

141026AM ESH-30 Lesson-6 Keep & Stay Filled.docx  
Discipleship Lesson-6: The Spirit of God  
"Getting Full, Staying Full &  
Living Full of God's Spirit"

Ephesians 4-5 & Galatians 5

As we open to Ephesian 5:18, we are learning what it means to Get Full, Stay Full & Live Full of God's Spirit. This may be one of the most vital topics, in the Bible, for any believer.

Sometimes, when we study a topic as massive as the power of the Holy Spirit in our lives, we need to remind ourselves why this study matters. For a moment think of the record we find in Acts.

We just spent several weeks looking at the ministry recorded in Acts for those 30 years from Pentecost and on to Paul being imprisoned at Rome. As we remember all those events, do you ever get puzzled at how they did it? If we are not careful we can even get overwhelmed at what amazing things those saints did for God, while struggling with huge obstacles.

In fact as I read over some of those more vivid parts of the New Testament again this week, some of the words that came to my mind were: ***Unbelievable, incredible & unattainable.***

Isn't that where most of us get to after a while? Unbelievable, incredible, but alas for me, unattainable! Three words frame many people's view of Biblical living:

## UNBELIEVABLE, INCREDIBLE & UNATTAINABLE

What do I mean? Think over with me what you know about just a few of those who lived across the pages of the New Testament:

**The Apostle Peter** was a stumbling, bumbling man who always was sticking both feet, up to the ankles, into his mouth in the Gospels.

In fact after the 1st Lord's Supper, one servant girl in the dark, scarred him into uttering some horrible curses and denials of Jesus.

Yet only days later he is standing up in front of 3,000 families, facing both the murderous religious establishment of Jerusalem, and their guardians, the Roman army; and was no less than totally fearless.

He is never recorded as wavering again from that day onward. He faces the inevitability of personal pain and certain martyrdom with serenity. See why we think: *unbelievable, incredible & unattainable?*

**The Apostle Paul** was beaten within an inch of death in Acts 16.

He was neglected to the point of abuse, thrown into a dark, damp, bug infested dungeon, fastened down with iron and wood stocks and left to grow infection, burn with fever and perhaps die.

What was the result? He started to quote and sing aloud from the Psalms. He was so convincing almost everyone who heard it wanted to become a Christian also! *Unbelievable, incredible & unattainable*: or is it possible to live that way?

**The Apostle John** was alone, imprisoned, troubled, and for all he knew forgotten by God and man as Revelation 1 opens.

He was on a baked rock in the middle of nowhere, kind of like an ancient version of an Alcatraz or San Quentin Penitentiary.

He had already survived beatings, mobs, and jails and even lived with the scars that marked his body from the boiling oil torture the Romans had subjected him to. So what comes out of a wasted and scarred body? He is in the Spirit, worshiping God on a Sunday: in nowhere; and all alone on that island prison he gets the best look at Heaven's beauty even seen. *Unbelievable, incredible & unattainable*: or is it possible to live that way?

What do they all have in common? Only one thing: the Spirit of God is how they made it, and were used so mightily.

The galaxy of unbelievable lives goes way beyond the Apostles. There are countless 1st century saints who found their pathway colliding with the godless and belligerent Roman Society, whose lives ended in the sands of the arena, at the stake or in ghastly martyrdom. Yet history records they went to their end singing, radiant with joy and serenely. *Unbelievable, incredible & unattainable*: or is it possible to live that way?

## THE LIST FROM CHURCH HISTORY: JUST GOES ON

Then for the past many centuries the heroes of the faith have continued.

**Athanasius in the 4th century** stood "*contra mundam*" against the whole world, alone in his standing for the undiluted deity of Jesus Christ, in the face of the forefathers, of the false doctrine of the Jehovah's Witness movement. *Unbelievable, incredible & unattainable*: or is it possible to live that way?

**Martin Luther in the 16th century** stood alone at the Diet of Worms and in the face of excommunication, and death by fire, said: "Here I stand upon God's Word, I can take no other stand!" *Unbelievable, incredible & unattainable*: or is it possible to live that way?

**Adonirum Judson in the 18th century**, worked 7 years in Burma without seeing even one soul converted. He was starved for weeks and left for dead in prison. Yet he never quit.

William Carey of India in the same century faced the mental insanity of his beloved wife, the hostility of the Hindus, and yet never quit until God's Word was translated. *Unbelievable, incredible & unattainable*: or is it possible to live that way?

**In the 20th century C.T. Studd** faced sickness, weakness and mortal danger among the cannibal pygmies of Africa's darkest jungles. Yet 20,000+ were saved, baptized, clothed and lived as saints, in the devil's own dark jungles. *Unbelievable, incredible & unattainable*: or is it possible to live that way?

## IS IT POSSIBLE TO LIVE AN UNBELIEVABLE & INCREDIBLE LIFE?

Yes, is the answer to the question of whether or not it is possible to live an unbelievable, incredible life; and the secret is found in our text this morning.

In fact, one word sums up Peter's life, Paul's life and John's life. This same word summarizes how the galaxy of 1st through 20th century saints has stood alone triumphantly for Christ.

In fact, one word tells all there is about walking in the Spirit today. Please turn with me to Ephesians 5:18-19, and as we read, may we find the secret they knew and followed and like them, do the same!

Ephesians 5:18-19 (NKJV) And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but **be filled with the Spirit**, 19 speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord,

## THE SECRET IN 1 WORD

One word explains it all. The Word God Gives is the Greek word that sounds like this in English: ***pleroosthe***

That word in Greek would be classified by four categories. This word is an: IMPERATIVE + PLURAL + PASSIVE + PRESENT: VERB.

When the Holy Spirit picked the words to write down His message, He was very specific. Perhaps nowhere else in all God's Word is the message of the grammar clearer than here!

- **IMPERATIVE**: An imperative verb means God is commanding. Imperatives build upon indicatives. God first explains to us the "doctrines" then He asks us to respond, which is our "duty". Indicatives are the doctrinal explanations, and the imperatives are the personal responses to God's truths. He is not offering a suggestion to us for our consideration! He is commanding us as Lord God Almighty. The filling of the Spirit of God into our life is our supreme obligation.

- **PLURAL**: A plural verb here means that God is speaking to all of us. When He says don't get drunk it is for all believers; and this imperative command is the same for the filling. So the Spirit filled walk is the high calling and spiritual duty for every one of God's children.

- **PASSIVE:** A passive verb means God is asking us to open up our lives to His filling. Passive means allow this to come into your life. “Let the Spirit fill you”, is what God is saying. This is a direct call to my unreserved yielding to God’s control.

- **PRESENT VERB:** The use of a present tense means God is offering a continuous filling. Another tense, the aorist, would mean a single action like John 2:7 when Jesus said, “Fill the water pots”. But a present imperative means that the river of God's Holy Spirit wants to start and not stop flowing into us, and overflowing out of our lives!

## SPIRIT-FILLED LIVING IS GOD’S PLAN FOR ALL OF US

That is God’s plan. That is why this may be one of the single most vital lessons in personal discipleship. Because, more than anything else, the Spirit of God can totally alter the way you live. God's Spirit can change us into brand new people!

To see how God wants to change each of us, would you open to Galatians 5 and stand with me as we read v. 19-23.

**Now the works of the flesh** are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

**But the fruit of the Spirit** is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law.

There are 17 manifestations of the flesh in verses 19-21. Of these 8 are dealing with interpersonal problems. It is not enough to say that we have always struggled in these areas. Or, to say I sinned and go on.

The Scriptures show us that a truly spiritual person will be growing in visible ways, in each of these areas that are described in v. 22-23. Staying filled with the Spirit is visible; and it shows up in the:

## THE NINE LIFE-ALTERING, PERSONALITY CHANGES THE SPIRIT OF GOD BRINGS

**Love** is the absence of selfishness. It is the product of the Holy Spirit present in our lives (Rom. 5:5). The whole law is fulfilled: by loving God and our neighbor, Jesus said. Love involves personal sacrifice for another.

**Personal checkup question:** *Do I sacrifice my way so I can follow God’s way? Do I sacrificially deny myself so God gets His way? Can others trace my progress in expressing God’s love? Do those who watch me see me as less selfish and self-seeking than I was last month, or last year?*

**Joy** is the spiritual quality that releases us from circumstances; because love and self-centeredness cannot co-exist. However, the Apostle Paul said that he was II Cor. 6:10 - sorrowful yet always full of joy.

**Personal checkup question:** *Do those that know me and watch my life see evidences throughout my daily life at work, school, and home as a more and more joyful person?*

**Peace** is the internal serenity that only God can give. Troubles are not absent. Rather, God is present! God promised to keep us in peace, if we will just cling to Him (Isaiah 26:3).

**Personal checkup question:** *Has peace through changes, upsets, unexpected twists, struggles, challenges, trails, and pains become more and more a way of life for me this year? Do people notice your growing peacefulness?*

**Longsuffering/Patience** is the absence of personal irritation at the actions of others. It is that bearing long with people that Paul spoke of in I Corinthians. Patience is also one of the Supreme attributes of God. It is His character that is revealed as being gracious and longsuffering. See Ex. 34:6; Num. 14:18; II Peter 3:9.

**Personal checkup questions:** *Ask yourself: am I more patient than I was three months ago, or less? Does patience characterize the way others would describe my: driving, explaining constant questions, directing how things need to be done, and interacting with people in general? Are you patient? If we are not increasing in patience, it is only an evidence that we are not yielding and submitting to the Holy Spirit.*

**KINDNESS** is a beautiful reflection of God in our lives. It is the absence of an abrasive manner in my dealings with people. It is a chosen reflection of Ephesians 2:8 and 4:32 in my life. "Kindness is seen as that sensitivity toward others that issues into deeds of self sacrifice and love even toward the unlovely and undeserving ones". Kindness will soften any word or act that might hurt another.

**Personal checkup questions:** *Is God changing my way of looking at people and responding towards people? Would someone following me around for a day say that my actions are showing an increasing tendency toward personal kindness with others?*

**GOODNESS** is being Godlike! It is the opposite of fallen humanity. Look at how Jesus is described in Acts 10:38, when the Holy Spirit anointed His life: He simply went about doing good.

**Personal checkup questions:** *Am I a visibly better person than last year to those that feel my life up close? Do people see me doing good, to all those around me? Do people think of the presence God when they see how I act, or do they think of the absence of God?*

**FAITHFULNESS** is the idea here. God wants to produce in us a trustworthy and dependable life. Surrendering our schedules to God makes us the kind of person that keeps their own life in order so that you can count on them. Like Psalm 15 speaks of, they make and keep their word.

**Personal checkup questions:** *Am I making strides in reliability and dependability? Is my life less and less out of control, and more and more under God's control? Am I faithful in punctuality, finances, promises, and my spiritual disciplines like prayer & the Word? Any part of my life that is out of control is reminding me that area is not under God's control.*

**GENTLENESS** is the opposite of asserting ourselves. The Lord said that the meek were the ultimate winners (Mt. 5:5). Those who are servants of the Lord must not strive to get their own way (II Timothy 2:24). Spirit-filled lives resist selfish ambition (James 3:16) because it is a reflection of Satan, not of God. Remember Jesus described Himself as 'meek and lowly' (Mt. 11:29).

**Personal checkup questions:** *Would people say that I am assertive or gentle? Do I fight for my idea, plan, agenda, and preference, or am I willing to let another express their way? What shape are my personal agenda and ambitions in: are they intact, and my rights being defended? Or is my personal, self-driven agenda in hopeless shape, crucified with Christ and fading?*

**SELF-CONTROL** is defined by the Greek Dictionary as "a virtue, which consists in mastery of the appetites and passions, especially the sensual ones." The only force that can control or flesh is the Holy Spirit. When yielded to Him we become vessels that are worshipful sacrifices to Him, and no longer to self. Self cannot control self. Flesh is not able to harness flesh. Only the Spirit can discipline us for godly living (Titus 2:11-13).

**Personal checkup question:** *Do I lead a disciplined life or an un-disciplined life? Would others think of me as graciously under the control of God's Spirit? Am I beating under and giving knockout blows to my flesh like Paul was in I Cor. 9:27? Does it seem like God is taking over more and more of my life, my attention, and my schedule?*

These nine reflections of God are produced by His Spirit in every part of our lives surrendered to Him. So, look inside, are these nine reflections of God present in your daily life? Are these manifestations of God's control growing?

## WE NEED THE SPIRIT'S POWER SO WE CAN FOLLOW GOD

Look back in Galatians 5:16. This is how the fruit of the Spirit is introduced. Note how v. 16 and v. 25 together form a frame around this section, describing the fruit of the Spirit, and the fruit of the flesh.

We are to actively follow the Lord—inviting the working of the Holy Spirit in our lives by reading the Word, praying, and obeying His will.

Galatians 5:16 I say then: **Walk...**

(present, active, imperative—lit. keep constantly walking)

We are to walk in the Spirit. And if we do that, look what verse 16 says

... and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.

Now look at verse 25—

If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.

So our body is His abiding place, we are to walk in Him.

It is my duty to say no to any thing that will shut off the valve of the Holy Spirit's working in my life.

It's my job to make sure that nothing constricts Him, so that nothing stops the flow of the Spirit in my life.

Ephesians 5:18 And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but **be filled** (**present passive imperative**) with the Spirit,

So is the unbelievable life of walking in the Spirit's power possible? Yes, for all who will surrender on a daily basis to allowing God to keep us full of His Spirit, His power, and His presence.

*Living & walking in the Spirit's fullness is attainable, and it is ours for the asking.*

The only catch is that we must prevent the valve of the Spirit's flow to not get shut off, little-by-little, by the Unforsaken sins of Ephesians 4:25-29.

There is an old hymn: All to Jesus I Surrender, that can help us invite God to change us by His Spirit, a little more every day. Please join me, and make these words a prayer of consecration to God today.

Stanza 1: All to Jesus I surrender, All to Him I freely give; I will ever love and trust Him,  
In His presence daily live.

Chorus: I surrender all, I surrender all. All to Thee, my blessed Savior, I surrender all.

Stanza 2: All to Jesus I surrender, Humbly at His feet I bow, Worldly pleasures all  
forsaken; Take me, Jesus, take me now.

Stanza 3: All to Jesus I surrender, Make me, Savior, wholly Thine; Let me feel Thy Holy  
Spirit, Truly know that Thou art mine.

Stanza 4: All to Jesus I surrender, Lord, I give myself to Thee; Fill me with Thy love and  
power, Let Thy blessing fall on me.