“Filled With The Spirit”

January 3, 2016

John 14:20-27

Many of the great hymns of the Christian faith are hymns about the Holy Spirit. But there’s one that has been a great help to me personally. It’s # 389 in your hymnal “Spirit of the Living God,” written in 1926 by a Pastor Daniel Iverson during an Evangelistic Campaign in Orlando, FL. He and others had just listened to a message from a medical Doctor who spoke on the topic of the Holy Spirit. Pastor Iverson is credited with starting seven Churches and seeing 150 men and women enter the ministry. He went home that evening and penned these words.

1. Spirit of the Living God, descend upon my heart,

Wean it from earth, through all its pulses move;

Stoop to my weakness, mighty as Thou art,

And make me love Thee as I ought to love.

1. Has Thou not bid us love Thee, God and King?

All, all Thine own – soul, heart, and strength, and mind!

I see Thy Cross – there teach my heart to cling;

O let me seek Thee, and O let me find!

1. Teach me to feel that Thou art always nigh;

Teach me the struggles of the soul to bear,

To check the rising doubt, the rebel sigh;

Teach me the patience of unanswered prayer.

1. Teach me to love Thee as Thine angels love,

One holy passion filling all my frame;

The baptism of the heav’n-descended Dove –

My heart an altar; and Thy love the flame.

The hymn is based upon a passage from the Book of Ephesians. Ephesians 3:19 *“And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God.”*

I had heard about the filling of the Spirit as a young Christian. But I’d also heard about Churches that taught that you should expect some very wild and strange things to happen to you when you were filled with the Spirit. That wasn’t happening to me. So, initially, I thought there was something wrong with me. But the more I searched the Scripture, the more I realized that strange things are just that; “strange things.” And that the norm for the Christian life is to know and enjoy the LORD and there is no command nor any reasons to search for these wild and strange experiences.

I also began to realize that the filling of the spirit is not confined to the inside of a Church building. Instead, His filling is to enable me to live my daily Christian life.

“Spirit of the Living God” brought me to the place where I realized that what I really wanted was to have a much closer walk with the LORD. And that the One Who would enable me to experience this was the Holy Spirit. I found that when He has full control over my life, then I am filled with His Spirit.

So, for today, and for the beginning of this New Year, I’ve titled today’s sermon “Filled With The Spirit.” Shall we pray?

Please open your Bible with me as we begin to the Gospel of John at chapter three. John 3:1 *“There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews: (2) The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him.*

*(3) Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. (4) Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born?*

*(5) Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. (6) That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. (7) Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.”*

The only way to rightly consider the matter of the filling of the Spirit is to ask this question. What does the Scripture teach about it?

First, your salvation is the work of the Spirit in converting you from spiritual darkness to spiritual light. The Spirit is the One Who enables you to be “born again.”

It’s not a natural thing to become a Believer in Christ. It’s not a natural thing to become a Christian. The natural thing is to be born, to live on this earth and to die. Instead, it’s a super-natural thing. And in order for you to enter into the Kingdom of God, you simply must be born again. And every person who is born again is quote “born of the Spirit.”

The Holy Spirit is the Who convicts you of sin and righteousness and the judgment to come. He brings you to repentance. And He, somehow, somewhat mysteriously moves upon your heart so that you are born again.

Jesus even says this in verse eight. John 3:8 *“The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.”*

He, the Spirit of God, is a lot like the wind, which appears to move as it pleases. He moves as He pleases. You hear the sound of the wind. You know it’s at work. But, you simply can’t tell where the wind comes form. You also know He’s at work. Yet you cannot comprehend how it is that the Holy Spirt enables you to be born again.

Those of you who have been born again can attest to this fact. You *know* you are born again. You *know* you’ve been born of the Sprit. You *know* you are a child of the Kingdom. Yet, you aren’t able to fully comprehend it.

And yet, it’s all *His* work. At the moment of your salvation, you looked Christ. You trusted in the blood of Christ. You looked to the Cross. You accepted the truths of God’s Word. And, lo and behold, the Spirit gave you new life.

Turn with me to I Peter chapter one. Here’s how Peter explains it. I Peter 1:20 *“Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you, (21)* *Who by him do believe in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God.*

*(22) Seeing ye have purified your souls in* ***obeying the truth through the Spirit*** *unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently: (23) Being [having been] born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever.”*

First, your salvation is the work of the Spirit.

Practically speaking, your heart’s been changed. And it’s being changed more and more as the days go by. You are a new creation. So, the first work of the Spirit upon you is to bring you new life; spiritual life.

Second, the indwelling of the Spirit. He comes to live in you. This is the effect of being saved. At the moment you were saved, the Holy Spirit came to live within your spirit and your body became His temple. Here’s what the Bible teaches on this matter. I Corinthians 3:16 *“Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?”*

I Corinthians 6:18 *“What? Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? (20) For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.”*

Christian, you, a child of God, are indwelt by the Spirit of God Himself. And, folks, this is not weird. His indwelling does not cause you to do any wild and strange things just became He lives in you. And no, you won’t feel some physical thing in your body when the Spirit comes to indwell your spirt. It’s totally a matter of your spirit.

Instead, it’s a new life; a new way of living your earthly life. You, your person, your body, your spirt, you no longer belong to you. You are now His. When you became a new creation in Christ, you became a new person. He, the Third Person of the Trinity is now in the driver’s seat of your life, so-to-speak.

First, your salvation is the work of the Spirit.

Second, the indwelling of the Spirit is the effect of being saved.

Third, the filling of the Spirit is the most necessary thing in your life in Christ.

Ephesians 5:18 *“And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be [continually] filled with the Spirit;…”*

You are now in Christ and you are indwelt by God. He is the LORD. And He calls you to one, primary thing – everyday. Now, you ask “How?” How am I to be filled with the Spirit? One way; by entrusting yourself to Him; by turning yourself over to His control each moment throughout your day. He calls you to fully surrender to Him; to continually look to Him for His direction and power.

The main thing that changes in the life of the Believer in Christ is this. You are now able and ready to fully surrender each area of your life to the Spirit’s control. The world knows nothing of this. The world operates by self-power and soul-power. The world is self-dependent. You, on the other hand, are Spirit-dependent.

Christian, the Holy Spirit lives within your spirit.

Turn with me to Ephesians chapter five. Ephesians 5:15 *“See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, (16) Redeeming the time, because the days are evil. (17) Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is. (18) And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but* ***be filled with the Spirit****;*

*(19) Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord; (20)* *Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ; (21) Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God.*

You see, the normal Christian life is the life of being continually filled with the Spirit.

When you get behind the wheel of your car, surrender yourself to His control. When you begin a project at work, surrender yourself to His control. When you are tempted to be irritated by someone, surrender to His control.

This term “filled” is the exact same one that is used numerous times in Scripture to describe what happens when you surrender to anger and wrath; when you surrender to grief.

Can you remember that last time you were “filled with rage”? Can you remember that last time you were “filled with joy”? You see, His filling is a very practical thing. You come under His control as you deal with people and solve problems at work and at home. It’s the Spirit Who lives in you that continually calls you to surrender yourself to Him.

And what is the one thing He has given to you to surrender to? He’s given you His word. Your Bible is the Spirit’s message to your spirit. Each and every time you read and respond to the words of the Bible, you are preparing yourself to obey Ephesians 5:18 *“Be filled with the Spirit.”*

And, as you can easily see from this passage, whenever you are filled with His Spirit, you are filled with His word. Ephesians 5:18 *“And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit; (19)* ***Speaking*** *to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs,* ***singing*** *and making melody in your heart to the Lord;*

*(20)* ***Giving thanks*** *always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ; (21)* ***Submitting*** *yourselves one to another in the fear of God.”*

When you are filled is the Spirit, you speak, you sing the Psalms, the hymns, and the spiritual songs. You make melody in your heart to Him. You express your gratefulness for the people and everts of your life. And in the fear of God you submit yourselves to those around you.

How will you go into this New Year as a child of God? Will it be a daily, hour by hour and moment-by-moment surrender to the Spirit? Or will it be a daily life of “I’m in charge of my life”?

And where does the power to live really come from. Go with me to the Book of Galatians at chapter five. Galatians 5:22 *“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, (23) Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.”*

You see, Christian, you are so attached to the Person of the Holy Spirit, that, as you surrender to Him, you are able to bear His fruit. Love. When was the last time you have a difficulty with someone in your life? Did you surrender to the Holy Spirit? Did you ask Him to bear the fruit of His love through you towards that person?

And, from where did that deep, true joy come in your heart? And Who is it that filled you with the experience of peace? And Who is it that has enabled you to suffer long; to be gentle; to treat those around you with love; to live by faith; to be meek; to walk in self-control?

That’s the Spirit within you. You are controlled by Him. And every expression of His fruit through you is good and right. Paul reminds us that there’s no law that can hinder, discourage, detract or deter you when He controls you. The LORD within you is merely expressing Himself through you as you are filled with His Spirit. These character traits of love and peace and joy and longsuffering are simply exhibiting Him to others. And it’s all hinged on one thing: your surrender to His control over your spirit.

The ordinary Christian life is the life of the Spirit’s control. For some, yes, it’s unusual. But that’s not God’s plan for you. His plan is that you take yourself in hand each moment of your day and surrender to the One Who is able to do exceedingly above all that you ask or think. Don’t sell yourself short when it comes to living and walking in the Spirit.

First, your salvation is the work of the Spirit.

Second, the indwelling of the Spirit is the effect of being saved.

Third, the filling of the Spirit is the most necessary thing in your life in Christ.

Fourth, and finally, are you willing right now to whole-heartedly surrender your life to His control? Living in your own strength is quite unsatisfying. It also leads to living the wrong kind of life. It’s also not the norm. God’s plan for your daily life is for you to experience daily success in everything you do by your dependence upon Him. At each turn in the road of your life this week, look to the LORD to fill you with His Spirit. He’s ready and He’s commanded it. So, it’s really a matter of letting Him have full control. When that’s true, He fills you. And when He fills you, He controls you. That’s His plan for you. Will you go His way? Or will you stick with your plan and program for another year?

The way is open for you to live under His control. Will you choose His way or yours?

So, what will it be? Are you willing right now to submit yourself to His authority?

Here’s the Prayer of Surrender. You are welcome to pray it with me. *“Father, I surrender my whole life to you today; again. You have saved me for Yourself. Do with me whatever You choose. I am available for You to do through me whatever You please. In Jesus’ Name, Amen.”*

Now, as we have prepared ourselves with the Word of God, please come to the Table of the LORD with me. And as you do, find with me Hymn # \_\_\_\_. “\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.” And let’s sing it together.