

# How to Be Filled with the Holy Spirit and Live with Power Every Day

## Rivers of Living Water

Take your Bibles and turn to John chapter 7. Begin at verse 37: "On the last and greatest day of the feast, Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, 'Let anyone who is thirsty come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as Scripture has said, rivers of living water will flow from within them.' By this he meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were later to receive."

Usually I preach a Mother's Day message, but this morning I felt like I needed to preach a little P.S. to last week's message on being filled with the Holy Spirit. I wanted to hit that one more time.

There's a story about some sailors whose water supply ran out near the coast of South America. Another boat came alongside and they cried, "We need water!" But the crew on that boat pointed to the water below. What they didn't know is they were floating in the outpouring of the mighty Amazon River—fresh water miles into the sea. They were surrounded by what they needed and didn't know it.

That's how some Christians are. Surrounded by fountains of living water—but still thirsty. Maybe they're praying for something God has already made available since they came to Christ.

Jesus didn't speak of drops, of drizzle, or mist. He said *rivers*. Rivers like the Mississippi or the Nile that keep rolling and never dry up. Rivers illustrate the life of a Spirit-filled believer. Jesus was talking about a supply that is impossible to exhaust because it comes from the Holy Spirit Himself.

And that's good news. There's an ample supply for all of God's kids.

Ephesians 5:18 says to "be filled" with the Holy Spirit. The Greek suggests a continual action: *be being filled*. It's not a one-time experience. I mean, praise

God for that youth convention in 9th grade, but we need more. We leak. And if we're not being filled up, we dry up.

But even that's hopeful—because dry sticks make good kindling. So if you're dried up, ask God to send the fire. Let Him fill you again. That fire brings enthusiasm and life.

## Stir It Up: Set Yourself on Fire

When you're filled with the Spirit, something changes. I always get a song stuck in my head while preparing sermons. This week, it was "Ol' Man River." Because rivers just keep rolling along. That's how it should be with the Spirit in our lives. There should be flow. Movement. Life.

One thing I've noticed: when you set yourself on fire, people notice.

I know this from backyard BBQs. I love playing with lighter fluid. Sometimes I put a little too much on and when I light it—*whoosh!* People notice. The same is true spiritually. When God sets you on fire, you get lively.

Even Richard Pryor, the comedian, said when he accidentally set himself on fire, people *definitely* noticed.

We need some spiritual fire. Enthusiasm. Motion. That passion comes when you stir up the gift within you. Paul told Timothy to do that. We can't let the Spirit settle like sugar at the bottom of a glass of tea.

We say we want the Holy Spirit, but we don't want Him to influence us. We like knowing He's in the glass. We just don't want Him to flavor the tea.

Stir it up. God gives you the spoon. He's placed His Spirit within you. Now it's up to you to stir that up, activate it, and let His sweetness be seen in your life.

When you do, it'll change how you live. It's like a Teflon coating. Under the Spirit's influence, not everything sticks. People can throw words, attitudes, insults at you, but they don't stick the same way.

You can live under the influence of the Holy Spirit. And hear me—when you do, you are never more in control.

So stir it up. Be on fire. Let God take control.

## Broken Cisterns and Empty Tanks

Sometimes we don't experience the Spirit because we don't want it—or we won't meet the conditions to receive it. Jeremiah 2:13 says, "My people have committed two evils: They have forsaken me, the fountain of living water, and have dug their own cisterns—broken cisterns that cannot hold water."

God says, why would you reject the real and try to manufacture something artificial?

Vance Havner put it this way: "We say we depend on God, but we're so wired up with our own devices that if the fire doesn't fall, we flip a switch and make our own." God save us from a synthetic Pentecost.

When we serve God without relying on Him, we run on fumes. You know what it feels like to run your car below E, hoping you make it to a gas station. Spiritually, we do the same thing.

My dad used to say, "Never let the gas tank go below half." That's good advice. How's your spiritual tank today? Half full? Empty? If we're going on a journey with God, we need to fill the tank.

The modern church has more education, more organization, more technology than ever. But somewhere along the way, I think we left God behind.

Even Mary and Joseph did that. They loved Jesus more than anyone, yet went a day's journey without Him. Don't let that be you. Stay close. Stay current. Don't do for God without God.

You need His presence every day. Don't wait for tomorrow. Take Him with you. Let Him guide your day.

## The Real Power Behind Our Mission

Jesus didn't leave His disciples with a strategy. He left them with a *promise*. He said, "Wait in Jerusalem for the Holy Spirit."

He promised them a *person* who would walk with them like Jesus did. A comforter. A counselor. A power source.

The Holy Spirit is the chief administrator of the church. And when we let Him direct our lives, our ministries, our churches—that's when we become truly dynamic.

That's the power that enables you to do the miraculous. To be used by God. Not under the spotlight, but in the day-to-day. In the diner. On the sidewalk. Holding the door.

If we let the Spirit guide us, He might whisper, "Hey, go back and pray for that person." Or, "They need a smile today." Or, "Speak this word of encouragement."

Being filled with the Spirit is the key to being led by the Spirit. And that's the key to a Christian life that glorifies Jesus.

That's the Spirit's job—to spotlight Christ. If He's filling you, people will see more of Him and less of you. Is Christ more evident in your life today than He was last week?

That's why we need to be filled. Not just to speak in tongues. That's part of the package, sure. But the purpose is to live a life that glorifies God.

Through the Spirit, we find power to live, to serve, to love.

So ask. Believe. Come. That's the ABCs of being filled.

Ask—based on your relationship with God.

Believe—based on the promises in Scripture.

Come—because you're thirsty for more.

Jesus has more for you. The life He promised is abundant—not dry, not stale, but full. And the only way to live it is to stay close to the bucket.