

Fruit of the Spirit – Part 6

Galatians 5:22-23 says, *22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, 23 Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.* In our study, we've been going through the fruit of the Spirit. We've been studying that subject, and I remind you that the fruit of the Spirit is not the same as the gifts of the Spirit. Today I want to look into the subject of being filled with the Holy Spirit.

In Ephesians 5:18 we find the important command to be filled with the Spirit, and the results of being filled with the Spirit are seen in the following verses in the book of Ephesians. If a believer is really filled with the Spirit, then what should be true of His life? How will the fullness of the Spirit be evidenced?

Ephesians 5:18 says, *And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit.* Ephesians 5:19 goes on to say, *Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord.* That's the answer to 5:18; it tells us what is to take place when we're filled with the Spirit.

Notice what it does not say. "Be filled with the Spirit, speaking to yourselves in tongues or in strange, ecstatic utterances." Those of the Charismatic persuasion teach that speaking in tongues is the evidence of the filling of the Spirit and that, if you have not spoken in tongues, well, then, this indicates that you have not been filled with the Spirit. This, of course, is not what the Bible teaches in Ephesians 5:19.

Well, what does it teach? What does Ephesians 5:19 teach? When God is in control,

He gives a song in the heart, and the Spirit-filled believer is a joyful believer. The Holy Spirit is the master musician who creates beautiful melody in the heart of the trusting believer. It does not matter if you can carry a tune or not. There are believers who cannot carry a tune, but they are able to make melody in their hearts to the Lord.

The fruit of the Spirit is joy, and the Spirit-filled believer is able to sing and to rejoice in the Lord always, even when passing through deep trials. God gives songs in the night. And I said the fruit of the Spirit is joy. Once again, we look at all those things that make up the cluster and we see that joy is part of those nine virtues found in the cluster, the fruit of the Spirit.

Notice with me Ephesians 5:20. It says, *Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.* The Spirit-filled believer is a thankful believer. If you are unthankful, then you are unfilled. How thankful we can be that God is at the helm and guiding the ship of our life, and how thankful we can be that He is in control of everything that comes into our lives and is able to work all things together for our good.

I believe that, as we look on, Ephesians 5:21 and the verses that follow tell us that God is looking for the submissive heart. Every heart is to be submissive to Him, to God. Wives are to be submissive to their husbands. Children are to be submissive and obedient to their parents. The employee is to be submissive to his boss.

To find the submissive, Spirit-filled believer, where should we look? Certainly not at church on Sunday morning although you can find

them there, but not in church on Sunday morning when everyone tries to be on their best behavior. Not during a prayer and praise session when everyone seems to be on a spiritual high. I believe the best place to look is right where the believer lives during the week.

For example, how does the believing employee react when the boss is having a bad day? Or when the husband comes home from work after a long and hard day and interacts with his wife and children? Do we see him under the influence or control of the Holy Spirit at that time? How does the wife do after she has had a challenging day with the children, when she is totally worn out, and then on top of that, her husband comes home in a grumpy mood and complains about the supper? Is she longsuffering? Once again, this is part of the cluster of the fruit of the Spirit. Is she longsuffering? Or does she explode like a volcano?

So, the place to see the filling of the Spirit is right in the home, right in the workplace, right where the rubber meets the road; in other words, everyday life.

We also see something else that takes place when a person is filled with the Spirit. It gives us the boldness to speak the Word. This is another evidence of the filling of the Spirit. Acts 1:8 says, *But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.*

A witness is like an arrow. An arrow does not want to be seen. It really wants to point to some other object, and the arrow says, "Don't look at me; look at what I'm pointing to." And the Holy Spirit gives the believer power to be a witness, His witness to point to Christ by life and by lip.

In Acts 4:31, it says they were all filled with the Spirit, and what was the result? The Bible tells us they spoke the Word of God with boldness. They were bold witnesses for Christ. They were not afraid to speak of Him and share the good news with others. And remember, their boldness was very costly. They could easily have ended up in jail for speaking the Gospel boldly, and in fact, these believers had just been in jail because of their fearless preaching, and in chapter 5, they were going to end up in jail again.

Then we look in Acts 4:8-12. Peter's bold message can be paraphrased like this: "You crucified Him. You rejected God's Son. You murdered the only Savior." In the early church the filling of the Spirit resulted in very bold and fearless preaching as Peter did in Acts 4:8-12.

Then we look at Acts 13:9-10. Paul had boldness to confront the enemies of the Gospel. There it says, ⁹*Then Saul, (who also is called Paul,) filled with the Holy Ghost, set his eyes on him, ¹⁰And said, O full of all subtilty and all mischief, thou child of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord?* Paul spoke boldly.

In Acts 7:55, Stephen had boldness in the midst of persecution and steadfastness even when being put to death by stoning.

What about faith? In Acts 11:24, Barnabas was full of the Holy Ghost and faith. The fullness of the Spirit and faith go together. When God is in control, the heart of the believer is trusting and resting in a great God. The Spirit-filled believer is known by his faith. The fleshly believer is known by His unbelief and his failure to trust God. The Spirit-filled believer is protected by the shield of faith and by the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God.

Notice with me also there is the ministry of the Holy Spirit. Jesus said this of the Holy Spirit: *He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you;* John 16:14 says that.

And so we see the main ministry of God, the Holy Spirit, is to glorify the Son, to lift up the Son of God, and when the Spirit of God is at work in my life, what would be the result? The Lord Jesus Christ will become more precious to me and so will His Word, the Bible. The Spirit-filled person is the person who is filled with Christ and, as we look, filled with Christ and occupied with Him, delighting in Him, rejoicing in Him, resting in Him, trusting in Him. A Christ-centered person is a Spirit-filled person; a self-centered person is a person who is walking in the flesh. The flesh wants to glorify self. The Spirit wants to glorify Christ.

Romans 14:17 says, *For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.* We must never lose sight of what is essential and what is not really important. We need to understand this. If a believer does not eat a hamburger out of love for a fellow believer he has not lost or sacrificed anything essential. Whether or not you eat a hamburger is not important; however, if you are missing God's joy or God's peace, then this is a great concern to the person who is commanded to be constantly filled with the Spirit.

If you look in Ephesians 5:18 once again, it says, *And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit.* This is a command of God.

We look on to the kingdom of God, and in a general sense, this is wherever God reigns. In the future God will actually reign on this Earth at that time. Righteousness will be a reality in

the world, according to Jeremiah 33:15. Peace will be a reality in the world, according to Isaiah 9:6-7. Joy will be a reality in the world, according to Isaiah 65:18-19.

The hymn, "Joy to the World, the Lord is Come," is really a hymn describing the Second Coming of Christ. Also Matthew 25:21-23 addresses those about to enter the kingdom with these words: *Enter into the joy of the Lord.*

Today, where does God rule? He rules in the hearts of believers. Christ came the first time to set things right in the hearts of men. Christ will come the second time to set things right in the world. Today, righteousness and peace and joy are not realities in our world, but they can be realities in our personal lives by way of the fruit of the Spirit... love, joy, peace, and so forth.

Righteousness is the fruit of the Spirit, according to Ephesians 5:9. Philippians 1:11 says, *Being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God.* The fruits of righteousness are the evidences of the fruit of the Holy Spirit.

William Newell said, "Oh, for the days when righteousness and love shall reign on this earth, but it will not be till the Righteous One shall come back to judge iniquity and establish equity. Do not fancy otherwise, but read Scriptures about it. Only remember that the Holy Spirit is in you, believer, and He will bring forth kingdom things, even now, in you."

Do you know Him today as your Savior? Let Him come into your heart. Receive Him right now. If you do know Him, you need to be living for Him and let the Holy Spirit lead and guide and direct your life. May the Lord bless you is my prayer.

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