

PNEUMATOLOGY

The Doctrine of the Holy Spirit Bible Institute - *Winter 2025-26* Gulf Coast Baptist Church

The Filling of the Spirit

I. Greek Words Translated Fill

A. *Platho* and *pimplami* - a filling the completely or fully fills an object

1. Gospels
 - a) Luke 1:15 - John the Baptist
 - b) Luke 1:41 - Elizabeth
 - c) Luke 2:6 - Mary
2. Acts
 - a) Acts 2:4 - believers in the Upper Room at Pentecost
 - b) Acts 4:21 - Peter
 - c) Acts 13:9 - Paul
3. Observations:
 - a) When describing the Spirit's work it results from a sovereign act of God - the individuals did not play a part in the filling
 - b) This filling is similar to Old Testament filling
 - c) The emphasis of this word has the idea of being completely full leading to a controlling influence

B. *Plerao* - a filling that makes up for a lack or deficiency

1. Matthew 1:22; 2:15, 17 et al - Prophecy
2. Matthew 5:17 - the Law
3. Luke 2:40 - Wisdom
4. John 16:24, 1 John 1:4 - Joy
5. Colossians 1:24-29 - the Word of God

II. The Grammar of Ephesians 5:18-21

A. Be filled

1. Imperative Mood - what the New Testament believer ought to do, God's intention
2. Present Tense - denotes ongoing, continuous activity
3. Passive Voice - someone or something acting upon the subject

B. Spirit is in the Instrumental form, literally "be being filled by the Spirit".

1. This is the content
2. The Spirit is not the content of the filling
3. The filling is by the means of the Spirit. He is the instrument or in other words, the Spirit is doing the filling
4. Paul is not saying, allow the Spirit to pour himself into you BUT rather, allow the Spirit to fill you with something

C. The result of “being filled by the Spirit” is indicated by the participles - speaking, singing, psalming, thanking, submitting

1. Pronouns

- a) *Heautos* - reflexive - "yourselves"
- b) *Allelos* - reciprocal - “one another” - John 13:34 (love one another)
 - (1) Paul NOT saying, “each of you speak to each other...”
 - (2) Paul SAYING, “as the Body, you will individually speak to your own selves”

2. Speaking - utter words

- a) Psalms - praise
- b) Hymns - state God’s character
- c) Spiritual songs - relates to the Spirit
- d) Summary: statements that reflect the person and character of God

3. Singing and Psalming - a heart that is filled with singing to the Lord

4. Thanksgiving - believer will be pervaded by an attitude of gratitude

- a) 1 Thessalonians 5:18 - the Spirit’s filling makes it possible for a believer to do God’s Will

5. Submitting

- a) Middle/Passive voice - submitting for your own self, for your own benefit
 - (1) Ephesians 4:11-16 - submitting to teaching gifts for one’s own benefit
 - (2) 1 Peter 4:10-11 - in order to be blessed must be willing to submit to others gifts/service

D. The Context of Ephesians 5:18-21

1. “The Christ”

- a) A reference to Jesus Christ the head joined to His body. It places a strong emphasis on unity under the headship of Christ
- b) Examples:
 - (1) Ephesians 3:8-10 - the unsearchable riches of “the Christ”
 - (2) 1 Corinthians 12:12 - “the Christ” is one body comprised of many members

2. 3:6 - Jews and Gentiles share equal status in “the Christ”

3. 3:17 - “the Christ” would settle down at home in their hearts

4. 4:3 - being diligent to guard the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace

5. 4:12 - gifts given for the edification of the Body

6. 4:13 - continual growth until we come to the “measure of the stature of the fulness of [the] Christ”

7. 4:16 - the growth of the Body of Christ by all the members

8. 4:20 - they did not learn that “the Christ” was greedy or unclean

9. 4:24 - believers were to put on the new man - the Christ

10. 4:29 - speaking gracious words to one another for their edification

11. 4:32 - be kind ones each other as Christ has been kind to us

12. Summary: - Paul stresses the importance of “the Christ” and how that relates to how they behave and relate to one another

E. A Parallel Passage - Colossians 3:16ff

1. Considerations

- a) Ephesians 5 - Paul tells believers what needs to happen - “allow the Spirit to fill you with what you are lacking...”
 - (1) Paul does not provide instruction how to “be filled by the Spirit”

- (2) Context: audience - Ephesians - Paul's ministry in Ephesus lasted approximately 3 years
 - b) Colossians 3 - HOW do we allow ourselves be filled by the Spirit?
 - (1) Context: Paul had never visited the Colossians
 - (2) Paul's letter to the Colossians states how to allow be filled by the Spirit
- 2. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom
 - a) The "word of [the] Christ"
 - (1) Paul not referring stories about Jesus in the Gospels
 - (2) The Christ is a reference to each believer's shared position in the One New Man, the Body in which Christ is the head
 - (3) This relationship began when the Spirit baptized each believer into the Christ with all others the moment they believed the Gospel
 - b) Dwell - *oikeo* - inhabit, a dwelling place, permanent habitation
 - c) Grammar
 - (1) Imperative mood - see above
 - (2) Active voice - the believer must do something
 - (a) The filling of the Spirit is not PASSIVE
 - (b) The believer allows the Spirit to fill them with what is lacking by thinking intentionally about who we all are in the Body of Christ
 - d) Richly - abundantly
 - e) Wisdom - understanding how to put into practice knowledge provided
 - f) Corollary verse - Romans 8:4-5
 - (1) Those who walk in the flesh "frame their mind" on the flesh
 - (2) Those who walk in the Spirit "frame their mind" on the things of the Spirit of God
 - g) The results of letting "the word of Christ dwell in you richly"
 - (1) The participles are nearly identical to Ephesians 5
 - (2) The following relational instructions are nearly identical as well
- F. Concluding thoughts:
 - 1. The filling of Ephesians 5:18 makes it possible for the individual to live out the fulness, what God intends for all believers to be together in "the Christ"
 - 2. The believer has a need to function as a member of the body of Christ (Ephesians 1:10, 27; 2:1-5, 12, 14; 3:15-17; 4:2-5, 21)
 - 3. The filling consists of the Spirit filling the believer up so that the believer is able to live like a member of the body of Christ, so he can act like a part of the Christ (Ephesians 3:19, 13)