

BEING FILLED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT

When considering this matter of being filled with the Holy Spirit or the work of the Holy Spirit in us, we must be very clear that, as far as the Bible is concerned, it is divided into **two periods**: the Old Testament and the New Testament; and as far as our experience is concerned, it is divided into **two great aspects**: the **outward** and the **inward**. [The] Spirit of God which descended upon man in the Old Testament did not come in His Person to be the Lord for man to obey, but as a **power** to be employed by man. We know that the Holy Spirit is a Person, but in Old Testament times the Spirit of God did not descend upon man in His Person. If He had descended upon man in His Person, He would have come as Lord, and man must obey Him. Nevertheless, in Old Testament times He descended as a power without His Person; therefore, it seemed instead that He obeyed man and was employed by man. Take for example the gasoline in a car: it is without a person; it is not the master for the car to obey... The gasoline is the moving power of the car and is used by the car. Likewise, God desired that Moses deliver the Israelites out of Egypt and lead them into Canaan, but Moses found himself lacking in power... Undoubtedly, Moses was learned in all the knowledge of Egypt and was very capable; however, his **limited learning** and **capability** were not sufficient to meet the need of this great commission. Therefore, the Spirit of God came not to be his master for him to obey, but **to supplement his lack of power and be under his command**. Moses was like a bicycle that could run only ten miles per hour, and the Spirit of God was like a motor added to the bicycle which increased its speed to seventy miles per hour, [thus] increasing its effectiveness.

However, the principle of the work of the Holy Spirit is entirely different in the New Testament. At this time, when He descends to work on man, He **not only** descends upon man to be power to man, but He **dwells within man** and is mingled with man to be his life, thereby imparting God's nature into man. This means that now He comes in His Person to dwell in man... It is interesting that there is not a single sentence in the entire Old Testament which says that man ought to obey the Spirit of God. But **in the New Testament**, we are told that **the Holy Spirit takes the control over us** (Acts 16:6-7) and that **we ought to walk by the Spirit** (Gal. 5:25). 2 Cor. 3:18 especially calls the Holy Spirit the "Lord Spirit". The Holy Spirit today is **the Lord**, a Person. He dwells within us to be our Lord; therefore, we must commit ourselves to Him and submit ourselves to His rule. He is not only our power, but also our Lord. He is not only the gasoline in the car, but **the driver**. He is not only the motor of the bicycle, but **the owner** who rides it. Not only does the moving power of the car depend on Him, but whether the car stops, proceeds, goes forward or backward, it is all under His driving and operating. Our nature and our life is of Him. He is our life, our nature, and our Lord.

Our Experience of the Holy Spirit – Outwardly and Inwardly

In New Testament times the **indwelling of the Holy Spirit becomes the basis for His outward descending** upon man. The first person in the New Testament who experienced the indwelling of the Holy Spirit was **Jesus of Nazareth**. Since the Lord Jesus was the first to experience the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, and since He is the Head of the New Testament believers as well as of the church,

then the manner of the Holy Spirit's work on New Testament believers and the church is the same as that which was upon Him; the Holy Spirit works on the Body in the same manner as He worked on the Head...The experience of the Lord Jesus with regard to the Holy Spirit was clearly divided into two aspects: first the inward experience of the Holy Spirit as life, and then the outward experience of the Holy Spirit as power... From the day the Lord was born until He came forth to work for God, He lived in the presence of God by **the Holy Spirit as the life** within Him. Isaiah 53:2 says, *"He grew up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground."* **It was entirely by the Holy Spirit infilling Him as His life that on one hand He was able to live humbly in the house of a poor carpenter as a son of man, while on the other hand He was able to walk according to the laws of God.** When He was thirty years old and was about to work for God, the first **outward** event occurred: while He was being baptized in the river of Jordan, the Holy Spirit descended upon Him as a dove, and He was filled with the Holy Spirit. After forty days of trials in the wilderness, He was even more filled with the power of the Holy Spirit and worked for God in the various regions round about Galilee... **The Apostles** were the first group to experience the Holy Spirit. They also experienced first the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, and then the outward descending of the Holy Spirit. The Lord promised His disciples that He would ask the Father to send them another Comforter,... This word of the Lord indicated that they would experience the Holy Spirit **inwardly** as life. At Pentecost, the Apostles experienced the other aspect of the work of the Holy Spirit, namely, the Holy Spirit **as power**...

Both the Inward and the Outward Experienced **at the Same Time**

After Pentecost, the experience of the Holy Spirit inwardly as well as outwardly was fully accomplished in the Head (the Lord Jesus) as well as in the Body (represented by the Apostles). From this time onward, all those who desire to experience the work of the Holy Spirit can experience both the indwelling and the outward descending of the Holy Spirit at the same time. The proof of this was seen in **the house of Cornelius**. In Acts 10 we see that Peter was sent to preach the gospel in the house of Cornelius, and while he was preaching, the Holy Spirit fell upon all those who heard, causing them to receive not only the indwelling Holy Spirit as life, but also the Holy Spirit as power descending upon them outwardly. Therefore, beginning with the household of Cornelius and continuing to this day, **it is possible to experience the Holy Spirit's work within and without at the same time.** The Holy Spirit within is the basis for the Holy Spirit without, while the Holy Spirit without is the proof of the Holy Spirit within. This is the **most normal** condition.

The Way to be Filled with the Holy Spirit

In order to be filled with the Holy Spirit, we need first to know that, as far as the **objective** fact is concerned, **both aspects**—the inward and the outward—have been accomplished by God. The Holy Spirit as life within was given on the night of the resurrection, while the Holy Spirit as power without descended on the day of Pentecost... The descending of the Holy Spirit is like the crucifying of the

Lord Jesus—**both are accomplished facts**. Today the Lord Jesus does not need to be crucified again; neither does the Holy Spirit need to descend again. [I]n order to obtain the Holy Spirit, either inwardly or outwardly, we also need only to receive Him. To what extent we receive the Holy Spirit, to the same extent the Holy Spirit will fill us. We shall now study separately the **two aspects of receiving the filling** of the Holy Spirit.

The Way to be Filled With the Holy Spirit Inwardly -- Empty Ourselves

If we will respond to the demand of the Holy Spirit, removing that which must be removed and forsaking that which must be forsaken, thus emptying ourselves and letting the Holy Spirit have all the ground and authority in us, then automatically the Holy Spirit will fill us, and we will subjectively experience and enjoy the infilling of the Holy Spirit. For this reason we have placed this lesson of being filled with the Holy Spirit **after** all the experiences of the dealings.

The Way to be Filled With the Holy Spirit Inwardly -- Believe

After we have dealt with everything and emptied ourselves, we must believe that the Holy Spirit is filling us from within. We only need to believe in the filling of the Holy Spirit, without trying to feel whether or not we have been filled. **Real faith does not depend on feeling**. If we will only believe in this manner, the Lord will cause the filling of the Holy Spirit to become our practical experience.

The Way to be Filled With the Holy Spirit Outwardly -- Be Willing to be Used by God

Beginning in the Old Testament, whoever was really willing to be used by God obtained the descending of the Spirit of God upon him as power...In the New Testament the principle is still the same. The first example in the New Testament of one upon whom the Holy Spirit descended was the **Lord Jesus**. The reason the Holy Spirit descended upon the Lord on the day He was baptized was that the Lord was **testifying to heaven and earth** through baptism that from that day He was going to be officially used by God. At the time when people in the world cared neither for God's will nor God's work, but lived only for themselves, Jesus of Nazareth stood forth before the whole universe, declaring that He desired to **live for God**, to be **used by God**, and to **work for God**. It was at this time that the Holy Spirit descended upon Him.

This was true also with the first group of **Apostles**. Originally they were fishermen, but they gave up both the fish and the boat, and with their whole heart were willing to be used by God. They **desired to continue the work of the Lord** to fulfill God's work on earth. Their heart desire and attitude prepared the way for God to pour out the Holy Spirit upon them at Pentecost. Examples of this kind are innumerable in church history. About two hundred years ago, the Moravian Church had a great outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Before that, they also were prepared to be used by God; therefore, at a meeting of the Lord's Table, the Holy Spirit greatly filled them. After this they were used by God in a surpassing manner. Since man is so unwilling to be used by God, few obtain the outward filling of the Holy Spirit, causing this experience to become mysterious and rare. In fact, the outward aspect

of the Holy Spirit is by no means more precious or more difficult to obtain than the Holy Spirit within, the only requirement being that we be willing to be used by God.

The Way to be Filled With the Holy Spirit Outwardly -- Believe

Once we have offered ourselves and are willing to be used wholly by God, **we must believe** in the outward filling, the outpouring, of the Holy Spirit. This too must be taken by faith rather than by feeling. If we are so willing to be used by God and we believe in the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, then the outward power of the Holy Spirit will be manifested upon us. Therefore, there is **no need to beg** for the outward filling of the Holy Spirit. All we need to do is to rise in answer to God's call, commit ourselves to the Lord to be at His disposal, and tell Him, *"Lord, I know that You have saved me so that You can use me. Now I put my all in Your hands to be at Your disposal. I also know that according to my own strength I can do nothing; therefore, I need Your Spirit. Since I know that Your Spirit has already been given, I am here to receive it by faith."* In this way, the experience of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit is not a difficult matter... Some admire others' outward manifestations, and insist that they also speak in tongues, cry or laugh as others do; if so, what they really desire is the speaking in tongues, the crying or the laughing, not the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Others insist not to cry or laugh, for they are afraid of being possessed by a demon. **This also is a wrong concept.** Our insistence often **limits** the free working of the Holy Spirit. Therefore, while we experience the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, we need to afford **complete freedom** to the Holy Spirit, **neither insisting upon anything nor refusing anything.**

In summary, the filling of the Holy Spirit within and without is a glorious blessing under the New Testament. It is also a fulfillment of the blessing promised to Abraham by God (Gal. 3:14). May we on one hand **empty ourselves** more that the Holy Spirit together with the fullness of the Godhead may fill us from within, thereby enabling us to live out the glorious image of God. On the other hand, we need to **give ourselves more to the Lord** to be used by Him, so that the Holy Spirit may descend upon us richly, giving us power and gifts; then we can serve God, deal with God's enemy, and bring in the Kingdom of God!