

THE FULLNESS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

“I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith.” —EPHESIANS 3:16-17

Christianity is not simply believing certain things and signing off on certain doctrines we believe to be true. It is experiential. It is being the recipient of the life and presence of the Holy Spirit indwelling us. As Christians, we are all called to live in the fullness of the Holy Spirit, so it is essential we understand what that means.

There is a misguided belief that if we’re going to be full of the Holy Spirit we must first be emptied of ourselves. We’re told in Galatians 5:17, “For the sinful nature desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the sinful nature. They are in conflict with each other.” How do we empty ourselves of a sinful nature? We can’t pour it out like we would a glass of milk. As long as we live on earth, the battle between flesh and Spirit will be an ongoing one.

So what does it mean to live in the fullness of the Holy Spirit? In Acts, Chapter 3, Peter healed a man crippled from birth. A crowd had gathered, many knowing this man, and it says they were filled with wonder and amazement. In Chapter 5, great things were happening in Jerusalem. Many were coming to Christ and Scripture tells us all the Sadducees were filled with jealousy. In Chapter 13, Paul and Barnabas were in Pisidian Antioch on their first missionary journey, and we’re

told the Jews were filled with envy. In Chapter 16, the jailor in Philippi was converted to Christ, and it says he was filled with joy.

Luke documents these events as an historian and an observer. He uses words like wonder, amazement, jealousy, envy and joy, not because the people gave testimony of how they felt, but because he could see their reactions for himself. At the time, being filled with these emotions dominated their personalities and determined their behaviour. Living in the fullness of the Holy Spirit is a condition in which we are called to live on a daily basis. It is not an occasional experience, but a continuous relationship with God that allows the work of the Holy Spirit to dominate our personalities and determine our behaviours.

We may be filled with the Holy Spirit for certain tasks as many were in Old Testament Scripture, but today living in the fullness of the Spirit is seen in our everyday activities; in how we treat others, in our giving, how we do our work, how we spend our money, and most essentially, by the time we spend in intimate communion with God.

PRAYER: Dear Heavenly Father, thank you for the gift of your Holy Spirit. I pray that His presence in me determines how I live every day of my life. Thank You, Lord.

TO REFLECT UPON: Have I given the work of the Holy Spirit priority in my life?