

Be Filled • Ephesians 5:18

I. INTRODUCTION

A. *Saying Goodbye*

1. Many of you have met Slava, the young man who pastor's the Calvary Chapel in Vladivostok, Russia
2. We brought him over last year so he could attend the annual Pastor's Conference
3. Slava & I have become very close - he is like a brother to me
4. So it is always with deep regret when we have to part
5. On my last trip to Russia a couple years ago, when it was time to return home, we drove to the airport, and said our good-byes
 - a. then I grabbed my bag and set it on the metal detector
 - b. I handed the person at the gate my passport and declaration form
 - c. and once they were stamped, I turned for one last glance at Slava
 - d. he stood there by himself with a look on his face that said both goodbye, & please don't go
 - e. I had to simply wave, smile, and turn away
6. I always look forward to returning home from Russia
 - a. the prosperity and abundance we have here are simply unparalleled
 - b. but it is very hard to leave the friends behind
 - c. and I always say, that Lord willing, I will return as soon as I can
7. It is specially hard leaving Slava, because he is more than a friend - he is a brother
8. The bond between us is strong
9. You see, Slava was an orphan; he was raised on the streets of Vladivostok, literally
 - a. he is a child of the State
 - b. and has never had a family
 - c. one of his greatest desires is for friends who will not leave, but who will stay

B. *The Promise*

1. I want to read from John 14 as we begin today . . .

{1} "Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me.

{2} "In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.

{3} "And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also.

{16} "And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever;

{17} "the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you.

{18} "I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you.

2. Jesus spoke these words at that last meal they shared, the last supper
3. For weeks He had been telling the disciples that they were going to Jerusalem where He would be betrayed and handed over to His enemies who would then put Him to death

4. And while they had been a bit slow catching on, by this time they were expressing their deep disappointment at His departure
5. So He tells them that though He is going away - He will come again
6. And in the meantime, He will not leave them alone; He will come to them in another manner than the one they had been accustomed to for the last three years
7. He will not leave them like orphans - He will send the Holy Spirit who will take up residence inside them and make them conscious of the fact that Jesus lives and is present in their lives

C. Relationship

1. It is right at this point that we see one of the fundamental differences between Christianity and other religions
2. Christianity is Relationship: Between God and Man
 - a. it's not about rules and regulations
 - b. it's not about adopting some philosophy
 - c. or merely practicing a religious ritual
 - d. it's all about *relationship*
 - e. about God as Father, and we His children
3. And He has not left us as orphans - He sends His Spirit to live inside us, to make this special relationship in "here" as opposed to out "there"
4. This indwelling presence of the Spirit isn't just semantics - it's real, and it brings a power to our lives that make all the difference
5. This is what Paul is referring to in Ephesians 5:18 . . .

II. TEXT

A. V. 18

{18} And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit,

1. Remember the context in which Paul writes this -
2. Beginning with Chapter 4, he tells the Ephesians how they are to *walk*, meaning their lifestyle
 - a. he tells them to have a walk *worthy* of their calling as believers
 - b. then he tells them to walk in *unity*
 - c. they are to walk in *maturity*
 - d. two weeks ago we saw they are to walk in *newness*
 - e. last Sunday we saw that they are to walk in *love*
 - f. in v. 15, he tells them to walk *wisely*
 - g. and here he tells them to walk in the *Spirit*
3. But it's interesting the way he phrases it
4. He contrasts being filled with the Spirit with being filled with wine
5. He says, "Don't be drunk with wine, which is destructive; but rather, be filled with the Spirit."
6. The reason Paul contrasts drunkenness with the filling of the Spirit is because drunkenness is really only the devil's *counterfeit* for the Holy Spirit
 - a. in Acts 2, on the day of Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit came upon the first disciples, the onlookers who gather to see what was going on said that it looked and sounded like they disciples were drunk

- b. Peter corrected them and showed from the scriptures how this empowering and outflow of the Holy Spirit had been foretold by the OT prophets
- 7. It seems that whatever God does, the devil tries to counterfeit
 - a. wanting to *be* God, Satan mocks God by providing his own so-called “blessings”
 - b. he invents his own brands of *religion*
 - c. he counterfeits the joy and blessing of marital love by filling the world with perversion
 - d. he manufactures a host of sensual and earthly pleasures that seek only to distract people from God
 - e. and drunkenness is merely the devil’s counterfeit to being filled with the Holy Spirit
- 8. People drink to get drunk for many reasons
 - a. but typically, they want to escape from their life as it is
 - b. there is something too painful to bear, so they seek relief in a state of mental distraction
 - c. it might be some situation that they cannot cope with, a relationship that is broken
 - d. or it might simply be the pain of *boredom* that drives them to drink
- 9. God's solution for all these pains is healing through the truth and grace the Holy Spirit brings
- 10. But Satan offers a counterfeit that many are deceived by
- 11. The problem is, drunkenness doesn't solve anything, it only adds to the problems
- 12. That is why Paul says drunkenness leads to destruction
- 13. There are some in this room this morning who know the truth of that first-hand
- 14. So rather than seeking the effect of alcoholic *spirits* in a cup - we're to allow the Holy Spirit to fill us!
- 15. The verb tense Paul uses with the word “**filled**,” is very important
 - a. it's in the *present* tense
 - b. so that we should translate this as, "Be constantly *being* filled"
 - c. it pictures someone under a waterfall

B. The Filling of the Holy Spirit

- 1. The words Paul uses here are also found in the book of Acts for that experience with the Holy Spirit that is various called, the *baptism* of the Holy Spirit, the *filling* of the Holy Spirit, and the Holy Spirit *coming upon* someone
- 2. Many Christians are under the impression that the *baptism of the Holy Spirit* is a one time event that brings them into an enlightened place of spiritual awareness
- 3. But Paul speaks of our need to be *constantly filled* with the Spirit; and he makes our abiding experience of anointing the *norm* for Christian living
- 4. He tells us to *stay* under the spout where the glory comes out!
- 5. And while there are some bible teachers today who are saying that you get all of the Holy Spirit you're going to get at the moment of your conversion, what they are saying simply doesn't square with either scripture, or the testimony of millions of Christians
- 6. Paul was writing this TO BELIEVERS
 - a. this wasn't something he was penning to unbelievers - this was written to Christians
 - b. to those who had *already been born again* he says, "Be filled with the Spirit."
- 7. In fact, in Paul's initial encounter with the Ephesians, recounted in Acts 19, he recognized that while they were indeed Christians, there was an important power

- and dynamic missing from their lives
- a. so he asked if they had received the Holy Spirit *since* they had come to faith
 - b. their answer was that they hadn't ever heard of the Holy Spirit
 - c. So Paul explained, prayed for them, and they were baptized with the Holy Spirit
8. But now here he is, writing from Rome years later, and he is still telling them the importance of *staying in tune* with the Spirit
 9. They must be filled, again and again
 10. Each new day brings new challenges that we will meet with either our own strength, or with the power of the Holy Spirit
 11. The key is to be filled with the Spirit

C. Controlled

1. When we read "Be filled with the Spirit" we might think of an empty vessel that is filled up
2. But that isn't really the picture here
 - a. we aren't empty shells that get filled up with some kind of spiritual energy or force
 - b. "to be filled" means to be controlled by - or to be under the influence of
 - c. for instance, when we say someone is "filled with anger," we mean they are being *controlled* by anger
 - d. if they are "filled with envy," it means envy is *influencing* them
3. This is what it means to be "filled with the Spirit"
 - a. it means to be *controlled* by the Spirit
 - b. to be under the Spirit's *influence*
4. When we are filled with the Holy Spirit, there is a *noticeable* difference in our lives
5. When we are filled with the Holy Spirit, we are *energized* by Him; and the result is that we *think, desire* and *do* what the Spirit wills for us
6. Some people today are being told that when they are filled with the Spirit they will lose control of themselves and start doing things that are strange
 - a. like laughing uncontrollably
 - b. or thrashing about on the carpet
7. But Gal. 5 says that the fruit of the Spirit is self-control
8. The person who is full of wine loses control and becomes a fool - but the person filled with the Spirit gains even more control and lives wisely
9. Any experience that robs people of their God-given intelligence and self-control is not from the Holy Spirit
10. But we must not allow the excesses and counterfeits of some people to rob us of the real blessings that the Spirit alone can confer on all who will yield to Him.

D. The Result

1. How can we know that we are indeed under the control and influence of the Holy Spirit?
2. The evidence of the filling of the Spirit is pretty obvious
3. Remember, He is called the *HOLY* Spirit
 - a. if He is filling us - then holiness will surely be the result
 - b. anyone who claims to be spiritual but who lacks growth in holiness is fooling no one but themselves
 - c. in fact, being filled with the Spirit is the best and surest way to gain victory over those sins that seem to keep stumbling us

- d. [glass with water]
- 4. He is also called the Spirit of *Truth*
 - a. so to be filled with the Spirit means to *depart* from all deception
 - b. instead, there will be a growing hunger and passion for the Word of God
- 5. In Acts 1:8, Jesus said that when the Holy Spirit came upon the disciples, they would be given power to be witnesses of Him
 - a. so another evidence of the filling of the Holy Spirit is that a person becomes more and more like Jesus
 - b. there is a new power to live the life He makes possible through His resurrection

III. CONCLUSION

A. *The Verse Again*

1. Let's read the verse again; but this time let's start at v. 15 . . .

{15} See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise,

{16} redeeming the time, because the days are evil.

{17} Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is.

{18} Do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit.

2. Just as in Paul's day, the days in which we live are evil
3. Not only are they evil, they are confusing
4. We face a bewildering array of choices - and it isn't always an easy thing to know what we should do
5. But Paul says that we are to walk wisely, not carelessly
6. We're to chart our course and hold to it
7. And we mustn't be uncertain as to the Lord's will for our lives
8. So - what is that will? What course should we lay in?
9. Be filled with the Spirit!
10. Stay under the spout where the glory comes out
11. Don't live your spiritual life like a car on an empty tank of gas
12. Every day, every moment - abide in that place where the Holy Spirit is controlling and directing you

B. *Be Filled*

1. How do you do that?
2. One last thing you need to know
3. Earlier I said the verb tense was in the present tense - "Be being filled"
4. It's also in the *passive* voice, which means it isn't something that you *do*
5. It's something that is done to you - you just receive it
6. Sometimes faith means taking a step - other times it means staying right where you are and just simply opening up
7. That is how we are filled with the Holy Spirit - we simply realize that it ***IS*** God's will to fill us
8. And He is ready to do it right now
9. We just open up to Him and receive.