

**Devotional Thoughts :: Spirit Fullness: A Way of Life, Not Merely Events by Bob Hoekstra****Spirit Fullness: A Way of Life, Not Merely Events by Bob Hoekstra - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2011/3/6 14:44**

Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire...And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit...Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them...the place...was shaken; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit...And do not be drunk with wine...but be filled with the Spirit. (Acts 2:3-4; 4:8, 31; and Ephesians 5:18)

When we were born again through faith in Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit came to dwell in our lives from that point thereafter (1 Corinthians 3:16).. After the new birth, our lives may be repeatedly filled to overflowing by the empowering presence of the Spirit. The testimony of the early disciples illustrates this.

On the day of Pentecost, the 120 followers of Jesus were filled with the Spirit. "Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire...And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit." Subsequently, the Apostle Peter, who was originally filled on Pentecost, was again filled as he stood before the religious hierarchy of Israel. "Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them." After this encounter, Peter joined the other disciples for a prayer meeting. "And when they had prayed, the place where they were assembled together was shaken; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit." In this event, those who had been filled with the Spirit at Pentecost were filled a second time. Peter, who had been so filled twice before, was filled a third time. Therefore, it is evident that the filling of the Spirit is not a once for all time matter.

Furthermore, being filled with the Spirit is not automatic or universal for Christians, as is the indwelling of the Spirit. This fact can be clearly seen in the instruction given in Ephesians 5:18. "And do not be drunk with wine...but be filled with the Spirit." Since this is a command and not a description, it only becomes a personal reality to those who respond properly.

Additionally, the form of this command contains tremendous insight concerning the fullness of the Spirit and God's desire for us. The injunction to "be filled with the Spirit" is in the present tense, indicating an ongoing condition. It could properly (though awkwardly) be translated "be (always) being filled." This imperative is a call to a way of living, not merely periodic events. It is the will of God that we actually live, day by day, more and more, by the fullness of the Spirit's empowering work. We should humbly pray for the fullness of the Holy Spirit as we face each day, each challenge, each opportunity of life.

Lord God of all power and might, I rejoice that Your Holy Spirit dwells within my heart. I thank You for those times when Your Spirit has worked powerfully upon my life. Help me to see that the fullness of Your Spirit is not merely an event-to-event experience, but a lifestyle to be developed. Lord, with great expectation I humbly seek You now for a fresh, ongoing work of the Holy Spirit in me. In the name of Jesus, I pray, Amen.