

# The Filling of the Holy Ghost

by Oswald J. Smith

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*Being filled with the Holy Spirit is essential for living a victorious Christian life, and it requires acknowledging and confessing failure, confessing sin to God, and surrendering and renouncing sin.*

**Duration:** 29:04

**Scripture:** John 16:7, Ephesians 5:18

**Topics:** "Filling Of The Spirit"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of being filled with the Holy Spirit. He refers to the command in Ephesians 5:18 to be filled with the Spirit and explains that this is a commandment for New Testament Christians. The preacher also refers to John 16:7-15, where Jesus promises to send the Holy Spirit as a comforter and guide. He highlights the role of the Holy Spirit in convicting the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment. The preacher concludes by emphasizing the power and importance of being filled with the Holy Spirit for effective service and glorifying God.

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## Transcript

Now may I ask you this morning to turn to the gospel according to John, and I want to turn with you, if I may, to the 16th chapter. The 16th chapter of the gospel according to John, commencing to read at the 7th verse, and reading from the 7th verse through to the 15th. Nevertheless, I tell you the truth, it is expedient for you that I go away, for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you, but if I depart, I will send him unto you.

And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment. Of sin, because they believe not on me. Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more.

Of judgment, because the Prince of this world is judged. I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth, for he shall not speak of himself, but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak, and he will show you things to come.

He shall glorify me, for he shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you. All things that the Father hath are mine, therefore said I that he shall take of mine, and shall show it unto you. May God's blessing rest upon the reading of his word this morning.

In Ephesians the 5th chapter and the 18th verse you have a very striking statement, a word of command, Be filled with the Spirit. Be filled with the Spirit. Not very many words, only five, and yet how momentous.

Be filled with the Spirit. This is one of the great commandments of the word of God, and this is a New Testament commandment. Therefore, because it is found in the New Testament, you and I as New Testament Christians should of course obey it.

Be filled with the Spirit. I know the Ten Commandments, the commandments of the Old Testament scriptures, are very, very important, especially the nine of them that appear in the New Testament. I know that you and I should pay attention to them.

The commandments of Moses, but I want to say that this commandment, Be filled with the Spirit, is far more important than any of the Ten Commandments of the Old Testament scriptures. And then there's the commandment to be baptized, one of the New Testament commandments, another very, very important commandment. Every Christian, of course, should be baptized.

Everyone who has been born again, and you know Jesus Christ as a personal Savior, should go through the waters of baptism. I think we all realize that fact. It's plain, it's clear in the New Testament scriptures.

But this commandment, Be filled with the Spirit, is far more important than the commandment to be baptized. Then, of course, there's the commandment that concerns the Great Commission, Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel. My estimation, this is one of the most important commandments to be found anywhere in God's Word.

The commission given to the Church to go into all the world and preach the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. But I want to say that this commandment, Be filled with the Spirit, is more important even than that commandment, because you see, when you obey this commandment, when you're filled with the Holy Spirit, you will automatically obey every other commandment in the Word of God. So this, I look upon as the most important commandment given to the Church of Jesus Christ in the entire New Testament scriptures.

I want you to notice in the first place, if you will, that this commandment was not given to a carnal Church. If it had been given to a carnal Church, you and I could easily have understood it. We would have said at once, why, of course, that Church is carnal, that Church is worldly, that Church needs this commandment.

Therefore, the Apostle Paul was right, he was correct in giving it. But I want to point out that it was not given to a carnal Church. Now, the Corinthian Church was a carnal Church.

There was all kinds of carnality in the Corinthian Church. But Paul did not give this commandment to the Corinthian Church. He gave it to one of the most spiritual churches on the face of the earth, the Ephesian Church.

And why did he give it to this church? Because even in the Ephesian Church, there were some who had never been filled with the Holy Spirit. And therefore, the commandment to be filled with the Spirit was absolutely essential for the Ephesian Church, even though it was known as a very spiritual church of the Lord Jesus Christ. But I know what you're saying this morning.

You're saying, Dr. Smith, I have the Holy Spirit. I received Him when I was converted. And I've had Him ever since.

And just what do you mean when you say to me, be filled with the Spirit? I know that that's true. I know that you have the Holy Spirit. The very moment you're saved, the Holy Spirit comes in and makes His dwelling place in your heart.

Therefore, if you're saved, if you're born again, you have the Holy Spirit. But I'm not talking about having the Holy Spirit. I'm talking about being filled with the Holy Spirit.

It's one thing to have the Holy Spirit. It's another thing to be filled with the Holy Spirit. What God is saying to His church and the members of His church is, be filled with the Spirit.

I know that you have Him. I know that He came to you when you were saved. I know that if you do not have Him, you're not even saved.

Therefore, if you're saved, you have the Holy Spirit. But I want you to be filled with the Holy Spirit. I want Him to dwell in your heart in all His glorious fullness.

And I ask you this question this morning. Are you filled with the Holy Spirit? Here's a glass of water, for instance. I hold it here in my hand.

Now, it would be perfectly correct to say, this glass contains water. This glass holds water. There is water in the glass.

But it would not be correct to say, the glass is filled with water. Because all you have to do is to look at the glass as I hold it now in my hand to realize that from here up, it's absolutely empty. It's filled not with the water, but it's filled with air.

Therefore, it would not be truthful to say, the glass is full of water. It's not filled with water. It's filled partially with water and partially with air.

And that's the way it is with many a Christian. So many Christians have the Holy Spirit, but they're not filled with the Holy Spirit. They have Him, but they have yet to be filled with Him.

What God is saying to His church is, be filled with the Spirit. And I want you to ask yourself this morning as I speak, have I ever been filled with the Holy Spirit? I have Him, but am I filled with Him? There's a vast difference between the two. And I have to ask myself the question this morning, am I filled with the fullness of the Spirit of God? Now why is it necessary? Why must you, why must I be filled with the Holy Spirit? Why is it essential? Why is it important? Isn't it sufficient if we have the Holy Spirit? Why does God say to us, be filled with the Spirit? Because there's one thing that you and I need in these Christian lives of ours.

We need what God calls power. We need power in our Christian lives. And if we do not have power, then there's a lack.

And it's power that God wants us to have, but power along two lines. First of all, power over sin. Sometimes I'm not filled with power.

Why is it? What's the matter? My friend, when you're filled with the Holy Spirit, you'll have power over sin. That besetting sin of yours, whatever it may be, that sin that you can't conquer, that sin that you cannot overcome, that you can't get the victory over, that sin before which you've gone down in defeat again and again and again, or you've sworn time after time that you'd never commit it again. Time after time you've said, I'll never fail God again.

Time after time you've repudiated your sin. You've said, I'm through with it. I'll never commit it again.

Yet in spite of your resolutions, in spite of your promises, in spite of everything, you do commit it again. You do fail again. You do go down before God again in defeat and in failure.

And you're not always victorious because you're not filled with the Holy Spirit. In Galatians, the 5th chapter and the 16th verse, you have these words. Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.

When? When you walk in the Spirit. When you live in the Spirit. When you dwell in the Spirit.

When you abide in the Spirit. When you are filled with the fullness of the Spirit of God, then you do not walk in the flesh. You walk in the Spirit.

And then you're victorious, but you're not victorious until then. And I ask you this morning the question, are you a victorious Christian? Do you know what it is to overcome sin? Or does sin still dog your footsteps? And do you still go down in defeat and in failure? There's generally just one besetting sin in the life of the Christian. Most of the sins the Christian conquers.

They're overcome. But there's generally one sin left to test him. One sin to try him.

To see whether or not he's the kind of a Christian that God wants him to be. And it's that one sin that you're combating continuously. And I ask you this morning the question, have you victory over that besetting sin of yours? That one sin that has conquered you so often.

You've gone down before it so frequently. You've failed so continuously. Has there ever been a time when you've been victorious over that one sin of yours? Therefore you need power.

Power over sin. And you'll never know the meaning of power over sin until you're filled with the Holy Spirit. Only if he fills you do you have power over sin.

For the remaining portion of Dr. Smith's message, please turn this tape over. Only if he fills you do you have power over sin. Now there's no reason why you should go on committing that sin of yours all the days of your Christian life.

There's no reason why you should fail continually and go down in defeat before the tempter's power. Because of that one sin that has power over you. You should have power over it.

You should be powerful over that sin. You should be an overcomer. And God speaks again and again of the overcomer.

The one who overcomes. The one who conquers. And that one sin of yours that spoils your Christian life, damages your testimony for God, that one sin of yours must be conquered, must be overcome if you're going to be the kind of a Christian that God wants you to be.

And so you need power. Power over sin. Struggle, if you will.

Fight as much as you want to. Put forth effort continuously. Do everything in your power to overcome.

And you will still go down before the power of sin that besetting sin of yours, unless you know the power of the Holy Spirit. But if He indwells your heart, if He indwells your life, then you'll know the secret of power over sin. And that's the kind of life that God wants you to live.

But that's not everything. There's also power in service. God wants you to be a fruit-bearing Christian.

God wants you to accomplish something for Him. God wants you to serve Him with all your heart and glorify Him. God wants you to magnify His name.

God wants you to be the kind of a Christian whose testimony will count and tell among those around you. He wants you to be a victorious Christian through the power of the Holy Ghost. And only as you're filled with the Spirit will you know the secret of power in service.

In Acts, the first chapter and the eighth verse, we have these words, He shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you. Or as it says literally in the original, He shall receive the power of the Holy Ghost coming upon you. In other words, when the Holy Ghost comes upon you in His fullness, you'll receive a power that you have never known before.

Now then, what is the secret? How can a man be filled, or a woman, with the Holy Spirit? What is God's secret in it all? Well, first of all, there must be the acknowledging and the confession of the fact that you have failed. As long as you go on boasting of victory when you haven't got it, there will be no chance of getting it. But as soon as you realize that you haven't got it, and you confess it, and you admit it, and you go to God and tell Him that you haven't got victory over sin, that sin is still victorious over you, then, my friend, there's defeat and there's failure.

There must be victory over sin. God is talking here to the Christian. The publican was not a Christian.

The publican cried out, God, be merciful to me, a sinner. He never mentioned one of his sins. He simply grouped them all together, and he prayed, God, be merciful to me, a sinner.

But when it comes to the Christian, it's entirely different. The Christian is faced with his failure in one sin, one failure. Someplace along the line, he has failed God.

Now, it's that one sin, it's that one failure that has to be confessed, and confessed to God. And when you confess that one sin, that one failure, that's the kind of confession God demands in order that you may be filled with the Spirit. There is one sin that you are conquered by, and there is one sin that you must overcome, and over which you must be victorious, if you're to be filled with the Spirit.

What does God say in 1 John, the 1st chapter, the 9th verse? If we... What does he mean when he says we? He's talking about the Christian. The entire epistle was written to Christians. This verse was addressed to believers.

The personal pronoun we is used. If we, the Christian, if we confess our sin, the sin of the Christian, he is faithful because he promised, and just because he atoned. He is faithful and just to forgive us, those of us who are believers, Christians, to forgive us our sins, our sins, not the sins of the world, not the sins of the unbeliever, but the sins of the believer.

He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us, us, from all unrighteousness. The entire verse has to do with the Christian. The entire verse is speaking about the believer, and it's the believer, it's the Christian, who must confess his sin to God and be cleansed from all unrighteousness.

You remember Bunyan in Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress. You remember he went to sleep and he lost his scroll. The next morning when he awoke he went on his way, but he wasn't rejoicing.

There was sorrow in his heart. There was gloom. There was disappointment.

There was heartache. And he couldn't understand it until presently he felt in his pocket, and lo and behold his scroll was missing. He had dropped it where he had been sleeping.

He had left his scroll behind, and as long as he didn't have his scroll there wasn't any happiness, there wasn't any joy. What did he do? Did he confess it and then go on? No, he confessed it, but he turned around and he went back. He went all the way back, right back to the place where he had slept, and there he found his scroll, picked it up and put it in his bosom again, turned and went on his journey rejoicing because he had recovered his scroll.

My Christian friend, you'll have to go back. You'll have to go back to that one besetting sin of yours. You'll have to return to that one sin that you committed against God when you lost your scroll.

You'll have to return to that failure and confess it. Once you do that, then God can forgive you, and you can again go on your way rejoicing. There must be the confession of sin if there is to be the forgiveness of sin, and if you and I are to go on our way rejoicing, our sin must be renounced.

It must be surrendered. We must be obedient to God. We must exercise faith, and only as we do can we go on our way rejoicing in the name of Jesus.

I ask you this morning, do you know anything about the fullness of the Holy Spirit, or do you just have Him? And have you never been filled? That will be the reason for your failure. If you want to be victorious in the Christian life, you'll have to know the fullness of the Holy Spirit. That truth came to me with tremendous power one day, many years ago now, and I sat down and I wrote these words.

You'll find them in number 148 in the hymn book. Lord, possess me now, I pray. Make me holy thine today.

Gladly do I own thy sway with thy Spirit. Fill me. And then I continued as God opened my eyes, and I wrote the second verse.

Lord, I yield myself to thee. You never will be filled until you yield to him. All I am or hope to be, now and through eternity, with thy Spirit fill me.

When I got that far, I said to myself, there must be an outcome. There must be results. If I am to be a Spirit-filled man, something must happen in my ministry, in my testimony for God.

So then I wrote the third verse. Lord, commission me, I pray. Souls are dying every day.

Help me lead them in thy way. With thy Spirit fill me. If I'm going to lead souls in the way of God, I'll have to myself be filled with the Spirit.

And then when I wrote the chorus, I wrote it with thy Spirit fill me. With thy Spirit fill me. Make me holy thine, I pray.

With thy Spirit fill me. I'm going to ask you to take your hymn books, if you will, and turn to number 148. We'll stand together as we sing this hymn in connection with this message.

With thy Spirit fill me, hymn number 148.

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