

CHAPTER EIGHT

HOW TO BE FILLED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT

As a new believer, you have been growing in your relationship with the Lord, getting to know the goodness of your heavenly Father and discovering that Jesus is your Friend. Are you hungry for more of God? How well do you know the Holy Spirit? Maybe you've wondered how you could get to know the Holy Spirit better. He is a very real person. Let's look at how we can be full of the Spirit.

A. WHO IS THE HOLY SPIRIT?

As we have stated previously, the Holy Spirit is the third person of the Godhead or Trinity. The Trinity is made up of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is a person, not an "it" or an impersonal "force."

Acts 5:3,4

In verse 4, with Whom does Peter equate the Holy Spirit? _____

B. WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE *FILLED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT*?

1. Understanding the two definitions

There is a difference between being born of the Spirit (the Spirit coming within our spirit) and being filled with the Holy Spirit (the Spirit coming upon our spirit). Let's look at the following examples:

a. John 3:5

Jesus said that unless a person is born of water and _____, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.

b. Acts 2:4

After the believers were _____, they began to speak in tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance.

c. John 14:17

Jesus said the Holy Spirit would dwell with us and shall be _____ us. (This happens when you are born again.)

d. Acts 1:8

Jesus also said that the Holy Spirit would come _____ us. (This happens when you are filled with the Holy Spirit.)

2. Understanding the two experiences

The Scriptures teach that there are two experiences for the believer.

- a. First and foremost is the experience of salvation, or the new birth. When a person believes in his heart and confesses with his mouth that Jesus is Lord and that God raised Him from the dead, he receives the gift of salvation or eternal life. At this point, a person is **born of** the Spirit and is made a new creation in Christ. We could say he receives the Spirit within. In other words, the Holy Spirit recreates the human spirit and dwells **within** our spirit.
- b. Second, the experience subsequent to salvation is known in the Scriptures as **being filled** with the Holy Spirit, **receiving** the Holy Spirit, or **being baptized** with the Holy Spirit. When this happens, the believer is endued with power for service. We could say the Holy Spirit comes upon our spirit and endues us with power.

3. Understanding two extreme teachings

Sometimes a new believer can become confused by the various teachings concerning the Holy Spirit. Like any spiritual matter, there can be a “ditch” on either side of the road. As a wise believer, you will want to stay out of the ditch on either side and stay safely in the middle of the road on solid biblical truth. What are the two extremes concerning the work of the Holy Spirit in the life of a believer?

- a. Extreme #1: There is no such thing as an experience subsequent to salvation called being filled, receiving, or being baptized with the Holy Spirit.
- b. Extreme #2: Unless a person is filled or baptized in the Holy Spirit subsequent to salvation, he does not have the Holy Spirit at all.

Actually, the Scriptures teach that there is an experience of being filled or baptized in the Spirit subsequent to salvation. But the Bible does not teach that unless a person is filled, or baptized, with the Holy Spirit, he or she does not have the Holy Spirit at all.

C. THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN **BORN OF** AND **FILLED WITH** THE HOLY SPIRIT

The difference between being born of the Spirit (the experience of salvation) and being filled with the Spirit (the experience of being baptized with the Spirit) is examined in the following Scriptures:

1. "Born of the Spirit" — baptized into the Body of Christ

1 Corinthians 12:13

Who is the Baptizer in this verse? _____

Who is being baptized? _____

What are we being baptized into? _____

BAPTIZED: It means "to dip into" or "to immerse."

2. "Filled with the Spirit" — baptized with the Holy Spirit

Luke 3:16 (the second half of this verse)

Who is the Baptizer in the last part of the verse? _____

Who would He baptize? _____

What are we being baptized with? _____

We can see from these Scriptures that the Holy Spirit baptizes us and places us into the Body of Christ, immediately, at the time of our salvation, or new birth. This is something that happens automatically to every believer in Jesus Christ. The Lord Jesus then baptizes us with the Holy Spirit, subsequent to our new birth. This infilling of the Spirit is available to every believer who desires more of God. Jesus, in fact, in Acts 1:4,5 commands all believers to be baptized in the Holy Ghost.

D. COMPARING THE TWO EXPERIENCES

Salvation is the baptism into the Body of Christ. The baptism in the Holy Spirit occurs when Jesus fills us with the Holy Spirit and endows us with power for service.

First we are **born** of the Spirit when we receive Jesus as Lord; then, we are to be **filled** with the Spirit after we receive salvation.

Look at the passages below and place the words "born of the Spirit" or "filled with the Spirit" in the blank space to indicate which experience is depicted in the verse. We can clearly see these two experiences in the life of Jesus and other believers in these Scriptures.

1. Jesus

Matthew 1:18-20 _____

Matthew 3:16 _____

2. Disciples

John 20:21,22 _____

Acts 1:2-5 _____

3. Samaritans

Acts 8:5,12 _____

Acts 8:14-17 _____

4. Ephesians

Acts 19:1-5 _____

Acts 19:6 _____

E. WHY SHOULD I BE FILLED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT?

As a believer, you have already been born of the Spirit and placed into the Body of Christ. Why would you want the additional experience of being filled with the Holy Spirit?

1. God has commanded us

Ephesians 5:18

What are God's two words concerning the Holy Spirit? _____

This Scripture denotes the idea of continually being filled with the Spirit, to "be being filled." To stay full of the Spirit one would have to receive an *initial infilling*, and thereafter we are commanded to continue to be full of the Spirit.

2. We need power

Acts 1:8

What is the purpose for being filled with the Spirit? _____

F. HOW CAN A PERSON BE FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT?

1. First, be sure that you are born again.

If you are a believer, the Holy Spirit has already been at work in your life helping you receive Jesus as your Lord. Now you are ready to receive the Holy Spirit in His fullness.

Acts 2:38

What happens after you repent and are baptized into the Body of Christ? _____

2. Second, simply ask and receive the Holy Spirit by faith.

Luke 11:9-13

What do verses 9 and 10 say will happen if you ask? _____

What does verse 13 say we can ask the Father for? _____

According to verses 11 and 12, if we ask the Father for one thing, will He give us something different? _____

If we ask for the Holy Spirit, what will we receive?

_____ a demon spirit

_____ an embarrassing gift

_____ a weird or spooky gift

_____ the Holy Spirit

God gave the Holy Spirit to all of mankind on the Day of Pentecost. When you ask the Father to fill you with the Holy Spirit, you are simply saying you want to receive what He has already given to mankind nearly 2,000 years ago.

3. Third, begin to yield to the Holy Spirit. (This will be discussed more fully in chapter 9.)

G. PERSONAL APPLICATION

1. Are you thirsty?

Jesus has made a river of living water available to every believer. (John 7:37-39.)

2. Are you ready to receive?

Take a moment to ask the Father in Jesus' name to fill you with the Holy Spirit. You may

want to pray a prayer like this — pray it from your heart.

Dear Father God, I ask You in Jesus' name to fill me with the Holy Spirit so that I may receive the fullness of Your Spirit. Lord, I want to have power to be a witness for You. I want to be able to praise You from my innermost being, and I want to speak Your Word boldly. Jesus, I believe You are the Baptizer, so I ask You to baptize me in the Spirit now. I believe I receive the Holy Spirit now. Thank You, Lord.

3. What should I expect?

Once you have asked God to fill you with the Spirit, believe that He has done it, just as He promised. You may sense the Spirit coming upon you. You may begin to feel as if a river were bubbling up inside of you. You may feel as if you want to speak words you have never heard before. This is a manifestation of the Holy Spirit and is the evidence of the Holy Spirit's indwelling presence. Don't quench this supernatural utterance, but rather, yield to it and let this utterance of the Holy Spirit flow from your mouth. You are speaking praises to God in other tongues.

As you yield to the Spirit and begin to move your mouth and to use your vocal chords, allow yourself to flow in this spiritual language as the rivers of living water come up from your innermost being. You may sense the desire to speak a fluent language, or just one or two words that are foreign to you. Speak them out in faith and let the river begin to flow. As you quiet your mind and allow your spirit to release itself, you will begin to magnify God in tongues you have never learned.

What if you don't "feel" anything? What if you don't "feel" a river bubbling up on the inside of you? Remember, feelings have nothing to do with Bible facts. If you have asked God to baptize you in the Spirit, then believe He has done just exactly that. Expect the evidence of speaking in tongues as the Scriptures teach, and you will sense that river bubbling up inside of you. Simply yield to the Spirit, and you will begin to speak in other tongues. As you worship God, your English vocabulary will be inadequate, and you will find yourself speaking words you have never learned.

We receive the Spirit by *faith*. We speak in other tongues as we *yield* to the Holy Spirit.

In the next chapter, we will study the scriptural purpose for speaking in tongues.

H. GROUP EXERCISE

As a group, you can take this opportunity to pray for one another to be filled with the Spirit. First, spend time worshipping God together. Then the group leader can pray and lay hands on those who desire to be filled with the Spirit.

As a group, maintain an expectant and reverent attitude toward the Lord. As you focus on Him, you may begin to sing aloud as a group, in English and in other tongues, as each one

is filled with the Spirit.

It is important that no one feel any pressure or any embarrassment, but that the love and presence of God are allowed to permeate your time together.

Because this is such an important time in the life of every believer, this time should not be rushed. Take time to worship God the Father, Jesus, the Son and the Holy Spirit from your heart of hearts.