

How to Be Filled With the Holy Spirit

What can we learn about being filled with the Holy Spirit from Acts 13:52 & Ephesians 5:18?

Acts 13:52 – “And the disciples were filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit.”

Eph.5:18 – “Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, **be filled** with the Spirit.”

Three Observations:

1. We **can** be filled with the Holy Spirit
2. We need repeated fillings
3. It is our responsibility to be filled with the Holy Spirit

What does the Spirit-filled life look like?

1. A life of obedience to the Holy Spirit
2. A life centered on the person of Jesus Christ
3. A life founded on God's Word
4. A lifestyle of fellowship with believers
5. A lifestyle that reflects and shares Jesus

Not wait but work at being filled

"We are commanded to be filled with the Holy Spirit. There is no passivity in being filled with the Spirit. The Spirit's control is not automatic but voluntary conceded and invited." (J. Oswald Sanders, *The Holy Spirit and His Gifts*, pg. 139)

Not - WAIT to be filled
But - WORK at being filled

We are responsible to be filled with the Holy Spirit - Lloyd-Jones

"How can one be filled with the Spirit? Here is a most important matter. The first thing we notice is that it is a command, an injunction, 'Be filled', 'go on being filled', with the Spirit, 'go on being controlled by the Holy Spirit'. It therefore follows of necessity that it is not an experience. Because it is a command, it is not an experience; because it is in the continuous present it is not some crisis, it is not some critical experience; and therefore it is not to be sought as 'a blessing'. There are many people who go round from meeting to meeting seeking, hoping to get 'the blessing of being 'filled with the Spirit'. They are sometimes invited to come forward at the end of a meeting to 'receive' the fullness of the Spirit. But surely that is to do utter violence to the language used here and to the whole analogy of the teaching of the Scripture. This is not a critical experience; this is a state or a condition in which we are to live always, permanently. This is how you always ought to be, says the Apostle; and he commands us to be like this. **So I deduce that this is not something that happens to us; this is something which we control, and which we determine.** As a man decides and controls whether he is going to be filled with wine or not, so it is he himself who controls and decides whether he is going to be controlled by the Spirit or not. He is therefore given a commandment, an injunction, an exhortation. We must therefore cease to think of it in terms of 'having an experience'.

Again, let me put it like this in order to make it clear. What happened to the disciples on the day of Pentecost was an experience, and not only did they know it, but everybody else knew it. What happened to Cornelius and his household when the Holy Spirit fell upon them was an experience, and everybody else knew it. What happened to those people in Samaria, when Peter and John went down from Jerusalem and laid their hands upon them and prayed for them was an experience, and they and everybody else knew it. Likewise with the people in Acts 19:1-6. To be 'sealed', to be 'baptized' with the Spirit is a definite experience. We do not control that; that is entirely the action of our Lord. It is something He does to us. But this filling is something which patently we control; and therefore it is put to us in the form of a command or an exhortation, 'Go on being filled and controlled by the Spirit.' In other words, we must get rid of all notions of passivity here; you do not just wait for this to happen. **It is in your power and mine to determine whether we are filled with the Spirit or not.** Is that clear? It is not in our power to determine whether we are going to be regenerated or not, it is not in our power to determine whether we are going to be baptized with the Spirit or not, but it is in our power to decide whether we are going to go on being filled with the Spirit or not. To confuse this last with the baptism with the Spirit is nothing but a grievous perversion of the Scripture. This is no experience that you wait for, or pray for, or long for. Rather you and I have certain things to do if we are anxious to go on being filled with the Spirit. (Lloyd-Jones, Life in the Spirit, pg. 48-50)

What are we to do?

What are we to do in order to experience the filling of the Spirit? From the writings of LaHaye, Sanders, Tozer, Morris and Lloyd-Jones we can compose this list: **We will be filled with the Holy Spirit when we**

<u>LaHaye</u>	<u>Morris</u>	<u>Tozer</u>	<u>Sanders</u>	<u>Lloyd-Jones</u>
Self-examination - is there evidence of filling	Ask	Present your body Rom 12:1-2	Aspiration	Do not grieve the H.S
Confess sin	Turn from every evil way	Ask Lk 11:9ff	Acknowledgement of the absence of the HS	Do not quench the H.S.
Submit to God	Obey	Obey	Abandonment of sin	Realize he is within us and desire & thirst for Him
Ask – Luke 11:13	Faith	Faith Gal 3:2	Abdication of the throne of super self	Heed His promptings
Believe			Appropriate the promise fullness	Listen to the Scriptures

When we compile these five lists we come up with these eight things:

1. **Faith** - John 7:37-39; Gal 3:1-5, 14
2. **Examination**: Self- Examination / Acknowledge the presence of sin and the absence of the filling of the Holy Spirit.
3. **Abandon Sin / Confess** - Prov. 18; 1 John 1:9; Acts 2:38
4. **Abdicate** the Throne of self rule. **Obey** – Acts 5:32
5. **Aspiration**: Realize the need. **Desire** the filling of the Holy Spirit. Matt. 5:6; Isa 44:3; John 7:37
6. **Ask**: – Luke 11:13; John 7:37; Eph. 6:19
7. **Assimilation / Meditate** on the Word of God - Before Eph 5:18 we have Eph. 5:17
8. **Attentive / Sensitive** to the promptings of the Holy Spirit.

"A great many think because they have been filled once, they are going to be filled all the time after," Moody said. "But O, my friends, we are leaky vessels, and have to be kept right under the fountain all the time in order to keep full." (Quoted by George Sweeting in Moody Magazine / April 1987)