

A Word From Your Pastor

“On one occasion, while He (Jesus) was eating with them, He gave them this command: 'Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift My Father promised, which you have heard Me speak about. For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.' So when they met together, they asked Him, 'Lord, are You at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?' He said to them: 'It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by His own authority. 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.' After He said this, He was taken up before their eyes, and a cloud hid Him from their sight.”

Act 1:4-9 NIV

Thank God for the Holy Spirit! As a child of God, He is the Greater One who lives within you! **I John 4:4** tells us: ***“You, dear children, are from God and have overcome them, because the One who is in you is GREATER than the one who is in the world.”***

Are you thankful for the Holy Spirit of God? Do you realize that He is the 3rd Person of the Trinity? Do you know that it is the Holy Spirit who indwells you? Many times throughout my day I will say something like this? ***“Heavenly Father, I thank You for the Spirit of the Living God! I thank You, Father, for Your Spirit who lives within me! He is the One who empowers me and anoints me to do what You have called me to do! Heavenly Father, You are the Greater One who lives within me by the Power of Your Spirit! Thank You for strengthening me today!”***

That's what I say because I realize that without the indwelling presence of the Spirit of God in my life, I could not even begin to serve as your pastor. Many of you knew me from my high school days – and you knew me to be very shy, quiet, timid. Yes, that's how I was! So what has made the difference? Very simple – the filling and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in my life. To God Alone be all of the glory! Jesus told the disciples in Acts 1:8 – ***“But you will receive POWER when the Holy Spirit comes on you!”*** That same power is available to us as Christians today, just as it was on that first Day of Pentecost!

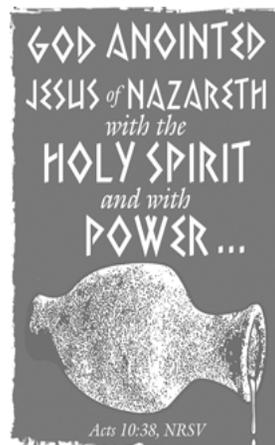
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Have you ever left church on *“cloud nine”* and you were full of the Lord's presence? What filled you was the intake of His Word, the inspiration of the music, the prayers, and all those things that add up to a worship service!

Many have come to expect that kind of spiritual experience to happen only during a *‘two-hour’* block of time on Sunday morning. But the way you get filled and stay filled is to learn to do on Monday through Saturday what you did on Sunday! The way you get filled and stay filled is to make your life a worship service. Listen to the words of Ephesians 5:18-20 – ***“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.”***

A good example to think about would be our vehicles. They can only go so far before having to have their gas tank filled again. So also, we must continually be filled with the Spirit! We live in a world that depletes our filling. Sin depletes the filling. When you go against your conscience, it is depleted. So the Holy Spirit's fullness in our lives is constantly being depleted. This is not because He (Holy Spirit) is deficient, but because we are imperfect Christians who still carry the principle of sin around with us.

I encourage you to make it your goal in 2019 to live a life filled with the Spirit of God! **Galatians 5:16** says, ***“So I say, live by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature.”*** Make it your priority this year to be present at our worship services, Sunday School classes, Bible Studies. Times of corporate worship are just as important as times of private worship and devotion. Remember, the Greater One is living within you! **HAPPY NEW YEAR! 2019!!**



***In Christ Alone,
Pastor Mike***