

RESULTS OF THE SPIRIT'S FILLING

"And do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord; always giving thanks for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God even the Father; and be subject to one another in the fear of Christ." Eph. 5:18-21 (NASB)

To be filled with the Spirit is to enjoy the normal Christian life. This comes as we yield ourselves to God and to His will, as we confess and forsake our known sins and as we walk in dependence upon the Spirit's power and particulars revealed in His Word.

Then the Holy Spirit can control us, working in us to will and to accomplish His good pleasure as we consciously depend on Him. (Phil. 2:12, 13)

The results of His control over us will be noticeable. However, we will not expect perfection. We will be continuing our constant battle with our "flesh." It is specifically for victory in this warfare that the Spirit indwells us and would control us (Gal. 5:16-18). The Spirit's work of changing us from one stage of Christlikeness to another implies growth while yet imperfect (2 Cor. 3:18). The Spirit is perfect, but He is pleased to use imperfect creatures redeemed by the grace of God. When He controls us, though, we do not sin. But when we sin, we have taken control from Him and asserted our rebellious wills. When this happens, we must confess our sins for return to His control (1 Jn. 1:9).

Positively, His control leads us out of our selfish control into more and more of the Spirit's control. We are to know an ever-increasing control by the Spirit as he continues to show us what yieldedness and obedience mean.

This leads to maturity, a condition of adjustment to life and its demands with proper attitudes and proper development of character and resources. Maturity is not static but dynamic. Spirit control maybe instantaneous and monetary, but maturity demands time and experience under the Spirit's control. All believers should be spiritual (Eph. 5:18), yet only the mature are generally allowed to have leadership positions (1 Tim. 3:6).

The primary evidence of the Spirit's control is not the spectacular and miraculous, but Christlike character and behavior. The fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22, 23) is a reflection of Christ's life growing within. There will be response to the grace of God in worship and praise, thanksgiving and in humble concern for others in the home, the church and the community (Eph. 5:18-6:19). The Spirit will teach us, lead us and empower us for evangelization and edification (Acts 4:29-31; 1 Cor. 12:14-27).

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