

The Way to Spiritual Fullness

by Stephen Kaung

The sermon emphasizes that true spiritual fullness is found only in Christ through revelation and obedience to God's truth.

Duration: 1:07:06

Scripture: Genesis 12:1-4, Genesis 22:1-18, Philippians 3:8, Hebrews 4:11, Hebrews 11:6, 2 Peter 1:5, Revelation 22:19

Topics: "Spiritual Growth", "Obedience To God"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher begins by describing how a farmer uses a yoke and a sharp instrument to guide a stubborn animal. He then relates this to the story of Saul, who was transformed into the apostle Paul after encountering the glory of God. The preacher emphasizes the importance of revelation and obedience in experiencing spiritual fullness. He also encourages the audience to look to Jesus as the perfect example of living out the truth of spiritual fullness.

Transcript

Dear brothers and sisters, you know what I'm thinking? If we continue to keep the spirit at the table, we are on the way to spiritual fullness. And I intend to dismiss you, but unfortunately the recess seemed to spoil it a little bit. So maybe there is still a place for more meditation and encouragement.

Will you please turn to Philippians? Philippians chapter 3, just one verse, verse 8. Philippians chapter 3, verse 8. But I surely count also all things to be lost. On account of the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, on account of whom I have suffered the loss of all, and count them to be few that I may gain. Let's have a word of prayer.

Dear Lord, as we continue in thy presence, we look to thee to keep it in the spirit of worship, of focusing upon thyself, of forgetting ourselves, and let the spirit of the Lord lead the way to spiritual fullness. We confess, Lord, that how easily our eyes turn away from thee. Look upon the world, look upon ourselves, look upon others, look upon environments, and we lose sight of thee.

Oh dear Lord, keep us fixed on thee. Do not allow us to drift to falter, but we do desire to offer ourselves to thee, and thou art the only one who is able to keep us to the very end. Lord, thou hast opened the heaven for us.

May that heavenly light continues to shine upon us, and in that glorious light we see thee and we worship thee. We ask in thy precious name, amen. For the sake of some who were not here yesterday, we would like just to remind you that our time together is on the theme of spiritual fullness.

Again, I want to tell you that I do not feel fit to teach you on spiritual fullness. I want to be with you, meditating together with you on this glorious subject, and look to the Spirit of God to lead us into the truth, and that is my prayer. Yesterday morning, we began by meditating on what is spiritual fullness.

Where can it be found? The very term spiritual fullness limits the meaning of fullness. In other words, it tells us right away that we are not thinking of worldly fullness, earthly fullness, carnal fullness. We are thinking of that which is spiritual, that which is eternal, that which is heavenly, that which is divine.

That is the fullness that we long for, and that is the fullness that our God has provided for us, and it is his will that we be filled with that fullness. You cannot find that fullness in the world. You cannot find that even in religion.

You know the Corinthian believers. They are believers. They have the life of Christ in them.

They have all the potentials to spiritual fullness, and yet they turn their eyes away from the Lord and look to the world. They try to find that fullness in the world, but it is not there. What is there is strife, contention, party spirit, sin, love of self, disorder, disbelief, and the Apostle Paul has to remind them it is Jesus Christ and him crucified.

The Colossians believers, they are believers. That's the reason why we are talking about spiritual fullness among ourselves. We who have already believed in the Lord Jesus, but how easily we will be led astray, forgetting the spiritual fullness can only be found in the Lord Jesus and nowhere else.

And yet the Colossian believers, they had such a good beginning. They have faith, they have love, they have hope, and yet they were enticed to shift their attention from Christ Jesus. They were deceived that Christ alone cannot make you full.

You have to keep the law. You have to do something. You have to believe in philosophy, in the teaching of man.

They are sincere. They try to fullness, but then they were led astray. And the Apostle Paul has to correct them and said, all the fullness of the Godhead dwells in Christ Jesus bodily, and you are complete in him.

So dear brothers and sisters, unfortunately even among God's people today, we try to find fullness in places other than our Lord Jesus. And the result is tragic. So brothers and sisters, let us remember God is the source of fullness.

It is out of his fullness he created all things. All things are to manifest the glory of God, but unfortunately sin enter into this world and spoil everything. But thank God he loves us so much.

He will not let us go. Therefore we say, he sent his only begotten son into this world. The word became flesh.

Tabernacle among man, full of grace and truth. God demonstrates his fullness in the person of our Lord Jesus. Nothing short of fullness.

His grace is full, cannot be increased. His truth is full, everlasting. That is what we find in the life of our Lord Jesus.

He is the expression, the manifestation, the very substance of the fullness of God. Thank God our Lord Jesus did not come just to demonstrate God's fullness. What grace is, what truth is, and yet if he does not go to the cross, it will not be available to us today.

Thank our Lord Jesus. He sealed that fullness of the Godhead by his death. And because of Calvary's cross, all the fullness of the Godhead is now available.

If we believe, if we obey, it's ours. And thank God he gave us the Holy Spirit. He is the Spirit of truth, the Spirit of grace.

And he lives in us to make everything that our Lord has done two thousand some years ago and bring them to us to be our living experience. So this is something that we have meditated together yesterday morning. Now this morning we would like to go on and meditate on how do we really apprehend personally and together the spiritual fullness.

In other words, yesterday morning we deal mostly with eternal truth. Our Lord Jesus said, I am the truth. What is eternal truth? Eternal truth is something that God has done through our Lord Jesus and whatever he has done on Calvary's cross is eternal.

It never changes. It's always there. Always ready.

Always available. Always working. But how does truth become our personal experience? So this morning we would like to get into experience.

Truth is objective. That is to say, it is outside of us. It is there, available, but outside.

Now we want to see how can the truth of spiritual fullness become our daily, living, real experience. That we can apprehend the love of God with all the saints. Now because we are dealing with this matter of spiritual experience, I feel that it is better for us in our meditation to find an example, a role model for us.

Now of course, our Lord Jesus is the perfect example, but probably we would say, well, he is God, although he is also man. Now aside from our Lord Jesus, where can we find someone who has really experienced spiritual fullness to a greater degree? I won't say to the fullest degree, because none can say that, but experience spiritual fullness to such a great degree that he may help us, show us the way as how to get into spiritual fullness. So our meditation this morning will be on the way, the way to spiritual fullness.

I think everybody who studied the Bible agrees. If we want to find a New Testament example, that's Paul. Paul himself testifies by revelation.

He knows the mystery of what he shares with us. It shows that he has the living knowledge of the fullness of Christ. So we would like to use him as our example, because he is human as we are.

First of all, we know this man, Paul. He was originally called Saul. He was named after the first king of Israel.

And Saul means ask for. He was a young man, very different from other young people. I would say he was a man seeking for fullness.

He was wise enough not to try to see fullness in the world. Many young people do not seem to have that wisdom. As young people we think we can find our fullness in the world.

If we have the riches, the wealth, the fame, the position, all that the world can offer us, then our life will be full. Foolishness. But this young man was different.

He did not try to find fullness in his life from the world. He turned away from the world, even as a young man, most unusual. He tried to find fullness in religion, in Judaism.

He tried to find his fullness in the law, the Mosaic law. He is dealing with shadow, not with reality. Even though the law came from God, yet the law is only a shadow showing us the reality.

But the young man saw he was so absorbed in the law of Moses. He was a disciple of Moses. He was such a fervent disciple.

He became a Pharisee. At no time in history there will be many Pharisees. Probably the utmost will be two, three thousand.

He was not like the other Pharisees. He was a true Pharisee. A Pharisee of Pharisees.

A Hebrew of Hebrews. He studied the law diligently. He tried to keep every letter in the law.

He could even boast of himself according to the righteousness of the law. I'm blameless. What a young man he was.

He trusted in himself. He trusted in his own work. He trusted in his own righteousness.

He was more advanced than his contemporaries. He was zealous for the tradition of the fathers to such an extent that he became a persecutor, chief persecutor of the followers of Jesus Christ. Why? Because according to human religious estimation, our Lord Jesus is an imposter of Judaism.

He should be crucified. Away with him. He was so zealous.

He was the chief persecutor of believers at his time. All the time he was seeking fulfillment. He thought he was serving God.

He was doing God a great service. Not doing. He was in darkness.

Blindness. Naked. Miserable.

He was sincere but deadly. Deadly. Wrongly sincere.

God looks upon the heart. God loves that young man. In spite of all that he did, God knew his heart.

His heart longs for fullness. But he looked in the wrong direction. He didn't know it.

Dear brothers and sisters, God looks upon our hearts. He knows where our heart is. What our heart is looking for.

Are we hungry and really seeking fullness? Are we just contented to be mediocre, halfway, never reach the goal? God loves a seeker. And if we are seeking, even if we may seek in the wrong direction, sooner or later he will reveal himself. That's the case with Saul.

So the Bible tells us one day he got the document from the chief priest to go to foreign cities, Damascus, to seize upon those who believe in the Lord Jesus, walk in that way, and brought them to Jerusalem, sentenced them to punishment, even unto death. Thank God for his long suffering. The cord of love is long.

He will let us go as far as we can. And then he will arrest us. Saul was on the way to Damascus when he was nearing that city.

At noontime, heaven, a light from heaven shone upon him. In such power, he was smitten to the ground. And then he heard a voice in Hebrew, Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me? It is difficult for you to kick against the cords.

It is not an angry voice. It is a sympathetic, loving, pitying, considering voice. Saul, Saul, it is difficult.

You are kicking against the cords. If you go on like this, you will perish. Brothers and sisters, I believe we all know when a farmer plowed the ground, he put an ox or a horse under a yoke, and then he will guide the yoke to chill the ground.

But sometimes that horse, or that mule, or that ox, can be stubborn. It has its own way. He wants to go this way or that way.

So when that animal is doing that, the farmer holds in his other hand a gourd, a sharp instrument. He will use the instrument to touch the leg of that animal. Of course, he does not want to hurt it.

He only wants to remind that animal, you have a master. You are here to do my will, not your own will. A slight touch.

But how foolish, how stubborn that animal is, it will kick back. And when it kicks back, it hurts. Brothers and sisters, don't you know that even before the foundation of the world, God has already chosen you in Christ Jesus, in love.

Don't you know that even when you are in a mother's womb, he has already separated you for himself. Don't you know that you are here with a purpose, not your purpose, God's purpose. Don't you know that you are not free to do anything you like to do.

You are his, created by him for his purpose. You have a master and you are here to do his will. If you don't, he will touch you with his gourd, softly, gently.

But how you kick back and you have to be touched again and again. Even one day you realize it's useless, it's foolish. Brothers and sisters, it is foolish to live for yourself.

You only hurt yourself and our Lord wouldn't like it. So, so, why do you persecute me? He is not complaining that you persecute him, he is thinking about you. Why? It is to your own hurt.

Under that light, his naked eye, thank God for that. Sometimes our naked eyes are too open, too clear. As our Lord Jesus says, if your eyes are blind, there is hope for you.

And when his naked eyes were blinded, his inner eyes were opened. He saw, he saw the righteous one. It pleased God to reveal his son in him.

What a revelation. So, consider our Lord Jesus as a man of gallantry, a carpenter, an imposter, someone to get rid of, shouldn't live on this earth. But now, his inner eyes were open and he saw this man whom he persecuted is none other but a son of God.

All the fullness of the Godhead dwell in him body, the heir of all things, the very substance of the fullness of God, full of grace and truth, the righteous one, the risen one, the one in glory, the master, irresistible, all-powerful. Brothers and sisters, he had a glimpse of the glory of the fullness of God in Christ Jesus. It was only a glimpse, but that glimpse changed his whole.

He began to realize all his past was wrong. He was heading the wrong direction. He began to realize that not only our Lord Jesus is the Son of God, the Son of Glory, the fullness of God, he also realized those humble believers that he sees upon, sentenced even to death, they are living members of the body of Christ, part of that heavenly man.

Only a glimpse of it, but that glimpse finished the old man's soul and brings in the new man, Paul, the apostle. Paul means little, not as for, but little, nothing. Dear brothers and sisters, this is the beginning of the spiritual life.

And do you know, this is our beginning. The way to spiritual fullness, it begins with revelation. Now, the revelation we are talking about is not that which has been already revealed and be written in the Old Testament and the New Testament, because the revelation of God is completed in Christ Jesus.

In former times, God spoke through the prophets to our forefathers in pieces and in bits. But in the fullness of time, he spoke to us in the person of our Lord Jesus. So with the coming of the Lord Jesus, the revelations of God are completed.

Nothing can be added, nothing can be taken away. We find that in Revelation chapter 22. If you take away anything, the tree of life will be taken away from you.

You cannot add anything to it. It's complete, it's fulfilled. So brothers and sisters, we are not talking about revelation in that sense.

There is no more new revelation throughout the 20th century. Many people complain they have new revelation and lead people astray. No, there is no new revelation from above.

You have revelation from below, but not from above. We need to be careful about that. When you hear something that is contrary from the Word of God already given, the faith once delivered to the saints, beware.

But we are talking about revelation, not in the objective sense, but in the subjective sense. That is to say, what God has already revealed and is written in the Word of God, it is objective, it is truth, forever true, never changes, always working, no matter who you are, where you are. It works because it is truth, but it is objective.

How can this objective truth become our subjective experience? Through revelation. That is to say, the Holy Spirit, He will get hold of that which has already been revealed and bring it to us in such a living, personal way that it becomes an experience within us. That is revelation.

It is like Apostle Paul. On the way to Damascus, he received a tremendous revelation. Heaven is open.

Light comes from above. In that light, he not only heard the voice, but he saw the just one. That is revelation.

And that revelation is so personal, is so living, is so operative, that what is revealed comes from heaven into your innermost being. It is not only there, it is here within you. You can say, I heard it, I saw it, I knew it is true.

Brothers and sisters, that is the revelation we are talking about. That is the beginning of our spiritual life. Think of yourself.

How do you get saved? You may be brought up in a Christian family. You may have heard the gospel so much that you can preach it. I did.

I preached the gospel before I was saved. But God is distant to me. I pray, but my prayer hit the healing scene and come to me.

I do not know Him. I know very much about Him, but I do not know. Not until the Spirit of God convicted me of my sins.

And He convinced me that Jesus Christ is my Redeemer. If I confess my sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive my sins and cleanse me from all in 1930. I still remember that afternoon as I knelt before Him.

He opened my understanding. I began to see that He is my Saviour. I confessed to Him.

He came into my heart. He is real. Revelation.

That begins our spiritual life. And dear brothers and sisters, do not tell me that you don't know Revelation. If you don't, you are not even saved.

No one can be saved without Revelation. The natural man does not receive the things of God, for they are folly, and they do not know spiritual things. Because spiritual things can only be discerned spiritually.

To the spiritual dead, there is no way. Completely shut out until one day, God in His mercy, He looks upon your heart. He knows you are seeking.

He reveals, not only to you what you are, your sinfulness. He reveals to you the Saviour, the Redeemer, the Lord. Every step on the way to spiritual fullness begins with Revelation.

Remember this. When you first receive Revelation, you only get a glimpse of the fullness of God. He calls you by His glory, but the glory you see is just a little bit.

If you obey the Revelation given to you, more Revelation will be given. You have a taste of the goodness of the Lord, but that taste will increase your appetite. It will make you hungry for more.

Just like that virgin in the song of Solomon, kiss me with the kisses of your mouth, for your love is better than wine. Dear brothers and sisters, she has kissed your neck, your stiff neck, and make you softened, but don't stay there. Isn't that taste so sweet? You want a closer, more intimate relationship with Him.

Oh, long for Him. Do you have a longing for Him? If you do, He will satisfy you. You are on the way to fullness.

But remember, when Revelation is given, it calls for obedience. If you do not obey the light, if you do not obey what is revealed, that Revelation will fade away. But if you obey, more will be given.

Remember Abraham? While he was in the land of Chaldea, God calls him. The God of glory appeared to him. And when the God of glory appeared to him, all the idols, he could not stay in the land of Chaldea.

He heard a call, out of the country, of your kindred, separated, and go where I want to show you. Abraham heard the voice. He saw the glory.

He had to go. But unfortunately, he consulted with his father, who has no vision. He obeyed halfway, and got stuck in Herod.

For many years, no more Revelation, no more glory, no more voice of God. But by the grace of God, God took Herod away, gave him another chance. The same voice, the same command, nothing new, only said, your father's house.

Abraham obeyed. Brothers and sisters, what is the secret to spiritual fullness? On God's side, it is Revelation. On our side, it is obedience.

Obedience is better than sacrifice. Do we obey? Do we obey the light that he has given us? The apostle Paul testified, I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision. That's the secret.

Are we disobedient? Someone asked the question, why is it Paul doesn't say, I was obedient to the heavenly vision? And yet he said, I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision. I think it tells us that naturally, we are all disobedient. In our natural life, we do not obey.

We think it's folly. But thank God, I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision. So dear brothers and sisters, by the grace of God, he made Paul obedient.

He testified that he does not consort with flesh and blood. Immediately, he left for Arabia. And there for about three years, alone with God, reread the Old Testament that he knew by heart, but under a new light, not by that dim light of the law, but by the bright light of Christ.

He came back and announced that Jesus is the Christ. Dear brothers and sisters, that is what is happening. If we have a seeking heart, God will not fail to reveal his Son in you.

And when he reveals, learn to obey. Another thing you can find in the life of Paul, the reason why he seems to grow so fast into the fullness of God, is because he's diligent. He, even I saw, was a diligent person.

Not only diligently seeking the law, but diligently persecuting the Christians. He was not a lazy person. I think it is Deo Moody who says, even Satan does not want a lazy man.

He has no use for him. Dear brothers and sisters, we are all naturally lazy. We may be diligent in our own things, diligent in seeking the world, but when it comes to spiritual things, we are lazy.

It takes the grace of God, the exercise of our spirit, the working of the Holy Spirit in us, to build up in us a new character, the character of Christ, diligence. Our Lord Jesus, he was the most diligent person you can ever see on earth. If you read the book of Mark, you'll find the word straight away, immediately, how diligent he was.

And if you read the Bible, there are lots of teachings on this Christian character of diligence. In Hebrews chapter 4 verse 11, seeking diligently to enter into his rest. Hebrews 11 6, God is a rewarder.

He will reward those who seek him diligently. 2 Peter chapter 2, chapter 1, diligently add virtue to faith. Add and add.

And 11, he says, make your calling sure, election sure, that you may diligently enter into the kingdom of God. In the book of Proverbs, it is full of Proverbs on diligence, on laziness. Brothers and sisters, God loves a diligent person.

Do you really diligently seek him? Do you really diligently read his words? Do you really diligently pray to him? Do you really diligently serve him? That is a Christian virtue we need to cultivate. But of course, we cannot by ourselves make ourselves diligent. It is the work of the Holy Spirit.

He will remind us, whenever he reminds us, obey. So, brothers and sisters, what is the secret to spiritual fullness? Empty. That's the secret.

The measure of fullness is governed by the measure of emptying. The more we empty ourselves, the more we are filled with Christ. That's a spiritual law.

Thank God when we are saved. The Holy Spirit helps us to empty our sins by confessing, repenting. And as we empty our sins, redemption, forgiveness, salvation comes to us.

He fills us with himself. That's the beginning. Every time when the Holy Spirit reminds us, there is something in us that is not Christ.

Whether it is the world, whether it is sin, whether it is self, whether it is your flesh, whether it is from the enemy. When the Holy Spirit reminds you, learn to obey, cooperate. In the measure of your emptying, will be the measure of your fullness.

That's the reason why in our spiritual experience, you find once you empty yourself, you feel full. But that's your measure. But thank God, after a while, you begin to feel hungry again.

Why? Because he wants to fulfill you. And that will go on and on and on until you come to your full capacity. But dear brothers and sisters, our personal capacity is limited.

That is why the body, the church, the body of Christ is the fullness of him who fills all and in all. We need a body. We need to have our inner man strengthened by the power of the Holy Spirit.

That Christ may dwell in our heart, reign in our heart, that we may apprehend with all the things, the length, the width, the depth, the height of the love of God and to be filled with the fullness of God. We need one another. Isn't it too wonderful, too glorious? How can it be? Not by might, nor by power, but by the Spirit, says the Lord.

In Ephesians 3, we are told, it is by his power that works in us above all that we can ask or think of, that we may be unto the glory of God. And brothers and sisters, spiritual fullness is not for you, for you, nor for my glory. It is for his.

Dear Lord, by thy Spirit, lead us into the truth of spiritual fullness, that thou may be glorified in the church, in Christ Jesus. Amen.

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