

Filled with the Spirit

by Coty Pinckney 9/19/08

How can you live the Christian life? How can you fulfill the purpose of your creation through glorifying God? How can you resist temptation and obey the command to rejoice in the Lord always?

The message of the Bible is: You can't. That is, in your own power, through your own resolution, by means of your concentrated effort, you can't.

But you can – by the power of God.

Jesus says, "Apart from me you can do nothing" (John 15:5). But that same verse implies that with Him, when you are connected to Him, leaning on Him, depending on Him, you can live to His glory: "Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit. . . . By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples" (John 15:5, 8).

God gives us power for living the Christian life through filling us with the Holy Spirit. Next month, as we consider Acts 2 for three or four sermons, I'll have much more to say about the different images that Scripture gives of the activity of the Spirit within Christians. For today, consider these different passages that discuss the filling of the Spirit.

Why does God fill His people with His Spirit?

For glorifying God through craftsmanship

Exodus 35:30-33 "See, the LORD has called by name Bezalel the son of Uri, son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah; 31 and he has filled him with the Spirit of God, with skill, with intelligence, with knowledge, and with all craftsmanship, 32 to devise artistic designs, to work in gold and silver and bronze, 33 in cutting stones for setting, and in carving wood, for work in every skilled craft.

For glorifying God through effective leadership

Deuteronomy 34:9 And Joshua the son of Nun was full of the spirit of wisdom, for Moses had laid his hands on him. So the people of Israel obeyed him and did as the LORD had commanded Moses.

For glorifying God through preaching to sinners

Micah 3:8 But as for me, I am filled with power, with the Spirit of the LORD, and with justice and might, to declare to Jacob his transgression and to Israel his sin.

Acts 4:8-10 8 Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, "Rulers of the people and elders, 9 if we are being examined today concerning a good deed done to a crippled man, by what means this man has been healed, 10 let it be known to all of you and to all the people of Israel that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead--by him this man is standing before you well.

For glorifying God through pronouncing blessing on another servant of God

Luke 1:41-42 And when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, the baby leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit, 42 and she exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb!

For glorifying God through ministry to the physical needs of others in the church

Acts 6:3 Therefore, brothers, pick out from among you seven men of good repute, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we will appoint to this duty.

For glorifying God through persevering and rejoicing in the midst of persecution

Acts 7:55 But [Stephen, while being stoned to death], full of the Holy Spirit, gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God.

For glorifying God through living the Christian life in our closest relationships

Ephesians 5:18: *Be filled with the Spirit.* [This expresses itself partly in our] 21: *submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ.* [Paul then explains how we submit to one another in our most intimate relationships]:

- Wives to husbands: 5:24 *Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit in everything to their husbands.*
- Husbands to wives: 5:25 *Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her,*
- Children to parents: 6:1 *Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right.*
- Parents to children: 6:4 *Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.*
- Employees to employers: 6:7 *rendering service with a good will as to the Lord and not to man,*
- Employers to employees 6:9 *do the same [referring back to verse 7] to [your employees], and stop your threatening*

We live the Christian life through dependence on His power. Apply these truths to yourself – and ask God to fill you with His Spirit, to His glory.