father, that Thou wilt anoint ears to hear. We have our background, our prejudices and our attitudes, our apathy, we are what we are before Thee, and therefore there are no two of us here quite the same way. We need the anointing upon our ears, and so wilt Thou speak through the speaker and listen through the listener, and plant Thy truth firmly and well, in the hearts of Thy people, and for all Thou dost do we will give Thee the praise in Jesus Name. Amen

Our Theme this evening is HOW TO BE FILLED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT. Obviously the Scripture that we must use in this connection, to give us the basic foundation, is Ephesians 5:18. "Be ye being filled with the Spirit."

Now the normal state of the believer is one of filled with the fullness of God. I think we shall not defend that or endeavor to prove it any further than this. We shall simply state it as a postulate. If there's a question in any mind, I would suggest that you make careful study. (And by the way I urge you to write the Scriptures. I'm going to be using a great deal of Scripture tonight, and I would urge you to make notation of the reference. You know it was very thoughtful of the makers of our Bibles to give us these two or three white pages in the back. Now you don't want to put everything you hear down there, but I think this is sufficiently valuable that you could afford to use a little corner of it, How To Be Filled With the Holy Spirit, and to use the Scripture verses in order that as the Service concludes and you return to your home you can think the Scriptures through for yourself and search the Scriptures, and see if these things be so.)

Thus our Text, if we can use one text for this message, would be Ephesians 5:18. "Be filled with the Spirit." But I will acknowledge that the strength of the Greek verb is, "Be ye being filled with the Spirit." But I would defy anyone to prove that you can be filled the second time until you have been filled the first time. Now this is as obvious as logic can possibly make a truth. So when it says, "Be ye being filled," it doesn't mean, Be ye coming progressively to that place of ultimately arriving at fullness, but it is, Be full and then continue to be full and be being filled, and Be filled thus is the normal state and not the goal with this thought in mind and this delineation I suggest to you that I shall group the truths that I wish to present the truths under four words, all of which begin with A. And to simplify it I shall state the word and then you can realize that the word is nothing more than a hook upon which we'll be hanging many related truths.

The first A therefore is ACQUAINT. Acquaint yourself with what the Scripture has to say regarding the matter of the Holy Spirit, and the fullness of the Spirit. This we shall, endeavor to do now and I will give you in sequence several Scriptures and trust that as we see them that you will allow the Spirit of God to speak to your heart through them.

From the testimony of John, John the Baptist that is, we have a repetition of the same word four times, actually a fifth time, because it came through Christ. But this we will see just in passing without dwelling on it in any length. Matthew will be the point of our beginning. John's testimony, as found in Matthew 3 verses 11 and 12. Now if you are interested in this then you will want to check in the other Scriptures also and you will find that it is given likewise in Mark, Luke and John. But hear it at this time.

"I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance;" says John the Baptist, "but He that cometh after me is mightier than I whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire; Whose fan is in His hand, and he will thoroughly purge His floor, and gather His wheat into the garner; but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire." (Mat. 3:11,12)

The goal, therefore, of John's preaching was not just forgiveness, and escape from the fire that was indicated and prophesied. This of course is a glorious benefit from what Christ is doing, forgiveness, pardon, and escape from penalty and from suffering.

But John the Baptist holds out to those who hear him that the end of repentance is fellowship with God. He describes it in the word, baptize. He is baptizing the people that come to him in water.

What do we mean by the word baptism? I suppose in this group the word baptism would have at least three different connotations from your backgrounds. Some of you might think of baptism as sprinkling water on the head; others of you might think of it as pouring water from the pitcher; and still others would think of it as being submerged in water, as the practice here is.

Well now the word itself means (baptizo) means immerse or submerge. We understand that a body, a physical body is submerged in water. Is that what John is speaking about when he says, "He shall baptize you." Might I suggest that just as the body is baptized in water, so the thought - the space concept that this word gives here is that the human spirit is going to be immersed or submerged in the Holy Spirit. This requires a great deal of time which I shall not take but let me remind you that the word Spirit as is used of the Holy Spirit, the third Person of the Trinity, is the word WIND, or BREATH. And the word for human spirit is wind or breath. It's the same word. You see God in His omnipresence is Spirit. Our Lord says, God is Spirit. And He in His omnipresence fills the universe. You are spirit. Job, (the oldest book in the Bible is the Book of Job), wrote saying, "there is a spirit in man, and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth him understanding." (Job 32:8) There is a spirit, and we recall that we have the word in the testimony and 1st Corinthians 2:9-10 that "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath entered into the heart of man the things that God hath prepared for them that love Him. For God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit, for the part of the man that knows the things of the man is the spirit of man which is in him. And thus human personality is said to reside in the spirit."

Now let me make this comparison. God is Spirit - infinite, eternal, immutable, unchangeable Who fills the universe. You are spirit, finite temporal, changeable, and you fill your body. Now you must see this. You fill your body in a somewhat similar sense as God fills the universe. With this thought, bearing in mind that when John says, "He shall baptize you with the Holy Spirit" (Mat. 3:11), he is speaking particularly and primarily of that invisible part of you that is going to be submerged in Him.

Now may I just point out here that as you acquaint yourselves with the teachings, the Scripture concerning the Holy Spirit, you will discover that the Bible makes it clear that the human spirit was made for God. It doesn't take a very great quantity of food to fill your stomach, nor a great quantity of air to fill your lungs. There is definite limitation to space. But it takes a great quantity of joy to satisfy the human heart. It takes a great amount of seeing to satisfy the eyes, a great amount of hearing to satisfy the ears. Your spirit, in other words, seems insatiable. It was the writer of Ecclesiastes, that book that ought to be understood by all of us for it is the natural man speaking. You'd be amazed if you read it carefully how many ideas that prevail among Christians are ascribed to the natural man. Well, in the Book of Ecclesiastes, Solomon is given an opportunity to try and satisfy the human spirit without God. And the net result of this is that he is given unparalleled extravagance in terms of power and money and wisdom and pleasures, sensual indulgence. And when he has carried all of these to the very extreme, the answer that comes back is, "Vanity of vanity. All is vanity" (Ecc. 12:8), says the writer. It is impossible to satisfy the human spirit with anything less than that for which the human was made. The answer that Solomon gives is in these succinct and direct words, what is the sum of the matter then. If you can't satisfy your heart with pleasure, with power, with money, with wisdom, where are you going to do it? And then, "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth." (Ecc. 12:1) In other words, don't waste your life.

Saint Augustine put it in words that are sweet and often repeated from this pulpit, "Thou hast so made us that we can not rest until we rest in Thee." Perhaps we could use another imagery and say, that when God made you He stretched you over a frame so vast that none but Himself can satisfy your need. No one but God can satisfy a human being. God made you for Himself. He fixed in you an empty place that only He can fill. Now understand this, and you've understood something of God's desire in filling you with His Spirit, and something of your indispensable need of being filled with the Spirit.

You see, dear friend, if God could take you to Heaven and wouldn't go Himself, Heaven would be nothing but another hell. It would just be a relocated and refined plush upholstered hell. That's all it would be. Because the mansion and the green grass and the streets of gold and the river of Life won't make Heaven heavenly. All of these are just imageries that are used of God

to try and express the glories of ultimate reality. "In His presence is fullness of joy" (Psa. 16:11), but it is His presence that brings fullness of joy, not his presents. Our children would like to think that the fullness of their joy on Christmas comes from the packages under the tree, and they are going to be happy when they are numerous, big and heavy. Well, this isn't the case at all. And it isn't the things that God gives to you that satisfy your heart, it is God Himself, Himself alone that can meet the need of your heart.

So He made you for Himself, and John the Baptist knew this, and John elucidated it to his hearers that they were made for God. Repent, be baptized, because there is One that is coming after me that's going to meet the age long yearning of the human heart. You're going to be filled with God. And thus the fullness of God is the goal.

Oh how Christianity in the 20th Century has suffered by making the goal of salvation to be escape from hell and going to heaven. Now, Beloved, these are certainly grand benefits, and I won't minimize them for a moment, but it is just as reasonable to think that the whole of our delight should be in the escape from punishment, and our home in Heaven as it is to think that a young bride finds her whole delight in the fact that she won't have to go to the office anymore and endure the punishment that the work entails, and that she's going to have a home that somebody else pays for. And so she settles upon these two benefits which accrue to her as the prime reason for her wanting to be married. I say it is just as reasonable to think that this is the prime goal of God's grace-to keep you out of hell and take you to heaven. No, my friend, it wasn't just to take you where He is, but to come where you are. So that Heaven could begin in your heart, and you could be filled with the fullness of God. And thus everything in this glorious salvation is to the end that He would walk in you and dwell in you, and you would be His temple, His dwelling place, and you could be filled with all of the fullness of God. And in this state, God would be satisfied, and you would be complete, the world would be blessed, and Heaven would rejoice. And anything less than this robs us of all these grand benefits.

So we have this promise that begins there. Then the next thing we see is the word of the Lord Jesus Christ in John the seventh chapter, where He is on this particular day, the last great day of the Feast, Jesus stood and cried saying, "If any man thirst let him come unto me and drink. He that believeth on me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his innermost being shall flow rivers of living water. (But this spake He of the Spirit, which they that believe on Him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)" (John 7:37, 38, and 39) And thus the testimony of our Lord to those that came to Him was that they would be satisfied with living water that should be in them a well of water-from their innermost being would thus flow rivers of living water. What a glorious analogy this is of the Holy Spirit — Living Water.

John G. Lake has written a very excellent little book of sermons on [The Tangibility of God](#), and so many in the days past have testified to being conscious, physically conscious of the presence of God, and they've spoken of liquid sunshine and living water. Such analogies are apt indeed, and certainly our Lord meant that there should be consuming glorious reality. Not just theory, but reality, glorious reality that would satisfy the heart of the hungry one. God first made us with a built-in thirst and then He provided a glorious built-in supply of the thirst. So we have this word from our Lord Jesus.

Then if you'll turn please to Luke, Chapter 11. Here again we have another testimony of our Lord. We are thinking at the moment of a acquainting ourselves with what He has to say regarding the possibility of being filled with the Spirit. Nobody ever asks God for what's impossible. When, my eldest daughter, Sarah was about two, two and a half, we lived in Orlando, Florida. One evening I picked her up and carried her out into the orange grove in the back yard and she looked up and saw the moon hanging above the tree and it looked like a big balloon caught on the top of the branch. And she looked at it and said, "Daddy I want you to get it for me. Can I have it?" (Or something to that effect.) And I said to her, "No, I can't reach it." And she put her head on my shoulder and started to whimper because she thought that it was just inconsiderate indifference on my part to rob her of the delight of bouncing that lovely glowing ball. Well, to tell a child two years old that the moon is 250 thousand miles away when she can plainly see it's at the top of an orange tree -- ridiculous isn't it. And it's awfully hard to explain, but when she gets a little older she'll discover that you don't cry for the moon. It just is out of reach. And people only want the things which they think are in reach. If someone has told you that to be filled with the Spirit is like crying for the moon, that it's impossible, it's not for today, not for this dispensation, or many other things which are used, then you aren't going to want to

be filled with the Spirit. So you have to acquaint yourself with what the Word has to say, for everything must be grounded on the Word.

Now the word that I give to you is here in the 11th Chapter of Luke, verses 5 through 13. "And He said unto them, which of you shall have a friend, and shall go unto him at midnight and say unto him, Friend lend me three loaves; for a friend of mine in his journey is come to me and I have nothing to set before him? And he from within shall answer and say, Trouble me not the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot rise and give thee. I say unto you, Though he will not rise and give him, because he is his friend, yet because of his importunity he will rise and give him as many as he needeth. And I say unto you, Ask. (Now this word ask isn't ask once and then stop. This word is ask insistently and keep on asking) and it shall be given you; Seek (and keep on seeking) and ye shall find; knock (and keep on knocking), and it shall be opened unto you. For everyone that keeps on asking receives; and everyone that keeps on seeking finds; and to him that keeps on knocking it shall be opened. If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? or if he ask a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent? Or if he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? If ye, then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him?"

Now as we think of this Scripture, we will discover that there are several principles in it. First, we acquaint ourselves with the grounds for our wanting to be filled with the Spirit. Do you notice what our Lord establishes in that fifth verse? and the sixth verse? For a friend of mine in his journey is come to me and I have nothing to set before him.

Why should you want to be filled with the Spirit? What is your motivation? Well, of course, it is a proper motivation that you should want to be filled with the Spirit in order that you might be what God intended for you to be, and God might have what He intended to have from you.

But there's another reason. Until you are filled with the Spirit of God and He is in the relationship with you that He designed and holds as normal you will have little or nothing to give to them that come asking you for bread. I am sure that everyone that I've ever met that has become greatly in earnest about being filled with the Spirit has done so as he has discovered the paucity and poverty of his own heart, set on the road, attend the wayfaring man, and has nothing to give. It is the discovery of your own powerlessness. It is the discovery of your own weakness. It is the discovery of the absence of your own resources. It is the discovery of your own inability to live that kind of a triumphant life that the Word of God indicates glorifies God. It is the discovery of your lack of power to walk in the fullness of the fruit of the Spirit and produce that fullness in your life. It is the realization that your personality isn't enough. Take the tremendous power of your subconscious. I tried that once you know. I figured that if I had a little power somewhere that I wasn't aware of I'd better latch on to it. So I established a connection with my subconscious and said, Now go to work for me. The only trouble that I... The only thing I found was that my subconscious was made out of the same kind of stuff as my conscious, and it was just more of the same. I was like an iceberg, one tenth of it above surface, nine tenths under, but the same kind of dirty ice up and down. It didn't make any difference. And so after a while, you come to the fact that it isn't going to do any good to make vows, and to make commitments, and to make decisions, and to make promises. You don't have what it takes. I heard just the other day about a man selling a Farm Periodical, and he went to one farmer. He said, "You know if you buy my magazine and read it you can have a greatly improved crops and you'll have better cattle, and oh everything will be better." And the old farmer spat in derision and said, "I'm not gonna subscribe to your magazine. I'm not farmin' now as well as I know how."

And that's not the trouble with most people, not knowing how to do better; it's the fact that they aren't able to do what they know. And this is the area where you find your need. When you have a standard here that God says is normative to you, and you don't reach it. When you're to have this kind of a prayer life, and this kind of a walk, and this kind of a witness, and you look down into your innermost being for the resources to live this way and walk this way and witness this way and pray this way, and you're like this man. He had friends come at midnight. He opened the cupboard, and it was bare.

And it is when you discover your inability to be to those about you and around you what God purposed for you to be that you are prepared to go and knock, and keep on knocking, ask and keep on asking, and seek and keep on seeking. You can't take no for an answer. And when it is thus that you are rightly related to God and His purpose, and to others and their need, and to

you and your own weakness, you've got to acquaint yourself therefore with God's plan and the manner in which He intends to do this.

And then there is another thing that is implicit in this text. There's a great fear of God in the hearts of men and women. You're afraid of God. You'd much rather talk with a nice preacher or personal worker than go into a dark room and meet God all alone. Don't you know why the Priest business has been so successful and lucrative? whether it's witchcraft in the fetish lands or whether it's priesthood in some other lands. I'll tell you why, because people are afraid of God, and they want to hire somebody to go into His presence. Because there is basically in the hearts of men a fear of God.

And somehow, there is a fear in the hearts of Christian people that God's going to do something to them, or God's going to hurt them. It's the old devil's lie carried over, that if you meet God on His terms that He'll take advantage of you, He'll embarrass you. He'll hurt you. You know you've sinned. You know that if you had done to anybody else what you've done to God that you'd expect them to get even with you. And you know that if anybody had done to you what you've done to God, you would do your best to get even with them. And because of this natural thinking and its lingering place in the human heart, there's a deep fear in the hearts of most people that if they go too far with God, God will take advantage of them; He'll embarrass them: or, He'll make them do something ridiculous: They'll lose their poise; that He will take advantage of their personality.

My friend God made you with such restraints as are good and wholesome and normal. And He is not of a fair mind at any time to violate the restraints that He has made and put into you. And if you come to Him, asking for bread, will He give you a stone; or if you ask Him for fish, will He give you a serpent; if you ask Him for an egg, will He give you a scorpion? Of course not! And this Scripture is designed to let you know that when you have a desire for that which God has placed in your heart, a desire for Himself, when you have a desire for that which God has promised to your heart, the fullness of Himself, that you can come and ask and keep on asking, and seek and keep on seeking, and knock and keep on knocking, and if as a father know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Heavenly Father. You see? To disabuse your mind of that latent fear that is there.

Then the next thing that you need to understand is found in Ephesians, the third Chapter, and verses 14 to 21. When you see this precious portion, then you realize that you are dealing with a familiar friend. It's marvelous to come to the fact that when you are asking to be filled with the fullness of the Holy Spirit, you are only asking to be filled with the fullness of Christ... And the fullness of God. And you know the Lord Jesus, and you can trust Him. You have to acquaint yourself therefore with this wonderful fact that the One who will fill you is none other than God, God the Son. Let's see these Words. It's the whole portion, Ephesians 3:14 to 21. But I would call to your attention 16 and 17. "That He would grant you, according to the riches of His Glory, to be strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man: That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; (That word dwell is begin dwelling, or take up His dwelling place)."

Now let me just deal with one other fact. When you were born of God, the Spirit of God joined Himself to you in regenerating relationship. But He, who came to bring Life and Regeneration, now asks you to present your body to Him so that He can fill you. He wants to take up His dwelling place in your heart - Christ. You're not afraid of the Lord Jesus. It is the Lord Jesus that wants to fill you. That's why Paul said, "I am crucified with Christ. Christ liveth in me." (Gal. 2:20) To be filled with the fullness of the Holy Spirit is to be filled with the fullness of Christ. It is the third Persona of the Trinity, Who makes wonderfully real the presence of the Second Person of the, Trinity.

Now in Verse 19. "And to know the love of Christ, which passeth intelligence, that ye might be filled unto all of the fullness of God." Isn't this glorious. God wants to fill you with Himself. This little body that you have. You were filled by your spirit. You filled it. Your spirit was acrimonious, bitter, licentious, vindictive, ambitious spirit. Are you going to argue with me about that? Oh I hope not. I hope you know yourself well enough to know that anything that is said about you is true, in the personal sense as well as in the general universal sense. There is nothing very nice about you. Have you found that out?

You know every once in a while a Christian sort of...Oh so often will break over...will become natural in the presence of their friends; lose their temper, become impatient. Don't have to. Often do. You know what that is? We're so terribly embarrassed

because we've given ourselves away. When you lose your temper, when you become impatient, when you fly off the handle, you know what that is? You're showing what you are. That's all. That's what you are. That's what it would be all the time, if it were just you. If there is anything else it's the Lord. This is the thing. You see, we figure that somehow we're better. But we're not better. God couldn't find anyway in the world to make you better. He took you and He said to the universe, world of angels and of devils and of men, this is what I think of him, and He hung you on a cross, and He said, All there is in that person is fit for the cross. And this is the truth. Oh that you can understand it.

Paul saw it when he said, "The things that were accounted gain to me I count loss for Christ," and "I take my place crucified with Christ, that Christ may live in me." (Php. 3:7) Are you acquainted with this? Do you realize what it is we are talking about? Do you realize that this is what God wants, to fill you with Himself so that He can live through you the life you never could live by yourself. You've been trying and failed. He didn't expect you to do it. His purpose was to do it. The first word is acquaint. Acquaint yourself with what the Scripture teaches, that this one who came to bring regenerating life, now wants to fill you, that He may live through you His own life.

Now the next word that I am going to use and obviously these next three will have to go rather quickly.

The next word is ACKNOWLEDGE. ACQUAINT, AND ACKNOWLEDGE.

Acknowledge what? Well obviously, the first thing is, if you haven't been filled with the Spirit to acknowledge it. That's it. Because as long as you suspicion that you have been filled with the Spirit, you never are going to ask God to fill you with the Spirit.

Occasionally, I deal with people that are not sure that they are saved. And they try to pray like this, Dear Lord, If I'm not saved, save me. Well they could just pray that till their tongue fades and sticks to the roof of their mouth and their hair turns gray, and nothing will happen. Because there are absolutely no grounds of faith in it: If I'm not saved, save me. If you aren't sure, the only way to pray is to pray, Lord, if I'm not saved, show me. But you can't believe for something until you know that this is a need. And therefore if you feel perhaps that you have been filled with the Spirit, or you aren't sure, how can you say, Lord fill me with the Spirit. Fill me with the Spirit.

Well someone might say, well I was filled with the Spirit when I was saved. What are you going to say about that? I'm not going to say anything about that. If you say so, all right. That's possible. Cornelius was. And as far as I'm concerned, if God could save and fill Cornelius with the Spirit, He could do it with you. I'm not going to argue the point. But I am going to say this, with 999 out of a thousand it didn't happen that way, according to what they say. They were born of the Spirit. They came to Christ with a mountain of guilt, with a world of iniquity on their heart, their souls stained with sin, and they saw the Lord Jesus Christ dying for them, and the thing they wanted was pardon, and the thing they wanted was forgiveness, and the thing they wanted was relief from this intolerable burden, and they asked God to forgive them and to pardon them, and to save them from the penalty of their sin, and He did. And look. Look what happened. They saw Christ crucified for them as the Spirit of God illuminated His work, and they took Christ to be Lord and to be Savior. They took Him. Christ was the One they took. My dear, you do not even need to know that there be a Holy Spirit in order to be forgiven. It isn't faith in the Holy Spirit that saves from sin. You do not need to know that He is the One that is doing His office work. All you need to know is that Jesus Christ was God come in the flesh, that He died for you, and rose again from the dead, and you are willing to receive Him as the Sovereign of your life, as well as the Savior of your soul; and when you do that God for Christ's sake forgives your sin. You take the Lord Jesus.

Now, we know that when you take Him without any act of volition or faith on your part, the Spirit of God joins Himself to you, and witnesses to you that Jesus Christ has died for you and that you are accepted in Him. So you see it is this. The Holy Spirit presents Christ to the sinner, and when the sinner takes Jesus Christ to be Sovereign and Savior the Holy Spirit joins Himself to him, in regenerating work. Then afterward, for most people, it is Christ through the promises and through the Words that presents the Holy Spirit to the Saint. And when Paul went to Ephesus and found these believers. It is recorded in the King James Version, he said, "Have you received the Holy Spirit since you believed." But actually the verb there is an active verb,

and what he said was, Have you taken the Holy Spirit since you believed. In a passive sense, yes He came. But not in response to faith. He came in response to their faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. He joined Himself to them in regenerating work.

Now the Lord Jesus said, I want you to take this One to be the Life of your life. Have you taken Him? Have you been filled with the Spirit the first time? Now Dr. Tozer¹ says this every year that he is here. By request as well as by conviction, that every one that has taken the Holy Spirit knows it; every one that has been filled with the Holy Spirit knows that he is filled; everyone that is filled with the Holy Spirit knows when he was filled and every one that is filled with the Holy Spirit was filled suddenly. Being born of the Spirit is having Him come to your Spirit in regenerating relationship. Being filled with the Spirit is taking Him to be the Life of your life and when you do you know it. You know when it happened. It is a conscious relationship in my estimation at least, as growing into the fullness of the Spirit. It has to be an acknowledgment therefore. Have you been filled with the Spirit? If you have, acknowledge it... In your own heart, and to your own satisfaction. You come to me and say, Now Brother Reidhead, I hope you haven't been trying to disturb me. I am filled with the Spirit. All right. We won't need to go any further. God bless you. Just walk in the Spirit. I'm not trying to say you aren't. I'm just trying to say this, that if you haven't been, saying you are won't change anything. It won't help any. You'll never be filled with the Spirit until you acknowledge that you aren't. It takes acknowledgment. You have to acknowledge that you haven't. You have to acknowledge your need. Oh how many there are. Missionaries. I'm talking to them repeatedly through the year. I've been a missionary for a number of years. I've been preaching on the fullness of the Spirit but I've never been filled, with the Spirit of God. Pastors, Christian Workers. Let me ask you. Have you been filled with the Spirit? Was there a time when you met Him, when you knew that He who had become resident at regeneration became president, presiding in all the areas of your life, filling you with Himself? Acknowledge. If it isn't true acknowledge it. You are to be filled with the Spirit but you never can be until you know you aren't.

Now then, the next thing. ASK. Ask. We will have given you the Scripture for that from Luke 11. He that asketh. If you ask and keep on asking, and seek and keep on seeking, knock and keep on knocking. Now why? why is it a matter of a process of asking? Friend, I remember years ago hearing that song, "My All Is On the Altar, I'm waiting For the Fire."² Well, I don't want to take umbrage with song writers long dead because they are not here to defend themselves. But there is just one thing I would like to say about that: It isn't so. That's all. When your all is on the altar, you don't have to wait for the fire. That's what you are waiting for you see. It's to get your all on the altar. When you say, Lord I surrender all, you ought to put, that I understand that the moment is included in this surrender. Because in my own case at least, and I've talked with so many others, and read so many others, that there was a principle in our hearts, Lord I surrender all; I'm willing to be as a corn of wheat and fall into the ground and die; I'm willing to do this Lord. But you see, asking God to fill you with the Spirit has a counterpart. As you ask Him to fill you with Himself, He asks you to abandon the right to your rights. You have certain things which aren't sin. The right to your name. The right to your reputation. The right to your time. The right to your body. The right to your whole being. And when you say, Lord I am asking you to fill me with the Spirit according to your promises in your Word, and you must ask, then He turns around and says, All right; that's what I've been waiting for; present your body a living sacrifice; take up your cross; fall into the ground and die; abandon the right to your rights. And obviously when you ask you are only asking in good faith, when you say, Lord I want to be filled with the Spirit, and I am prepared to meet every condition that You will show me.

So it isn't a question of getting down and saying, Now I'm going to pray till morning. Lord you must fill me with the Spirit before morning. That isn't it at all. It is this, Lord I have your promise, and on that promise I stand, and I'm asking you to fill me with the Spirit, and in order to do this I am asking You to show me everything that stands in the way of my being filled with the Spirit. Because I believe You have more to gain in this than I do. And so there comes an asking which includes with it, because of sincerity on your part, a willingness to face the issues that He may see. So it's an asking in faith. Lord I know that Thou art going to fill me with the Spirit, because I have your Word. The need in my heart is answered by the promise in Your Word. deep calls unto deep, but there may be issues that I don't understand, and I know that You in Your great grace will show them to me, and so I thank You now that You are going to fill me with Your Spirit.

¹ Aiden Wilson Tozer (1897-1963) Pastor and Author, Christian and Missionary Alliance Magazine Editor

² "My all is on the Altar" By J. Lincoln Hall

So that leads us to the fourth word. ACCEPT. Ask and Accept. Accept the fact that this is not in vain, That you are not beating the air, that God isn't calling you to a process of simply abnegation for its own sake and laudation for punishments' sake, that God isn't leading you down a blind alley in a dead end street, that He's not trying to hurt you or disturb you, but that on the contrary this is His great desire and His great plan, and His great purpose; and so in your response it is this, Lord, I've asked you to fill me with the Spirit, and I have told Thee that I am willing to meet the conditions. So now on the basis of your Word, I accept. I accept this as my portion, and as my delight, and as my joy, and I know that Thou art going to make gloriously real in my life in terms of my need and Your purpose the fullness of the Spirit. Well now you see what I am suggesting by this is that you create in your own heart a climate for God to work. How many times people have asked and asked and asked in vain unbelief. They'll ask for three hours tonight and tomorrow night they ask for three hours, and they never come to the place where they say, Lord I am trusting Thee to meet me.

Now I want you to just make one other observation here before I close. And, that is, that this is a Church matter. In Acts the 8th Chapter, let's take them in sequence for a moment.

First in Acts. You remember that Philip came down to Samaria and preached, and there were a goodly number that repented of their sin and were baptized. The word went to Jerusalem and Peter and John came up. And Peter and John prayed with these individuals and talked to these individuals, individually by the way, and prayed for them, and laid hands on them, and they were filled with the Spirit. Now we recall that in the next Chapter, Paul meets the Lord Jesus Christ on the road to Damascus, and is taken to the home. And you recall how that Simon is brought to him by the Spirit of God, and the words of Simon is, "The Spirit of the Lord has sent me to pray that you might be healed of your blindness and be filled with the Spirit." And Simon prayed for him and he was. It was a Church matter, and thus Paul was identified with a nameless believer that we never hear of again, (not nameless, but an unheard of believer before and afterward), Someone God sent — God wanted Paul to know that he was part of a Body and dependent upon the Body. Then you recall that when Paul came down to Ephesus, there too he entered into their need and hunger. I think one of the very finest things that anyone can do, personally you have to meet the Lord; it's always alone; it's always with the Lord that God meets you even if someone else is present. But one of the things that — at least in my own case. I recall how stubbornly and adamantly I said, Lord everything You are going to do for me, You're going to have to do alone; because I felt that anybody in my position was in such a state that God ought to be glad to meet their need without involving anybody else. But you know it wasn't that way. And I recall how there was an evening at Orlando, Florida, when I was in a little Presbyterian church up in Maitland, and Charles Fuller was there, and I couldn't have a Service because everything was closed for this Union Meeting with Dr. Fuller. And God led me about 160 - 170 miles in order that I could be with two or three Brethren, one of them a Baptist, one an Evangelical, and Reformed, something like that. And these dear men were those who represented the Church, and talked with me and counseled with me and prayed with me. So it's a Church matter. It isn't just an individual matter. In any event, be it understood and be it known to you that this is a matter of supreme importance, and as Pastor of this Church, I am delighted at any time that I can talk with you and pray with you, and counsel with you. To give you an invitation and ask you to come forward is inimitable to best interest, because this matter requires time; it may require an hour, two or three hours of counseling, or two or three visits together until the difficulties and problems are there. But it is a Church matter. Peter and John, Paul, Simon, as the case may have been. This is a matter of supreme importance. And what I want you to understand thereby is this, that there are these four words.

Now subsequently at some time, we'll talk about how you can know that you are filled with the Spirit. But the theme tonight is **HOW TO BE FILLED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT** and I repeat. **ACQUAINT** yourself with the Word of God. In my own case I took a piece of legal sized paper and wrote down every Scripture verse under classification headings which had anything to say about the Holy Spirit, read these Scriptures together. Acquaint yourself with the Word. Saturate yourself in the Word. You want the Word all of It, but nothing more, nothing less, nothing else.

ACKNOWLEDGE your need.

ASK — in simple childlike faith, willing to meet all the conditions that are involved in your asking, and

ACCEPT the fact that for Jesus Sake, the Glory of His Name, God is in His own time and way going to meet your need and begin to thank Him now for what is going to be a glorious reality in your life. Well there we are. Shall we pray.

Our Father, this is a matter of tremendous importance. It's a matter of glorious reality as we've said: To be filled with the fullness of the living God. This is the normal state, Father. And we refuse to take something that Thou has said is normal and for every child of Thine, and add an adjective and disqualify most of the believers. And we won't talk about this, Father, to Thee or to them about a Deeper, Higher or Victorious Life — it is just Christianity as Thou hast set it forth in Thy Word. Thou hast said, Come out from among them. Be ye separate saith the Lord. Touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you and will be a Father unto you and I will dwell in you and walk in you. Ye shall be My sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty. How we rejoice that in Thy great Father's heart of love Thou hast wanted to fill every one of Thy children with Thine own fullness. Oh Father, wilt Thou create such an insatiable hunger in the hearts of the men and women here tonight that not a one of them but what will say, I must go on. I cannot wait. Will arise and go. I must know the fullness of Christ. Help them to take these simple suggestions and to meditate upon them, to dwell in thy Word, and to realize again Father that Thou dost often work through Thy Church, work through Thine own, and Lord might it be that this should rapidly become a people that know that they are walking in the fullness of the Risen Christ. And so we plead now for the motion, movement, and working of Thy Spirit over and upon us in the days of the week. Lord, let not the fowls of the air snatch away the good seed. There are so many things to disturb us, and take away everything we've heard, but somehow Father do a new thing tonight, and let the Word just reside and like a poultice burn its way into hearts until they'll not be ready or content or waiting or satisfied until we are satisfied with the fullness of Thyself. To that end, bless for Jesus sake.

I wonder while our heads are bowed and eyes are closed, (I don't want you to raise your hand. You don't need to tell me) What are you going to do about it? Either one of two things. Either you're filled, with the Spirit or you aren't. And He said, Be filled with the Spirit. You either are, or you aren't. What are you going to do about it? Every part of the ministry of this Church and this entire Society is to the end that you should become a normal Christian, filled with the fullness of God. Oh dear heart, nothing is as important as this. As you go to work in the morning, and as you go about your household tasks, may the Spirit of God just stir in you such a deep insatiable longing that you'll not be able to get away from it, until you've allowed Him to do what He's longed all this time to do: Fill you with His Own Wonderful Fullness. We dedicate everything we have in terms of time or strength or knowledge to the end of helping you into your inheritance in Christ. God bless you.

Will you stand now for the Benediction. What more lovely Benediction could we have after such a message than Ephesians 3: 20 and 21? "And now unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly, above all that we ask or think, according to the Power that worketh in us, unto Him be glory in the Church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen."

* Reference such as: Delivered at The Gospel Tabernacle Church, New York City on Sunday Evening, September 4, 1960 by Paris W. Reidhead, Pastor.

©PRBTMI 1960