

How to Know That You are Filled With the Holy Spirit

By Paris Reidhead*

Our Theme, How to Know that You are Filled With the Holy Spirit. Shall we Bow our hearts in prayer.

We come to Thee, our Father, realizing that what is said tonight can have profound effect in the lives of those who hear - can change their lives. We ask that there shall be that sense of Thy Presence, so real, so sweet, so certain, that what is done shall be wholly of Thee. We plead the precious Blood of Christ. We ask that He may be exalted, shown, and seen. And for all that Thou dost do we will give Thee the praise in His peerless Name. Amen

I ask you to turn first to John, Chapter 17. There will be several Scriptures. If you have no paper, these little white pages in the back of your Bible are ideal for such notations as you would make - these Scripture verses. I want you to see first that our Lord is praying for the relationship that we are presenting and with which we are dealing.

In verse 20 I begin reading, and in verse 23 conclude. I shall, however add the paraphrase of Charles Williams and others that tends at least in my mind to made this somewhat clearer: "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on Me through their word; That they all may be in union; as Thou, Father, or just in the very same way that Thou Father, art in union with Me, and I am in union with Thee; that they also may be in union in Us, in order that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me. And the glory which Thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be in union even as We are in union: I in union with them, and Thou in union with Me. That they may be made perfect in union, and that the world may know that Thou hast sent Me, and hast loved them, as Thou hast loved Me."

Back to verse 18: "As Thou hast sent Me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world." As Thou hast sent Me. This little word AS, as I have remarked in the past on several occasions, is an important word in the Greek. We better understand it when we give it such statement as this, JUST AS, IN THE SAME MANNER THAT, SIMILARLY TO.

How was the Lord Jesus sent into the world? First, we must recall that He was born of the Spirit. He was conceived by the Holy Ghost. From the moment of birth, in Him dwelt the fullness of the Godhead bodily. And this was the case, and continued to be the case for the thirty years of His life. Then, at the age of thirty, our Lord presented Himself for baptism. Baptism is a picture of death. To what could the Lord Jesus die? Certainly not to sin in any sense that we would know or understand it. May I suggest to you that from before the foundation of the world He had voluntarily consented to die to the right, to His rights to act as Son for a period of time that embraced His incarnation and His ministry. In other words, He voluntarily laid aside the right to act in His essential Deity as Son, and took upon Himself the form of a man, and the fashion of a man, and the likeness of a man. He embraced humanity, clothed Himself with a human personality as well as a human body; and the nature of the Lord Jesus was perfect union between the eternal Son and man. He was the God-man. God come in the flesh. And thus He was, from His birth until the age of thirty, when He publicly was baptized, indicating there His identification with us in death to the right to His rights. There He went into the water, and came from it, signifying that for the purpose of the Father, as I understand it, He would lay aside the right to act in His Deity as Son. Now He didn't lay aside His Deity, just the right to act in His Deity.

And when He came from the water, the Scripture records that the Holy Ghost, visible as a Dove, descended upon the Lord Jesus and passed upon Him. He then said, as we saw in Isaiah 61, "That the Spirit of the Lord is upon Me because the Lord hath anointed Me to preach good tidings unto the meek. He hath sent Me to bind up the broken hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, the opening of the prison to them that are bound, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord."

Now I have recommended from time to time books, and this one I have called to your attention frequently in the past. Many of you may not have secured it, I repeat now. Moody Colportage¹, THE CHRIST LIFE FOR THE SELF LIFE, and particularly the

¹ Moody Colportage Library, contains many Christian books, the reference here is "The Christ Life for the Self Life" by F. B. Meyers - Copyrighted, 1897. By The Bible Institute Colportage Asso.

Chapter on The Anointing With the Spirit, and I refer now to page 87, where F. B. Meyer the Author says, "We must remember that everything done by our Lord Jesus during the three years of His public ministry was done in the power of the Third Person of the Trinity, and not in the power of the Second Person of the Trinity. All of the miracles that were performed were performed by the Holy Spirit working through Christ, rather than by the Son in His own essential Deity as Son."

Now this is a tremendously important point, not just a little matter for curiosity. Our Lord said, "I do not speak of Myself. I speak as I receive commandment of the Father." Again He said, "The works that I do, the Father that dwelleth in Me, He doeth the works." Everything done by Christ was done by the power of the Holy Spirit working through His humanity. Why? Why is this so important? Well, it is as we read that He might in all things, in all points, be like unto His brethren; That as He is, so we might be in the world. Or again, "as the Father hath sent Me, so send I you. As Thou hast sent Me, so send I them."

What would you see here from the pressure that pattern exerts. Would you not see then that we, too, born of the Spirit and in that sense of having Him in His regenerating life, having the Spirit, are not ready for our ministry until we are clothed upon with the Spirit. This is what I see.

Now a word about my background, in order that you might understand the point of view from which I speak. I was reared in rigid dispensational fundamentalism, and am deeply grateful to splendid teachers that gave me the very finest that they had. But I recall how I had been taught for years, that regeneration is by the Holy Spirit, and if any man have not the Spirit of Christ he is none of His. And then I heard people speak about the Spirit-filled life, and the terms they used caused great consternation. For I would reason this way, as I had been taught, Since the Spirit of God brings Life, and there is no Life apart from Him, since He comes at regeneration, and since a Person can't come in parts, then when you have Him you have all there is to get of God. It just remains for Him to get more of you. Now if a person can't come in parts, a person can't be given in parts, but this never occurred to me. It seemed to be an air-tight logic, that couldn't be gain said. But you know, one day all of this evaporated when I saw what happened to the Lord Jesus - indwelt by the fullness of the Godhead bodily, in nature God and man, He came to Jordan's banks and there the Spirit of God came upon Him. Now, beloved, the Spirit of God was in Him, even when He came upon Him, indicating that you cannot reason from the human to the Divine correctly. Human personality is finite and Divine personality infinite. And all of the logical arguments that you would infer, reasoning from human to Divine, fails completely. It is true that the Spirit of God brings Life, but I want you to see something.

When you came to Jesus Christ, with a mountain of sin and guilt upon you, you received everything you believed for. If I understand correctly how you came, and how most come, it was this, that you had seen your sin, the mountain of your accumulated crimes against God, and you wanted some way to have them dealt with to remove them as a barrier between you and God. You heard about Jesus Christ, the Savior. Perhaps you had heard even that your crime was that you had played God and become God in your own life, and that sin is self-idolatry and self-will. Perhaps you even renounced your right to rule, and believed that the death of Christ was sufficient to wash away your sin.

But primarily when you came, you came with your need, a mountain of sin, and with Christ's sacrifice all-sufficient to wash it away, and you reached out to embrace Him as Savior and Lord. You took Jesus Christ. Now, who presented Christ to you, aside from the preacher and the Scripture? May I suggest to you that it was God the Holy Spirit, presenting the Son to you. For it was the Holy Spirit that awakened you, but never did He say, I, the Third Person of the Trinity, are awakening you to see your danger. Nor did He say, I, the Third Person of the Trinity, am convicting you of your crimes. Nor did He say, I am giving, and stimulating, and stirring in your heart faith. Nor did He say, I am now regenerating you. But He, none the less, was the One that awakened you and brought you to conviction and repentance and faith. And He is the One that joined Himself to you in regenerating grace. And He was the One that witnessed to your heart. But in all of this doing, He never spoke of Himself. Nor was it necessary for you to so much as know that there be a Holy Spirit in order to be saved. It is not through faith in the Third Person of the Trinity that you are saved, but faith in the Second Person of the Trinity, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now let me show you then. It was the Third Person, the Holy Spirit, that presented Christ to you. And you reached out by faith to receive Him as Lord and as Savior. Now when you did this, taking Him, embracing Him, the Spirit of God did join Himself to you in regenerating work, but you didn't know that until afterward. There was no faith whatever directed toward the Holy

Spirit. It was stimulated by Him, but not directed toward Him at the time of your regeneration, unless you had unusual teaching. And even then, the question is could the teaching make up for your own concern with your own need.

So it was that you took Christ, and passively, unknown to you as a bi-product of taking Christ you were regenerated by the Holy Spirit. Now when Paul came, as you find in Acts, the 19th Chapter, to this city of Ephesus, he met a company of people there and he asked this question: "Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed?" Reading this, you would say, "Had the Holy Ghost come into them in regenerating work?" But this is not what he said. This word RECEIVED is an active verb, and is best understood when you read it this way, "Have you taken the Holy Spirit, the Holy Ghost, since you believed?" Do you see the difference? It's an active work. Your action, reaching out. Have you taken Him?

Now we find as we read this, that they went on and "*he* said unto him, We've not so much as heard that there whether there be a Holy Ghost. And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto John's baptism. Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism unto repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on Him which should come after him, that is, on Jesus Christ. When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus." (Acts 19:2-5)

Now there was no question about their fitness for baptism. No question at all about their readiness to follow the Lord in Believer's Baptism which the Word teaches. But the question that he asked them, "Did you take. Did you take the Holy Spirit since you believed?" It was a question of the direction of their faith. Now I would personally believe, because of what I understand the Scripture to teach, that when their faith went out at the time of John's baptism in the One that was to come, in the Lord Jesus, of Whom Paul spoke, and they understood that it was He, that there had been a real work done in their heart. And there was not any question. They went ahead then and were baptized in the Name of the Lord. There was not any question regarding their forgiveness, their pardon, their regeneration. But there was simply a matter of whether or not they had taken.

And I think this points out the distinction. Now when I have said this, then I have to proceed to insert as a parenthesis, that I am sufficiently acquainted with Scripture to realize that it is entirely possible for people to be filled with the Spirit of God when they are saved. And if you were to come to me and say, I was filled with the Holy Spirit when I was saved, I would not say you nay, for so much as a moment. Because I do know that at the house of Cornelius when they preached to them salvation, the Spirit of God came upon them at the same time, and I am not going to be in conflict with Scripture, and I am going to allow the possibility that there are those who are filled with the Spirit of God at the time they are saved. So I have no issue there. But the fact is, that with the most of God's children the case is as you find here in the 8th Chapter of Acts, and I would like to have you turn to it for a moment.

Philip had went down to the city of Samaria and preached Christ unto them, as we read in the fifth verse. "And the people with one accord gave heed unto those things which Philip spake hearing and seeing the miracles which he did. For unclean spirits, crying with loud voice, came out of many that were possessed with them: and many taken with palsies, and they that were lame, were healed. And there was great joy in that city. But there was a certain man, called Simon, which before time in the same city used sorcery, and bewitched the people of Samaria, giving out that himself was some great one: To whom they all gave heed, from the least to the greatest, saying, This man is the great power of God. And to him they had regard, because that of long time he had bewitched them with sorceries." (Acts 8:6-11) But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the Name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women. Then Simon himself believed also: and when he was baptized, he continued with Philip, and, wondered, beholding the miracles and signs which were done.

Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the Word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John: Who, when they were come down (Notice now in the parenthesis that is here, that I insert- he didn't question their repentance, did Peter and John. Nor did they question their faith in the finished work of Christ. Nor did they question their commitment to the Lordship of Christ. Not at all. This was perfectly clear and accepted.) But Peter and John, when they were

come down, prayed for them, that they might take the Holy Ghost: (For as yet He was fallen upon none of them: only they were baptized in the Name of the Lord Jesus.) Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost.

Now I believe that this is normative. And I think I stand in good order when I do. I have in my study at home the Philadelphia Confession of Faith. The Philadelphia Confession of Faith was the London Confession of Faith by the Baptists. It was prepared by the London Baptist Association in 1631, and it was published again in 1730 some in Philadelphia as the Philadelphia Confession of Faith. Now Article 31 in the Philadelphia Confession of Faith has the laying on of hands for the further impartation of the Holy Spirit. In which it was held by the Baptists of those centuries, that the normative experience was for those who had repented of their sin and believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, and had followed Him in believer's -water- Baptist, that following this the elders would gather and would instruct them in their identification with Christ and would lay hands on them and pray for them that they be filled with the Spirit. Now this I say was the normal practice of the Baptists for many, for two or three hundreds of years. In fact, up until perhaps a hundred years ago. This was the manner in which it was done.

Now if you read Church history, you will discover also that this that you read here was considered to be a normal procedure for many centuries. And I maintain that it is, even today, a most salutary and desirable manner.

I closed last Sunday evening the message, "How to Be Filled With the Spirit", by making a hasty reference to this portion, saying that this is a Church matter. I would have you see how that Peter and John represented the Church in Jerusalem. They were Apostles. Philip, if I can use the appropriate word, was a Layman, a Deacon, that had come down and had preached Christ, and this great ingathering had transpired. Now Peter and John come to join in what has been done. They instruct them., (This we will infer)and pray for them (this is stated), laid hands on them (this is clearly stated) that they might receive, that they might take the Holy Ghost — that they might take Him.

This brings to a point the matter that I am trying to show you, that when you come to Christ, the Holy Spirit presents Christ as all-sufficient Savior. But having come to Him, and having gone to the Word, you find that Christ now presents the Holy Spirit to be the Life of the believer's life and to make real the presence of Christ. So we are not talking about the same thing at all. We are talking about first, the Holy Spirit presenting Christ to the sinner; and then we are talking about Christ presenting the Holy Spirit to the Saint.

Now having said that, I come to that verse which says, "We are all baptized by one Spirit into one Body." (I Cor. 12:13) And this I hold to be verily true. That it is the operation of the Holy Spirit, just as Eleazar went into a far country and brought back the bride for Isaac, so the Holy Spirit is going out and bringing back the Bride for the Lord Jesus Christ. It is His work to set up the standards and conditions by which the Bride is selected, namely repentance and faith. It is His work to prepare this one to be presented to Isaac. And we recognize that it is the Holy Spirit's work to awaken and convict and bring to repentance and faith and regenerate, and thus place into the Body of Christ, submerge in the Body, or baptize, if you please, in the Body of Christ. This has no problem to me at all.

But John said of the Lord Jesus, "When He is come (that is, the One who would follow him, Who was preferred before him) he said: He it is that baptizes you with the Holy Ghost." Now let's see the contrast again. In I Corinthians 11 we read, "It is the Holy Spirit that puts us into Christ." With this we quite agree. It is true, obviously. For whatever the Scripture says is so. But then we find that it is Christ who is to fill us with the Holy Spirit. And so we must distinguish between things that differ.

Back again to the matter of the pressure of pattern. Our Lord Jesus was born of the Spirit, or conceived by the Holy Ghost, indwelt by the fullness of the Godhead bodily, but He was not ready for His ministry until the Spirit of God came upon Him to anoint Him. No, this is the reason Dr. F. B. Meyer entitles his chapter on that to which we refer, The Anointing With the Spirit. For this is the word which is used of the Lord Jesus, and a good word and quite satisfactory to me. People have often tried to argue on terms. One will say, The Crisis of the Deeper Life; another will say. Anointing With the Spirit; another will say, Endowment With Power; and another will say, The Baptist of the Holy Spirit; and someone else will say, Being Filled With the Spirit. They ask me to take my choice, and being greedy when it comes to the things of the Lord, I just take them all. Just take them all. I love them all. There is no use to distinguish and pin point. They all have reference to phases and aspects of the same glorious truth.

Now I am not interested in changing your terminology, and I am not prescribing for you any set phraseology. I am talking about a relationship that parallels that of the Lord, who was born of the Spirit, and indwelt by the fullness of the Godhead bodily, but was not ready for His ministry until He was anointed with the Spirit of God, and Who said, "As the Father sent Me, so send I you," and we would infer from that that we are born of the Spirit. (John 20:21) And if you will, in terms of the nature that has now been produced in us, we have Him but are not ready for our ministry until we are clothed upon, anointed with, or empowered with the Holy Spirit. So we distinguish between things that differ.

Now we come to this matter in the Acts that we have read, in Chapter 8. Philip preached Christ and the necessity of repentance. The people repented, believed, were baptized. Peter and John came down, accepted what had been done, had no corrective ministry, instructed them, prayed for them, laid hands on them, and they were filled with the Spirit. Now will you notice what is not said here. Do you notice what is not said in this portion? It does not say what the people did when they were filled with the Spirit, does it? It does not say that they said. It does not say what transpired. It simply says, "They laid their hands on them and they were, they received the Holy Ghost." I want you to bear that in mind, because remember our text, our theme is (we shall conclude with as the answer) How To Know You Are Filled With the Spirit. Now obviously these people know, but the Spirit of God apparently had real reason for telling us that they knew. Even Simon knew. Peter and John knew. But He doesn't give us any final criteria as to what it was, by which anyone else would know.

Now turn to Chapter 9. Chapter 9, and we come to the occasion when Paul is in Damascus, having met the Lord and recall his words where he said, "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do." He saw the Lordship of Christ, the Saviourhood of Christ, and received Him therewith, and proceeded then to be led into Damascus. Now I read from verse 10 of Chapter 9: "And there was a certain disciple at Damascus, named Ananias;" Isn't that lovely? Previously it was Peter and John. It was the Church represented by them. But now notice the lovely anonymity. Isn't it strange? If there had just been Acts 8, do you know what someone would have said, "The only one who can have any part in this are the Apostles." I am so glad the Lord anticipates the reasoning's of our minds and just takes care of it. And all it says is, "There was a certain disciple." And you never hear of him again. I am so glad of that. He was available. But notice how close he was to the Lord.) "There was a certain disciple at Damascus, named Ananias; and to him said the Lord in a vision, Ananias." And he said, "Behold, I am here, Lord." (Isn't that a wonderful intimacy? Isn't that what your heart longs for, to be just that intimately related to the living God?)

"Behold, I am here, Lord. And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the street which is called Straight, and enquire in the house of Judas for one called Saul, of Tarsus: for, behold, he prayeth, and hath seen in a vision a man named Ananias coming in, and putting his hand on him, that he might receive his sight. Then Ananias answered, Lord, I have heard by many of this man, how much evil he hath done to thy saints at Jerusalem: And here he hath authority from the chief priests to bind all that call on Thy Name. But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto Me, to bear My Name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel: For I will shew him how great things he must suffer for My Name's sake. And Ananias went his way, and entered into the house; and putting his hands on him said, Brother Saul," (Isn't that lovely? Does that do to you what it does to me? When the Lord spoke all of his animosity and resentment was gone. I wonder what the parallel will be? I wonder if there is a parallel? I think you could think of someone.) "Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost." (Acts 9:10-17)

And putting his hands on him said, Brother Saul. Do you see? "And immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales: and he received sight forthwith, and arose, and was baptized." (Acts 9:18) (And you have every reason to believe that he was filled with the Holy Ghost.)

Now what I want you to notice is what it does not say happened. Do you see? It does not say, he did something, or said something. It just says what happens. We have a large company of dear believers across the nation who maintain stoutly and earnestly that there is only one evidence to the baptism or the fullness of the Spirit, and they proceed to maintain that unless one has received this particular evidence, the glossolalia evidence, the speaking evidence, that they have not been filled with the Spirit.

Now I take complete, and total disagreement with these dear people, though I love them dearly in the Lord, and maintain stoutly that the Scripture does not teach that speaking with an unlearned language is the evidence of the baptism with the Holy Spirit or being filled with the Spirit. Now let me say it again. I have no prejudice about the matter, for when I came to realize that we could be filled with the fullness of God I was quite willing to approach the Word, and just let the Word say what it would say, but you know I noticed three things as I studied. Every time when it speaks anywhere in the New Testament (Acts, Corinthians) regarding Speaking in what is called in tongues or in Glossolalia or in an unknown language, It is always in the imperfect tense, which means that it was a speaking that continued.

Now, my friends would say that in Acts the 2nd Chapter (and you might like to turn to it, since we are making reference to it) that in Acts the 2nd Chapter and the fourth verse, that this was the sign — that there is a distinction between the sign and the gift. Now I have to disagree with them totally on the grounds of what the verb tense states. This is the imperfect. The imperfect always carries with it the sense of incompleteness. And this could never be understood as a sign used here and not repeated. Because the word as you see it there, “And began to speak,” which means as the verb tense makes it so clear, They spoke — it was incomplete — and they continued. This was a gift. A gift. Now that is the first reason. Every place that the word speaking, the verb, is used, it is always used in the imperfect tense (Always; I know of no exception.). Which means that the idea that there is a sign as distinct from the gift is not borne out by the Greek verb.

The second thing I find (And I ask you to turn over to 1 Corinthians 11, which satisfied me once and for all in respect to this matter) was where Paul dealing with... Excuse me. I Corinthians 12 (I misspoke myself) in the 30th verse is dealing with this. And he says, “Are all Apostles? are all prophets? are all teachers? are all workers of miracles? Do all have the gifts of healing?” And then it says, “Do all speak with tongues? do all interpret?” The word that is used here demands a negative, demands a “no,” and to rightly understand the use of this little matter, this little article “μή or μήτι” which is the Greek indication of the negative. Do all speak with tongues? It is, No. No. Just like that. No. No escape from it. It is clearly stated, that just as all are not prophets or teachers, or workers of miracles, or gifts of healing, so all will not speak. Now to say, that when Paul says that All will not is to say that all must (when the verb tense indicates that there is no distinction between gift and sign) is to wrest the Scripture.

Then there was another matter that I had to face in this. And I think you will too: Where it says clearly that tongues are a sign not to the believer but to the unbeliever. Now when Paul makes this statement that it is a sign not to the believer, how can we then turn around and say that this is the sign to the believer? God says it is not. Now we turn around and say, It is. He says, It's a sign to the unbeliever. So I have to conclude at this juncture in answering the question. How to Know that You Are Filled With the Spirit, that the Scripture does not teach that any one gift or sign is the evidence of being filled with the Spirit of God—does not teach it. If it did, I assure you I would affirm it just as gladly. But as impartially and as earnestly as I could come to the Word I became convinced of this.

But then I want to say something else. I want to hasten to say that I firmly believe with all my heart, and am prepared to stand thereon, that the gifts of the Spirit that are listed in 1 Corinthians 12 belong in the Church today and are (and the church is greatly impoverished for want of them — greatly impoverished for want of them, And that they are needed.) And all of the gifts of the Spirit are supernatural abilities which are bestowed upon the Church for the purpose of restoring to the Church the loss that was sustained and suffered in the captivity to Satan. Now I haven't time to dwell on that. But let me say that when I declare that I do not believe that any gift is a sign, or that there is any single sign that I am not for one moment saying, that all of these gifts that are described are not valid and are available today. But I would have you notice this in I Corinthians 12, if you are interested to turn back to it, one thing. (Just see it in passing.) And this I see in the 4th 5th, 6th verses:

Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all. But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal. To every man is given. And then to verse 11. And perhaps it would be profitable to read them. “For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; To another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues.” (I Cor. 12:8-10) (But

notice) “But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to everyman severally as He will.” (I Cor. 12:11) (And the sovereignty is in the hands of the Holy Ghost.)

Therefore I would state to you tonight, that I do not believe that there is any sign or particular gift that can be understood to be the evidence or proof of being filled with the Spirit. But having said that, (and I want you to know that if you are interested you can have a recording of this message because it is being taped upstairs)... But having said that, I then proceed to say this: That I believe with Dr. Tozer² and give it my unqualified support that everyone that is filled with the Spirit knows it. That everyone that is filled with the Spirit knows when. And everyone that was filled with the Spirit was filled suddenly. I am going to deal with those briefly. First, Everyone that is filled with the Spirit knows it. Why? Because you knew you were not filled with the Spirit when you sought the Lord. No one has ever been filled with the Spirit until he knows he is not. There has to be a hunger before there can be a supply. “Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled.” (Matt. 5:6) But without the hunger there is no supply. And just as you know you are hungry to be filled with the fullness of God and know you are not filled with the fullness of God, so when you are you know that this need and this desire is met. We noticed last Sunday evening; I said that the prime condition for being filled with the Spirit was to acknowledge that you were not. And here it is again. Here we see it. And just in the same sense that you knew you were not and were desperately hungry, so when He has filled you with Himself you will know that you are. What part of you is He dealing with? Your spirit. What part of you is that? That is the invisible, nontangible part of you, the part that leaves when you die. People gather round your bedside and hear that last gasp, and they say, “He is gone! She is gone!” It is that part of you with which the Holy Spirit relates Himself. The spirit. And it is your spirit filled with His Spirit.

Now you see dear, you are a creature of time and sense and so am I. The things we can feel and handle and weigh, they are real. But when God begins to draw us to Himself, it is really to draw us away from idols, to draw us away from the things of time and sense. And you have to believe in what many of the world call stupid nonsense. But we know it isn't stupid nonsense. We know it is glorious revelation: That God became flesh through the virgin birth, and that Jesus Christ was God come in the flesh, that He lived a sinless life, and died an atoning death. Can you not see how ridiculous this sounds to a skeptical world, that is dealing with things of time and sense. The whole thing sounds so fantastic. How can the death of a man 1900 years ago have any relevance to your life in the twentieth century? Well you see, this is the stumbling stone. This is the area.

And so when God starts to draw you to Himself, He is drawing you away from time and sense. He is drawing you to commit your eternal welfare to a Man who lived and died and was raised from the dead. He is drawing you to cast out over the abyss of the dark eternity your never dying soul, and rest in the finished work of Christ. He is drawing you away from time and sense.

And then how do you know you are saved? Because of what you have done? Because of what the Scripture has said? Of course. But the way you finally know that you are forgiven and pardoned is because you have the witness of the Spirit. “He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness within himself.” (I John 5:10) “God hath not given us the Spirit of fear,” “of bondage again to fear, but the Spirit of adoption whereby we cry Abba Father.” (II Tim. 1:7; Rom. 8:15) What is this witness to regeneration? It is the knowledge that your sins are gone, and that you are pardoned, and you are forgiven.

Now, if you have been born again, then you know this beginning witness of God to your heart. Then on the basis of this beginning witness you have known the sturdy and stimulated hunger for God, the deep yearning and longing for God. You know that. You know how you have waited before Him, and how you have cried out with perceiving of your vast emptiness, and you have had His Word, perhaps, come to you. “Ye shall seek for Me and ye shall find Me when ye shall search for Me with all your heart.” (Jer. 29:13) You have come to the cross. You have been willing to abandon the right to your rights. You have dealt with that which God has brought into your life, all because of this deep hunger within you. You have presented your body a living sacrifice because of this hunger that you have known. Now my friend, if hunger is a reality, being filled and satisfied will be a reality. But if hunger is not a reality, then you have nothing with which to contrast it. I look at the hungry, I emaciated one and say, Would you like food? And deep from within every cell of the body confirming what the words say, the one that is

² Aiden Wilson Tozer (1897-1963) Pastor and Author. Christian and Missionary Alliance

thirsty and hungry says, "Oh I must have food. Nothing else has meaning until I have food." And I look at you and say, "Are you hungry for God." And knowing your heart if it be true, you say, "Listen, I have seen the field of great price, the field with the pearl of great price. I have counted the cost. I can be satisfied with nothing less than filled with the fullness of God. I must have God. I have deep, abiding, yearning hunger." This hunger is going to lead you to deal with the conditions, to embrace the cross, to die to the right to your rights, to present your body. This hunger is going to hold you, and it is going to bring you to that place of expectancy when you are going to take Him to fill you and you will know the fullness of the Spirit just as certainly as you knew the hunger for the fullness of the Spirit. Every one that is filled with the Spirit knows it immediately, needs nothing else. You know it because you know. You know when it happened, for there was a moment when you were not, and a moment when you were, and then you knew that it happened suddenly.

Now you say, Well wouldn't it be much easier if you could have something simple, like a special gift or physical feeling, or emotional reaction. Wouldn't it be easier? Well I'm not even prepared to reply to such a hypothetical question, because easy isn't the point we are interested in. Reality is what we concerned about. And I know this, that you can counterfeit a gift, and a sign. But you cannot counterfeit God. You cannot counterfeit God. If you are seeking an experience there are a lot of entities that will be glad to give you an experience. Not all experiences are of God. But my friend when your desire is for the Lord Himself, for nothing else, not a gift, not a blessing, not power, God is no longer a means to your successful service or your happiness, but God is the end of all the longing of your heart, and you have entered into covenant with Him when He said, "If ye shall search for Me." How tragic it is when people say, I want this gift, or this blessing, or this sign. To demean themselves to ask for less than Himself. No, No, dear. "Ye shall search for Me" — not as a means to anything else, to power, to gift, to ability, to ministry, to witness, — all of these things flow out of it. But, "ye shall search for Me." My friend, there is no counterfeit for God. And when you plead the precious Blood of Christ and cover yourself with that Blood and assure the God of all Grace that you want no thing, but just Himself, you have the assurance. I will pour water on Him that is thirsty. I will pour floods upon the dry ground. Open your heart for the gift I am bringing. For while ye are seeking Me, I shall be found. Seeking Me. And my friend, when you are filled with the Spirit of God you will know it, and you will know when, and it will happen suddenly. Let me ask you. Have you taken the Spirit of God to be the life of your life? Have you presented to Him your body? And have you told Him that you will be satisfied with nothing less than the fullness of God?

Hear Paul's prayer for the Church at Ephesus. That our Christ may take up His lasting dwelling place in your heart through faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to know with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to experience the love of God which passes intelligence, that you might be filled with all the fullness of God.

Now someone might say, "But Brother Reidhead you are saying to these people to tarry and to wait." No. No. I am not. There is no tarrying on God's part when there is preparation on your part. You do not have to tarry and wait. There is only one thing you have to do and that is prepare. The time is not in waiting for God to meet you. The only time element involved is in your embracing the Cross, and entering into union with Him, and letting that union be experientially real, and presenting your body to Him, and abandoning to Him the right to your rights. There is no waiting on God's part. The only time involved is simply in your preparing your heart. And so when I say, "Receive by faith the fullness of the Spirit," I understand that to mean that you are going to say, Lord I take the promise of Your Word, and the provision of Your Love, and I am prepared to meet every condition, and I thank You that just as soon as those conditions are met, that you are going to satisfy my heart with Yourself. And now Lord the waiting is not for You, but it is just that I might know all that You would like done that You might have untrammelled right in my life.

But it is not just a personal matter. It is also a Church matter. And they stand together, and Peter and John counseled and prayed, and Ananias the same. And so we are together in this thing, to share, to counsel, to pray; and the great longing of my heart for you is that you might walk in the fullness of God, that the One who came at regeneration to bring Life might now be granted the privilege of having every area of your personality and filling you with His fullness.

Now one other thing I say. Where does God come from to fill you? That is not the question. All geographical limitations upon God are erroneous. It is not that He comes from some place. It is just that you abandon to Him something, that He can possess

wholly as His own. And the One that brought Life at regeneration wants to bring fullness of Life and flow through you in unhindered freedom, and do that for you and through you which you could never do alone.

Now let us bow in prayer. Our Father, deep within the heart of everyone that has been born of Thy Spirit is a longing to be filled with Thy Spirit. We were made for Thee. And nothing less than Thyself can satisfy us. Now it may be, Father, that someone has taken umbrage or exception to what has been said, and it could very well be that the one who has spoken has been mistaken in so many of the details that he has presented. Lord let no one bog down or stumble over the words that are used. But let there come to every [Tape ends] heart a sense that the normal Christian Life is being filled with the fullness of God. "Be ye being filled with the Spirit." (Eph. 5:18) Now Father, we do not ask everybody to take just the way we try to explain Your Truth. That is not our desire. But oh Father, we have seen so much arguing, and haggling, and fighting, and so little of the manifestation of the fruit of the Spirit that betokens the fullness of the Spirit. And what we are longing to see happen tonight is that in the heart of this company, more than there were in the upper room in the day of Pentecost, shall come a covenant longing with Thee that will not rest until they are normal Christians, every one of us, filled with the fullness of God for our work, for our witness, for our own means of glorifying the Lord Jesus. And so bring all to focus here that someone may stumble over some explanation. But Father if they could contradict everything that has been said, we still have the Word, "Be ye filled with the Spirit." This is binding upon all of us. Show us what great good will come when we are, and what great guilt will be ours if we are not filled with the Spirit. And put within hearts tonight a deep desire.

I do not know how to close. I would like to take every hungry heart aside and spend hours talking with you, praying with you. Make known your need. Make known your hunger if you wish. Perhaps we can arrange for a time to pray. But look; only God can satisfy the hungry heart, and fill the longing soul with goodness. God bless you. I have not been talking tonight to mock you, but to guide you as best we are able to go on into the glorious fullness of God. And may it be that with deep desire of heart you follow on, to know the Lord in every lovely way that He desires. Will you stand for the Benediction. 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. Make know your need. God bless you.

* Reference such as: Delivered at The Gospel Tabernacle, New York City on Sunday Evening, September 11, 1960 by Paris W. Reidhead, Pastor.

©PRBTMI 1960