

“Filled with the Spirit” - Acts 2:1-13
Pastor Burt Garwood – October 1, 2017

John 20:21-22 *“Again Jesus said, “Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you.”²² And with that he breathed on them and said, “Receive the Holy Spirit.”*

In our Bible reading today, the disciples of Jesus were filled with the Holy Spirit in a very dramatic way. READ: Acts 2:2-11

- It was dramatic because Jesus didn't want them to have any doubt about the coming of the Holy Spirit into their lives as he had promised.
- The filling of the Holy Spirit gave them special abilities...the church has traditionally referred to them as gifts of the Spirit. In this instance, the disciples were suddenly able to speak fluently in the languages of the people gathered in Jerusalem.
- The filling of the Holy Spirit was obvious. It was powerful. And it connected with others who needed to know Jesus by allowing the disciples to speak in their languages.
- It didn't take long for Peter to stand up and deliver a message to the people that ended with this: *“Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.”* (Acts 2:38)

When you read through the book of Acts, there were times where people believed in Jesus, but they didn't yet have the Holy Spirit. READ: Acts 8:14-17

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

- The word “filled” in the Greek is pleroo, which means “dominant influence.”
- What happens when you drink too much alcohol? We say you're under the influence. What has taken over your body? Alcohol.
- You lose a sense of balance and control. You do or say things you might regret. You think and move a little slower. Things seem like they are in slow motion.
- You can have impaired judgement. Your reaction times aren't as good when you drive a car. You're more prone to get into an accident and hurt yourself or others.
- To go even deeper, it's typically not just the act of getting drunk...but your desire for alcohol in the first place...that can be a problem.

That's what it means to be filled with alcohol. This helps us to understand what it means to be filled with the Holy Spirit.

- You have a desire for the Holy Spirit to fill you up. Jesus talked about asking God for the Holy Spirit. READ: Luke 11:13. You are inviting the Holy Spirit into a relationship with you. READ: John 14:16-17
- To be filled with the Spirit means you have surrendered your life to the Holy Spirit's guiding. You are under the influence of the Holy Spirit. It means you move over and the Holy Spirit takes the driver's seat.
- Your choices and decisions are no longer based on what you think is good for you, but on what God the Holy Spirit says is good for you.

In understanding what it means to be filled with the Holy Spirit, we need to define the Holy Spirit as one of the three persons in the Trinity: Father, Son, Holy Spirit.

- Because the Holy Spirit is a person, he is either dwelling in your or he isn't.
- He isn't like the Force in Star Wars where you can have a little bit of the Force as a young Jedi in training or a lot of the Force like Yoda.
- You don't have more of the Spirit, or less of the Spirit. This isn't like a glass half full.

You can however have a deeper relationship and understanding of the Holy Spirit.

- When you seek to know and understand the Holy Spirit, you learn that you can surrender more of your life to him.
- You can trust him with your life. You open yourself up to his influence on your life. You are more in tune with the Holy Spirit.

Many of you believe in Jesus, but you might be spending your life wrestling with the Holy Spirit.

- You say you believe in Jesus and that's great. But you want to control your life...when you should be surrendering to the Spirit's leading in your life.
- And as a result, you are not receiving the kind of guidance and power from the Spirit that you could have if you would just relinquish control and surrender to the Spirit.
- You might be wondering why things aren't going the way you want. Maybe it's because you're trying to control things the way you want. As long as you're trying to control things, you're not allowing the Holy Spirit his rightful place at the driver's seat of your life.
- You might not even realize this. But you're keeping the Holy Spirit from doing his work in you.
- Maybe because nobody ever taught you about your relationship to the Holy Spirit and how the Spirit works in your life as one who fights for you, cares for you, watches out for you and guides your conscience. He's your advocate, counselor and helper as we learned last week.

One way you can measure the influence of the Holy Spirit on your life is by looking at how you have changed over the years to live a more Christ-like life.

- That you've grown spiritually. Your character is more Christ-like. You've cleaned up things in your life that used to control you...and now they don't.
- A large part of your faith journey is surrendering control, over and over again, and asking the Spirit take control.
- I'm praying for your desire to have the Holy Spirit as the dominant influence on your life. That over time, you will surrender control of your life, and submit to his influence. And that you can see the difference the Spirit makes in your life over time.