

## Tuesday's Touch #51

...from Pastor Ed ...January 12, 2010

### *Be Filled with the Spirit*

*Be not drunk with wine wherein is excess, but be filled with the Spirit... Ephesians 5:18*

*Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly... Colossians 3:16*

*As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him, rooted and built up in Him and established in the faith, as you have been taught, abounding in it... Colos 2:6-7*

**G**od is omnipresent. There is nowhere that he is not. David said that whether he fled to most distant realms or be he in heaven or hell, God was there (*Psalm 139:6-9*). Paul says that in Him we live and move and have our being (*Acts 17:28*). By him all things consist (*Colos 1:17*). That is, God (Christ) is at the ground and substance of all things. He is transcendent – above and beyond all things. Infinite!

The scriptures also clearly reveal that the “natural” man, fallen in sin, is *separated* from God, alienated, at enmity with God and under his abiding wrath (*Isaiah 59:2; Colos 1:21; Eph 2:3;12; John 3:36*). He cannot receive the things of God’s Spirit, they are foolishness to him (*1Corinth 2:14*). He can’t even see the kingdom of God (*John 3:3*). He simply can not know God (*Matt 11:27*). It is one of the myriad of paradoxes of truth: no one can be apart from God, yet all men in their sin are separated from God. Like a drop of oil in a bucket of water, sinners are in God, yet separate. As we live and move and have our being in God, sin has placed a dark bubble around us insulating us from his Spirit’s presence and life.

This separation Jesus came to abolish. In dealing with man’s sin through his perfect life, dying in the sinner’s place, receiving the wrath due him, and conquering death and the grave, Jesus burst that dark bubble for all would believe and trust in him. And, as that bubble bursts, God’s Spirit comes rushing in upon us, immersing (baptizing) us into Himself. Jesus has baptized the believer with (into) the Spirit, and God permeates his life and being, so that Father, Son and Holy Spirit are in (indwelling) him. We are in Him, and He is in us (*1John 4:15-16; John 17:21*). Complete in Christ (*Colos 2:9-10*), with no condemnation (*John 5:24 ; Rom 8:1*), and no separation (*Rom 8:35-39*), the believer is one with God forever.

Now, it is important to remember that we still have this treasure in earthen vessels (*2Corinth 4:7*). We are forgiven, permeated by God, one with Him, yet the redemption of our flesh, our bodies, is not yet a reality. Our flesh is not yet glorified – fully integrated into God, so that we groan within ourselves, waiting for the redemption of our bodies (*Rom 8:23*). The flesh still wars against the Spirit (*Gal 5:17*) and is contrary to our new “immersion” in God. Therefore, we must be exhorted continually to walk in the Spirit (*Gal 5:16*), and be filled with the Spirit. But what does that really mean?

First, the indwelling of the Spirit (indeed, Christ in us) is not to be thought of as this separate Entity inhabiting our bodies. Nor should we think in terms of having more or less of God “in us.” God is not, and cannot, be divided. He does not come on the installment plan! Either Christ has “burst” our sinful bubble and immersed us in God, or he hasn’t. Either we are complete in Him or we are still at enmity with Him, separated from the life that is in Him (*Eph 4:18*).

Consider for a moment your car’s need for gasoline (at least most cars at present). It won’t run without it. You can push it, tow it, or roll it down a hill, but it will not move on it’s own without gas. And if I put contaminated gas into the car, it will run very poorly if at all. Now suppose I fill a gas can with five gallons of the best grade available. I then set the can of gasoline in the back seat of my car. Now, the car has gas in it, but it won’t do any good at all. I have the gas, I put gas is into the car, but it is still a separate entity “inside” the car. You see, I must pour the gas into the car’s operating system

which was designed specifically to run on gasoline. As the gas *integrates* into the system – the pump, filter, injectors, combustion chambers, etc. - it then produces power that drives the pistons, crankshaft, transmission, and wheels.

As human beings we were designed specifically in God’s image. Our “system” will only run properly when fully integrated with God’s Spirit. As long as we think of His Spirit as a separate entity inside us, like the gas can in the back seat, we will be apt to be *waiting* and praying for *Him* to do something. We will expect Him to give us a great feeling, or show us a sign. We pray, “Lord, fill with me your Holy Spirit”, never considering that being filled with Him is a command, not something we are to hope, wish, and pray for.

In comparing Ephesians 5:18-19 with Colossians 3:16, we see how closely the Holy Spirit is identified with His word. Being filled with the word of Christ is described in the same way as being filled with the Holy Spirit. *I will pour out my spirit unto you, I will make known my words unto you (Prov 1:23)*. Jesus said, “it is the Spirit that quickens (makes alive); the flesh profits nothing: **the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life** (*John 6:63*). By the *word written upon our hearts by the Spirit (2Corinth 3:3)*, and illuminated and confirmed by *the Spirit through the words of the prophets* (the Bible), we are led into all truth (*John 14:26; 16:13; 1 John 2:27*). We must be injecting these spiritual realities and truths of God and His kingdom into *all* of our thinking (*Rom 12:2*), *all* of our affections and desires (*Colos 3:1-2; Heb 11:15-16*), and *all* of our relationships (*John 13:35; 1 Pet 1:22; Eph 4:32*). We must be integrating the living reality of Christ “in us” into every aspect of our lives. This *is* being filled with the Spirit.

While it is right to long and pray for special outpourings of the Spirit in personal and corporate revival and renewal, as well as for powerful manifestations of His Spirit among us, these are conditionally dependent upon God’s sovereign purposes “as He wills” (*1Corinth 12:11*). But, for each believer, being personally filled with the Spirit is an abiding responsibility, privilege, and labor of love.

It’s not how much he has of me,  
Nor how much I of Him;  
It’s all about how much I shine  
The the truth He writes within.

Blessed Spirit of the Living God,,

As we are immersed in You and You in us, let us also walk in you. Fill our lives with Truth.

Amen.

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