

LESSON 13 The Spirit-filled Life

A Spirit-filled life should be the goal of every believer. Being filled with God's Spirit is another step or progression that should take place in the experience of every Christian. A Spirit-filled life is one that is completely yielded and consecrated to the Lord.

Jesus promised His disciples that when He went back to His Father He would send the Comforter, the Holy Spirit.

“When the Counselor comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father, he will testify about me.” (John 15:26)

This coming of the Holy Spirit happened on the Day of Pentecost. (See Acts 2.) Since then it has been possible for every believer to live the Spirit-filled life.

In this lesson we will learn what it means to have a Spirit-filled life. We will also learn of the reward that comes with being filled with the Holy Spirit.

The Plan

- A. Being Filled With the Spirit
- B. Sustained by the Spirit

The Goals

- 1. Identify some characteristics of a Spirit-filled life.
- 2. Describe how the Holy Spirit sustains a believer.

A. BEING FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT

Goal 1. Identify some characteristics of a Spirit-filled life.

Ephesians 5:18 instructs us, “Be filled with the Spirit.” This happens when one becomes a born-again Christian and is baptized in the Holy Spirit. Jesus used the words, *baptized in the Holy Spirit*, to indicate a beautiful spiritual experience His disciples were going to have. He said in Acts 1:5, “John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.”

As believers we can be baptized in the Holy Spirit just as the first disciples who waited in faith, thanking and praising God. They obeyed the instructions Jesus gave when He said, “I am going to send you what my Father has promised; but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high” (Luke 24:49).

One of the ways we can know we have been filled is that God’s power will come upon us as it did on the believers on the Day of Pentecost. The Holy Spirit will speak through us in languages that we have not learned. The early believers in the upper room all “were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them” (Acts 2:4).

It is important that a Spirit-filled life show character traits or “fruit” as they are sometimes called. In Galatians, Paul lists the fruit of the Spirit: “love, joy, peace, patience, kindness,

goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control” (Galatians 5:22–23).

If we think we are Spirit-filled and we are not showing these characteristics, we should ask the Lord what is wrong. If we do not have these traits, we can hinder the work of the Holy Spirit in and through us. Paul warns,

Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God,
with whom you were sealed for the day of
redemption. (Ephesians 4:30)

We can keep filled with the Holy Spirit by living in obedience to God’s will.

Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to
debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit.
Speak to one another with psalms, hymns and
spiritual songs. Sing and make music in your
heart to the Lord, always giving thanks to God
the Father for everything, in the name of our
Lord Jesus Christ. (Ephesians 5:18–20)

These Scriptures help us to understand what is meant by *living in the Spirit*. When we allow the Holy Spirit to direct our lives, we grow and develop into mature Christians (Galatians 5:16). The Holy Spirit keeps us alive and active so that we feel strong and ready to do the work of the Lord. This idea is stated in 2 Corinthians 4:16: “Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day.”

Application

1 Circle the letter before each statement which completes the sentence correctly. When the baptism in the Holy Spirit is received, the believer

- a)** speaks in an unknown language.
- b)** shows the “fruit” mentioned in Galatians 5.
- c)** grows spiritually.
- d)** will let the Spirit direct his or her life.

2 Read Ephesians 5:17–21 again. List at least three activities a Spirit-filled Christian should do, according to these verses.

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3 According to Galatians 5:16, what is the key to living in the Spirit?

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B. SUSTAINED BY THE SPIRIT

Goal 2. Describe how the Holy Spirit sustains a believer.

The Holy Spirit was sent to be our Helper. One of His titles is *Comforter*. When someone comforts us, he makes our lives easier. He holds us up when we are under pressure. That is what we mean when we say the Spirit sustains us.

The Holy Spirit sustains us. He helps us in every aspect of our Christian growth. The Holy Spirit helps us in our prayer life. “We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express” (Romans 8:26).

The Holy Spirit also guides us. Romans 8:14 says, “Those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God.” The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Truth and is the great Teacher and Guide into all truth. Jesus promised, “‘The Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you’” (John 14:26). “But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth” (John 16:13).

Among the results of the Spirit-filled life are the gifts that the Holy Spirit brings us. These gifts can become tools to make our work for God easier and more effective. One of the first gifts is power for Christian service.

“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” (Acts 1:8)

The Holy Spirit makes available to us His gifts, which are special provisions for Christian service. “There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit” (1 Corinthians 12:4). Gifts of the Spirit listed in 1 Corinthians 12:8–11 are the message of wisdom, message of knowledge, faith, gifts of healing, miraculous powers, prophecy, distinguishing between spirits, tongues, and interpretation of tongues. There are also other gifts and abilities that God through His Spirit wants to give us.

We have different gifts, according to the grace given us. If a man’s gift is prophesying, let him use it in proportion to his faith. If it is serving, let him serve; if it is teaching, let him teach; if it is encouraging, let him encourage; if it is contributing to the needs of others, let him give generously; if it is leadership, let him govern diligently; if it is showing mercy, let him do it cheerfully. (Romans 12:6–8)

The Holy Spirit also has blessings and glory for God’s children.

The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God’s children. Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory. (Romans 8:16–17)

The marvelous outpouring of the Holy Spirit comes in modern times just as it has in the past. God is baptizing many Christians in the Holy Spirit. Let us pray that this will continue. Pray for your church that your pastor, deacons, and all of the members may be filled with God’s Spirit and be used of Him.

It is this Spirit who will sustain us even if we face problems, hunger, hardship, persecution, poverty, or death. Paul reminds us that “in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us” (Romans 8:37).

Application

4 To say that the Holy Spirit sustains us means He

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5 One title for the Holy Spirit that is mentioned in this lesson is

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Check Your Answers

- 1** You should have circled all of the letters, as all are correct.
- 4** comforts and holds us up when we are under pressure.
- 2** You could list any three of the following: sing hymns and psalms, have praise in your heart, give thanks in everything, submit yourselves one to another, have reverence for Christ.
- 5** Any of the following: Helper, Comforter, Spirit of Truth, Teacher, Guide
- 3** Having the Spirit direct our lives

Now you are ready to answer the questions in your unit evaluation report for Unit Two. Review the lessons in unit two, then follow the instructions in your unit report. When you send your answer sheet to your instructor, ask about another course of study.