

(pastor has orig)

Filling of the Spirit (Is the Holy Spirit Filling You Right Now?)

They tell me that it is rude and impolite to ask people personal questions, especially people you don't know real well. You don't ask a man how much money he makes. I go into a hospital, someone is ill and had surgery, I do not pry and ask ~~many~~ personal questions about the nature of their illness, that would be rude and impolite. If they want me to tell me, they can. I want to be rude and impolite for just a moment. And I want to ask you, each one of you, a very personal question. And I want you to answer it - not out loud, not with the uplifted hand, but you answer it in your own heart. I want to ask you a very personal question. IS THE HOLY SPIRIT FILLING YOU RIGHT NOW? At ~~this~~ this very moment, preacher, singer, Christian man, Christian woman, boy or girl - IS THE HOLY SPIRIT FILLING YOU RIGHT NOW?

Now there are three possible answers you can give to that question. One, you can say, yes, praise God I know the Holy Spirit is filling me right now. You may be able to answer, No, He isn't. And there is a third possible answer, you may say I am not certain what you mean by the filling of the Holy Spirit. I don't know if I am filled with the Spirit or not. And I pray by God's illuminating that before we are through you will be able to answer that question - honestly, clearly, certainly. I think next to that question, Do you know Jesus? -- this is the ~~the~~ most important question anybody will ever ask you - IS THE HOLY SPIRIT OF GOD FILLING YOU RIGHT NOW? And I want you to answer the question - IS THE SPIRIT OF GOD without any shadow of a doubt, FILLING YOU RIGHT NOW? Now there is some misunderstanding about the filling of the Holy Spirit. But as I mentioned earlier ~~at~~ I think one of the greatest truths in all the word of God is that when I became a Christian the Spirit of God came to permanently indwell me - to make His home in me. Now being filled with the Spirit of God is not having more of the Holy Spirit than you have now. I have often in times past used that illustration of an empty glass with a little bit of water in it and I have said, now that water represents the Holy Spirit

and being filled with the Holy Spirit means that I pour more water until that glass is filled. That is not a scriptural illustration. Because when you were saved, God gave you the whole Holy Spirit and I think one of the grandest truths of all is that I have all of God dwelling in me right now - I don't have just a little bit of God in me, a little bit of God in you and a little bit of God in you -- like God kind of spread Himself thin, you know, and passed Himself out to all of us. I have all of God in me and you have all of God in you and you have all of God in you. When the Spirit of God came to indwell you the whole Spirit of God came to indwell you. And you know it takes that to save you. A half a God in you could not save you. That little daisy growing out ~~you know~~ yonder needs the whole sun to keep it alive. You say, well such a little flower doesn't need all of that sun, doesn't need all of that light - but if you were to subtract half of that sun, that little flower would die. It takes the whole power of the whole sun to keep one little blade of grass alive. And it takes the whole God, all of God there is in you to save you and to sustain you. Being filled with the Holy Spirit isn't having more of the Holy Spirit than you had before. Paul commands in Eph. 5 verse 18 -- and this is my main test this morning - we are going to be using several other verses, but this is the main one. Eph. 5:18 Paul said: To be filled with the Spirit. What is the filling of the Holy Spirit?

First of all the filling of the Holy Spirit is a COMMAND OF GOD.

It is a COMMAND OF GOD. You know that that verb is in the imperative mood, it is a command. It is not a suggestion, it is not a wish, but it is an undeniable and unalterable command of God. Be filled with the Spirit. And it's in the plural. He's not talking to super saints, the filling of the Holy Spirit isn't for the hierarchy of heaven. It's not for the elite of the elect. It's not just for preachers and evangelists. It is for everyone. And God commands every person who is saved to be filled with the Holy Spirit. The first thing that you and I need to understand is that this filling of the Spirit of God is not an optional item. It's not luxury equipment in the Christian

life. It is standard equipment in every Christian life if he is to be ~~X~~ effective and to bring honor and glory to the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is a command to be filled with the Spirit. Now, if it is a command for me to be filled with the Spirit - then if I am not filled with the Spirit, I am living in sin. Did you know, has it ever occurred to you that it is a sin for you not to be filled with the Holy Spirit? We need to be convinced of this and we need to be convicted of it. I think a great many people in our churches think that it would be nice if they could be filled with the Spirit and they would love to be filled with the Spirit, but it's not absolutely necessary and I doubt if very many people are convinced and convicted that not to be filled with the Spirit is a sin against God. But it is. It is just as much a ~~XX~~ sin against God not to be filled with the Spirit as it is to be drunk with wine. Now I don't know any other way to read that 18th verse than that way. There are two commands in that verse -- one is a negative command and the other is a positive command. The same God made ~~XX~~ both commands. The same Spirit inspired both commands. It is a sin not to obey the command of God. With one breath Paul says, don't be drunk with wine. With another ^{breath} ~~breath~~ but, on the contrary and in contrast to that, be filled with the Holy Spirit of God. To be drunk with wine is a sin against God. And not to be filled with the Spirit is a sin against God. What do you do when you ordain deacons in your church - bring them together and question them, got to make certain that these men fulfill the scriptural obligations. Do you tithe? Do you drink wine? Are you the husband of one wife? Did you know according to Acts chapter 6 that it's just as much a qualification for a man to be set apart ~~X~~ for service, to be filled with the Spirit of God, as it is for him to tithe? Actually, it's more of a qualification because the Bible never tells the deacon he has to tithe. You'll never find that as a qualification for a deacon. Every Christian ought to, but it's not listed in the qualifications. Let me tell you what to do to ~~XXXX~~ kind of get things going in your church. The next time you have a deacon organization, or ordination, and you begin to select men, you stick to the Word of God and bring the level of your experience to the standard of the Word of God, and demand that no man be

be ordained unless he knows that the Spirit of God is filling him with the Spirit. Because as we have always said the ability to serve in a church has nothing to do with your natural talent, or your native ability and the one reason we have some many problems in our churches is because we have ordained men to the minstry, as well as to the deaconship, who have not been and are not beknq filled with the Holy Spirit of God. It is a command to be filled with the Spirit of God and if the Spirit of God is not filling you right now, you are living in ~~x~~sin and disobedience to God. Well why is it a command? Why does God commandit? I want us to look at some verses and we're going to see that there are many reasons, ~~MA~~ but primarily there are two reasons why God commands us to be filled with the Spirit. First of all it is necessary for

PURITY OF LIFE

For purity of life. You'll listen as I read, or turn over in your Bibles to Gal. 5:16. Paul saysNow he goes on to point out that every Christian has something inside him, the Bible calls the flesh. And he also has something inside him called the HOLY Spirit and these two are opposed one to the other. In other words, the flesh is drawing us one way, that's the old self, ego, the ~~NIKX~~ big I, my old unredeemed, unregenerated nature is still there. You know I discovered something about that old nature, and that's when that when God saved me, He didn't change that old nature. God did not convert that old nature it is a terminal illness, and it cannot be changed. And I discover that the reason I ~~FAKX~~ failed so much in my Christian life, I kept trying to control and to improve andto sophisticate and to Christianize the old flesh and the old nature, and I'd been trying to fight it. Youcannot do it. You are no better now than you were when you were saved. I don't care if you have been saved 20 years, you are absolutely no better now than you were when you were saved. The only good thing in you the only thing that's different about you is that Jesus Christ, through His Holy Spirit is indwelling you and if He were to remove Himself from you you would immediately revert back into your pre-conversion state. You haven

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changed one bit. You are no better than you have ever been. God hasn't changed one bit of that old nature. He doesn't try to convert it, He crucifies it. But it's still there, alive and active, it will do anything. And it's a very powerful force. And every time you want to serve God, that flesh, that old nature, the old ego is there saying, don't be a fanatic, don't overdo it, let somebody else do it. Every time you try to serve God, try to pray, try to read the ~~BIBLE~~ Bible, try to please God, the flesh is there asserting itself, overpowering you. You have the flesh dwelling in you. Now the works of the flesh are obvious he says, and he gives a whole list of them there in vv 19 and 20, the works of the flesh. And they are not merely ~~m~~ just these big gross sins that we call the works of the flesh but they have to do with your attitude, bitterness, unforgiving spirit, a critical attitude, powerless, all of these are there. Now you also have someone else dwelling in you that the Bible calls the Holy Spirit of God. I want you to listen for just a moment. You have three enemies in your Christian life. Three enemies in your Christian life, the devil, the world and the flesh. The devil is the tempter, the world is the temptation, and the flesh is the tempted. The devil stands on the outside holds up the world and appeals to the flesh within me, saying, look here what I've got. And James 1 says that a man sins when he is led away of his own desires. That old sinful desire, that old unchanged nature that the Bible calls the flesh is in you. It looks and sees what the devil is offering, the world and it reaches out and takes it. Now on the outside, the devil and the world. They are on

the outside. The only enemy that you have on the inside is the flesh, the old nature. The only way that the devil and the world can get in to your life is if that flesh opens the door and lets them in. The only part of us that the devil and the world can appeal to is that old nature. Every sin is an inside job because that flesh that old nature, that old unchanged desire within you sees what the devil has, sees what the world has, opens the door and allows this to come in. Now, I don't have to worry about the devil, I don't have to worry about the ~~WXX~~ world, if I can somehow re-inforce this harbor, if I can somehow build a hedge around X the flesh, if I can somehow make my flesh inaccessible to Satan and the world, I'm all right. The only way the world and the devil X can get into me is through the flesh, that's his bridgehead, that's my vulnerable spot, that's the only spot the devil can reach me in -- everytime he tempts me, he appeals to that old lower nature, the same with the world. So, my problem is the flesh, the old nature, the big I, my ego, self. And if I can somehow re inforce that and get victory over that, then victory over Satan and the world will follow. ~~XXX~~ All right here's what Paul tells us: "this I say then walk in the Spirit and ye shall not by no means --- that's what the Greek says -- bad grammer, but X great theology, ye shall not by no means fulfill the lusts of the flesh, the desires of the flesh. Now I want to ask you, do you believe that? You shall not by any means X whatsoever fulfill the desires of the flesh. All right, it is walking in the Spirit, it is living in the Spirit, it is the power of the Holy Spirit, controlling me and filling me that conquers the flesh in my life. Now I want you to notice who fights the flesh here. Who fights

the flesh, taking study courses, making rules and ~~xxxxxx~~ regulations, trying to somehow butress the flesh, we've been fighting the flesh and we miss it every time. Notice who fights the flesh, the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit fights the flesh. I don't have anything to do with the flesh. If I try to fight the flesh, he'll overy power me, the Spirit of God fights the flesh, I step out of the way, take myself out of the picture, that's reckoning yourself ~~be~~ to be dead. I get out of the picture, and allow the HS to take it, He fights the flesh and He overcomes everytime. But I'll tell you it's a fixed fight. It's a fixed fight. Because I say who wins. Everytime the flesh and the Spirit get in the ring together, I pick the winner. And I have the terrible and awesome responsibility of saying, the flesh is going to win in this particular situation, I can yield to the flesh and it'll win, because the Spirit of God will never force Himself upon us. All right, then say I am going to yield to the HS and when I do that, what I do is un-tie the hands of the HS and I loose Him and let Him go and He defeats the flesh, He defeats the flesh. What we've been trying to do is ~~be~~ overcome the flesh in the energy of the flesh. Now that's ridiculous. Jesus said can a kingdom ~~be~~ divided against itself stand? Of course not, the flesh isn't going to ~~be~~ oppose the flesh. And so in the energy of my flesh, you know when I was saved, somebody ~~xxxxxx~~ said all right, now, Ron, the next thing to do is go out there and do your best for Jesus. We stand up and sing "~~we~~ Hear ye the Mast'ers call, give me your best. I'm going to do my best. Well I've done my best, and the flesh never opposes itself. And I want you to notice how beautiful this is. The HS fights the flesh and if I walk in the Spirit, that means

if I let my daily life be controlled and ordered by the HS, I will not by any means fulfill the desires of the flesh. Now I want you to see something in vs 22 -- "but the fruit is love . Now do you agree with me that there Paul is picturing the HS as a tree planted within the Christian. Right? The HS who dwells within us will produce ~~CCCCC~~ fruit. So the picture is a tree planted within the Christian. And this tree wants to bring fruit of love, joy and peace. But I've got a lot of old dead leaves of fornication, uncleanness, idolatry, hatred, and envy. How can I get rid of that old dead works of leaves and spoiled fruit and how can I have the blessed sweet fruit of the HS produced in me? Well I discovered something. I discovered that dead leaves don't fall off a tree. I always thought they did. Come Autumn the leaves turn, they die - they fall off the tree. No, they don't fall off the tree, you go out here and you cut a branch off a tree and let it fall down on the ground and let it lay there beside that living tree. Now as the seasons pass the leaves will brown and on that living tree, those dead leaves will begin to fall off. But you look at that branch on the ground, unless you pull them off or knock them off, they are still there. They don't fall off. They don't fall off. You know what happens to dead leaves? They don't fall off, they are pushed off. They are pushed out, as the sap, as the ^{life} ~~light~~ flows through the branches, it pushes out those dead leaves to make room for the fruit and the new leaves. Now listen, here's what some of us have been trying to do in our Christian life. We have been going around pulling off dead leaves. Pulling off dead leaves, we've been saying, I've got to get rid of this dead leaf of bad habits, I've got to get

of this dead leaf of filthy language, I've got to get rid of this dead leaf of an impure mind. We've been going around pulling off these dead leaves, that's not the way to do it. Oh, it's so simple. All I have to do is just to yield myself to the HS and allow Him to flow through me and to fill me and to allow Him to fill me with the fullness of Christ and as the life of Jesus and the power of the Spirit flows through me, it just pushes off those old dead leaves, they just fall off, pushed out by the power of the HS. What we've been doing is focusing all of our attention on our failure. That's a trick of the devil. You focus your attention on your weakness and your failure and you'll go on that way. You forget about your failure, don't look at your sins and forget about your habits and you focus ~~on~~ your attention upon Jesus ~~and~~ Christ on the power of the HS and as He infills you and as He flows through you He will push off all of those dead leaves. You won't have to worry about that, that's His business. I read over in John chapter 15 that "I am vine.... MY FATHER IS THE HUSBANDMAN and He will do the pruning. Oh, I thought I was supposed to do the ~~pruning~~ pruning. Man, all my life I've been going around with pruning shears trying to clip off the bad things in my life. And all of a sudden I realized the Father is the husbandman, He'll do that, He'll do that. Listen you need to be filled with the Spirit for PURITY OF LIFE, for purity of life. You've been trying to overcome habits and overcome weaknesses. ~~You~~ You'll never do it. You'll never do it. Let the Spirit of God fill you and as He produces love, joy and peace in you He'll just naturally push off those old dead leaves of sin. Necessary for PURITY OF ~~LIFE~~ LIFE. Necessy for POWER IN SERVICE.

~~XGEEK~~ FILLING

I love old Elijah. Boy I feel with him. I identify with Elijah. For one reason . He was on Mt. Carmel, he brought one of the best sermons I've ever heard, it was eloquent, powerfully delivered. And when he finished, the Bible says the people answered him not a word. Oh, I've been in that church, haven't you? Boy I've preached there a many time. You just preach your heart out and the best you know how, and you get through and they just sit there. They don't say Amen, they don't say, Praise the Lord, nobody gets saved, nobody mad, nobody glad, nobody sad, nothing. When Elijah preached with fervor, they answered him not a word. Now listen when the fire fell, when the fire fell, the people fell on their faces, they said, the Lord He is God, the Lord He is God, Boy, you're right Elijah, he's God. Elijah had been trying to get them to say that all along but they wouldn't do it until the fire fell. And when the fire fell they said, the Lord He is God. You must be filled with the Spirit to have POWER IN SERVICE.

Now we go to another portion of the Word, in John chapter 15. One of my favorites, and with this we are illustrating the principle of POWER WITH SERVICE -- you must be filled with the HS in order to have POWER WITH SERVICE. We are always interested in how we can have more people saved in our churches, and we can have more baptisms, increase every year. Well right here Jesus tell us, but I've never heard anybody use this as a method of evangelism. Jesus said in John chapter 15, "I am the Isn't that what we want? More baptisms, more people saved. All right, how do you do that? He purges the branches that they may bring forth more fruit. Now look in verse 4 --- " abide

I am the vine bringeth forth what? MUCH FRUIT. Fruit, more fruit, much fruit. For without me you can do nothing. And he goes on to say in verse 8 "..... He's not glorified not just with fruit or more fruit, did you notice that? He's glorified with much fruit. A man has a vineyard, is he honored is he glorified is his vines produce fruit? A bit more fruit -- no. He's not satisfied, he's not glorified until every branch is bearing fruit. Until every vine is producing. He is glorified when that vine produces much fruit. Well how are ~~§~~ you going to produce much fruit? Listen, Jesus said, I am the Vine, ye are the branches. Abide in me. And you'll bring forth fruit. Now listen, here is the relationship that the Christian has w/ Jesus. Jesus is the vine, I am just the branch. ~~EM~~ Did you know the branch doesn't produce fruit? The branch simply bears the fruit. The fruit is produced by the vine, the life flowing through the vine. The branch is just a coat rack to hang grapes on~~E~~. That's all the branch is for. It just must be there so it can bear fruit. It never produces fruit, it never produces fruit. It cannot produce fruit. And you and I cannot produce fruit, and I can't produce it and you can't produce it, Jesus produces it. He says all I want you to be is just a branch. Just make yourself available and you just abide in me. Now where is the responsibility for fruit bearing? On the branch? No. On the vine. Where is the responsibility for fruit bearing in my life? On me--- I used to think so and I worked myself to death and then worried I hadn't done enough, until I discovered that the responsibility for fruitfulness is not on me, it's on Jesus. He is the vine, all He asks of me is to be a branch. And what does a branch do~~E~~ all day long? It abides in Jesus. And it lets the life of Jesus flow through him and the life of Jesus

AS IT reaches through me touches the lives and transforms them. Now how are we going to have more fruit? How are we going to have more baptisms? Well baptisms in the church down, let's organize a new committee, let's come up with a new program let's go over here to this man he baptized so many a year, maybe he's got some secret formula, some method. I want us to look at the method of Jesus. I am the vine, you are the branches ... MUCH FRUIT. You know the way to bring forth more fruit? It's just to abide more and deeper in Jesus. Getting closer to Jesus, abiding in Jesus. And as I abide in Him, and as I let His word abide in me, as more and more of the Spirit of God flows through me, there will be more fruit, more fruit, more fruit. Listen, when I want to see more people saved in my church the thing for me to do is to make certain that my people are in Jesus more than they've ever been and the fruit will come from the Lord.

I remember a ~~few~~ fellow pastor of mine ~~was~~ one time was commencing to preach on how to learn to love the lost ~~XXXX~~ at an evangelism conference and so he said let's look for a text on learning to love the lost. We thought, that'll be easy. We found a lot of verses that told us why we ought to learn to love the lost, we found a lot of verses that showed us what would happen if we did love the lost. But we ~~and~~ could not find one verse of Scripture that told us how to love the lost. That's why a lot of people don't witness they say I just don't love the lost. We pray, Lord, give me a love for lost people. And then the Lord showed me, over in John -- remember when Jesus had his little breakfast talk with Simon Peter? Simon Peter comes and sits down and Jesus said, Simon, do you love

Feed my sheep. He asked him a second time, Simon, do you love me? Jesus, you know I love you. Simon, feed my sheep. He asked him a third time. Simon, do you really like me? Simon said, Lord, you know I do. Feed my sheep. Did you know that Jesus never one time asked him if he loved sheep? I can just imagine old Simon Peter, Jesus, sid, Simn, feed my sheep. Oh, Lord, I don't like sheept. I didn't ask you that, I asked you if you loved me. No, I don't care if you love sheep or not, if you love Me, feed My sheep. And allof a sudden I realized the way to X way to learn to love lost people is to love Jesus that's the motive, that's the motive. That's the motive and I want to tell you this morning, the most useless preaching I've ever done in my life. The most useless preaching I've ever done in my life is as I stood on Sunday morning and Sunday night and told mypeople, you'd better win souls, you ought to win souls, you need to get out and win souls. They knew that. And they wanted to, they were scared to death. They lacked motive, they lacked power. Now I'll tell you something else, nearly every Baptist has a guilt complex because he doesn't win souls and he knows he ought to. The pastor gets up on Sunday morning and adds to that guilt complex andintensifies it and says you ought to witness you ought to win souls, they know that. I believe honestly that most Christians, they want to doit, but they don't know how. One day God showed me what it was all about. He said, listen, you quit trying to get them to win souls. You get them to love Me, and let Me be Lord and let the Spirit of God fill them, I'lltake care of all of that other stuff. And when our people began to love Jesus and when they began to enthrone Jesus as the Lord of their life, and as they begin to appropriate the full

out ~~W~~ everywhere witnessing and sharing JC. That's the answer, that's the key right there. And you ~~must~~ must be filled with the HS for POWER IN SERVICE. Because yousee, one of these days all of us are going to stand before the Lord at the Judgment Seat and He's going to give us a ~~reward~~ reward or ~~a~~ a ~~loss~~ loss of rewards, according as our works shall be. Jesus -- Paul says in I Cor. chapter 3, "The Lord shall try every man's work - of what? What SORT it is. Now what size it is. The Judgement Seat of Christ is concerned with quality not quantity. And there are two sorts of work. ~~There~~ There are two kinds of works he describes in that passage. One is that which is wood, hay and stubble. And the other is that which is ~~precious~~ precious gems and gold and silver. Those are the only two sorts of works. And every man builds on the foundation of his salvation, a super-structure of Christian living made out of either wood, hay and stubble, or precious stones, gold and silver. Now, there are only two kinds of good. Human good and divine good, right? God rejects all human good. There's only two kinds of energy, the energy of the flesh and the energy of the Spirit. God rejects the energy of the flesh. Every thing that I do in the energy of the flesh - or in other words - everything I do without the fullness of the Spirit, constitutes wood, hay and stubble. When I go to that judgement seat, we all go together, and I look over there and I see a big old stack of works with my name on it, boy, I can hardly wait until I stand up before the Lord and He rewards me for that. Look at that, Look what I've done, look how many I've baptized. Look what I did, that big old stack. You say that's yours over there? Well, that's all right, you made it to heaven

Your name tag is bigger than your pile of works. Yes, there it is. Well that's all right. So the Lord reads my name and the closer I get to that big stack of works, all of a sudden I become aware of something. I stand there and it's wood, hay and stubble. And the Lord Jesus Christ strikes a match and sets the fire to it and says let's just see if you lived in the Spirit or in the flesh. Let's ~~see~~ see if you preached, sang, and taught and witnessed for My glory or your ego. And He touches the fire to it - whfff, it's gone. He comes over here to this little fellow, little pile of gold and silver and precious stones. He says, let's test yours and He strikes the match, and it doesn't hurt because that's how you make ~~gold~~ ~~gold~~ gold, silver and precious stones - with fire. I want you to know this morning, and it is a solemn fact, a very solemn fact, that ~~it~~ it is highly possible that a man can live all of his life ~~and~~ as a minister of the gospel or preacher and deacon and work and work and work and work ~~and~~ and stand before Jesus at the Judgement Seat of Christ and have his entire life of Christian service lost. I believe that will all of my heart. And the key is not building bigger churches, because sometimes you are just building bigger haystacks, that's all. It's got to be done in the power of the Spirit if it's going to stand the test. And I want to know this morning if you were to stand before Jesus Christ at this moment and He were to test your life, has your life been lived in the fullness of the Spirit or in the energy of the flesh? And if your life has been lived in the energy of the flesh, it's going to be wasted and it'll go up in smoke and you shall be saved yet, so as by fire. You will be like a man who is awakened in the

AND THEY say, your house is on fire, run for your life. And you get out and all you escape with is just the sheet wrapped around your body. And you look back and your whole life's savings, your life's work, your home, everything, all of your possessions goes up in smoke. I say that's a very solemn truth. That's a man's ministry, a Christian's entire life of service can be lost at the Judgement Seat of Christ unless it is done in the fullness of the Spirit.

All right, it is a COMMAND, and secondly, and more briefly it is a COMMAND TO BE CONTROLLED BY THE SPIRIT.

Let the Spirit of God fill you - that's a passive verb and the NEB, I think, translates it properly, Let the HS fill you. You see, that puts the reluctance on our part, not on His part, some of you have never been filled w/ the HS because you think God is reluctant to fill you and you beg Him and plead with Him and hope that some day you'll grow up into the filling of the HS. Listen, you do not grow up into the filling of the Spirit, you grow from the filling of the HS. There is no spiritual growth until you are filled with the Spirit. Now you may grow in knowledge and may grow in church membership and church activity, but spiritual growth comes only after the filling of the HS. You do not grow towards the filling of the HS, maybe one of these days I'll attain to it, NO. You have, ~~EM~~ you appropriate the filling of the HS and then you grow from it, what does it mean to be filled? It means to be controlled. One man ~~E~~ translates this "to be possessed completely of the Spirit". And we get that idea from wine. When a man is drunk w/ wine, he is controlled by that wine. And to be filled

with the Spirit is to have the HS controlling me. You say, I would love to be filled with the Spirit. Would you? Would you really now? Would you really like to have a Person controlling you that would not tolerate any self-centeredness in your life? Do you mean that you really want to be controlled by a Person who will not tolerate any ~~ENING~~ thinking of yourself first? Do you really want to be controlled by a person who will not tolerate any envy and jealousy? You mean you really want to be controlled by a person who is going to demand that you recognize you have no rights of your own and you are nothing but a slave? Do you really want to be controlled today by a person who is going to demand absolute holiness of life, and will not tolerance any sin in your life? It is to be controlled by the HS. Now I think in that controlling there are two things involved. One, of course, is dethrong self. Saying no to self. There can only be one operator of the Christian life - either self, or the Spirit. And the first thing I have to do is to recognize that I am not my own, I am bought with a price, and I dethrone self. Well that's just ~~X~~ the negative. The real test, the real key, is I must enthrone Jesus as Lord in my life. I was saved when I was nine years old, I was called to preach when I was 15. I preached my first revival when I was sixteen, and pastored my first church when I was seventeen, I cut my teeth on good old fundamental, conservative SB preaching. But all ~~X~~ the days of my ministry there was something missing, and I had no idea what it was. Because I would preach victory, and live defeat. I would preach peace, and ~~HE~~ know anxiety. I would preach love, and yet was aware of critical spirit and bitterness and jealousy and envy. You

know after preaching for a few years, I ran out of gas, went stale and stagnant. I had to force myself to get into the pulpit. I'd drive to church on Sunday night and see other people out barbecuing, you know, or charcoaling during T.U. and I would wish I could do it. I tell you there is nothing worse than making yourself go to church. And there is no ~~xxx~~ feeling to compare with that horrible feeling of making yourself preach because you get paid to do it, and you wish you didn't have to. I tried to get out of the ministry two or three times. I just couldn't do it. I never doubted my call to preach, I never did. I've doubted my salvation in times past, I've never doubted God called me to preach. I didn't know what was wrong. You know, I'd go to one conference and I'd think, oh boy, maybe this is it. Maybe one of these days I'll just read a book or I'll go to a conference or something will happen, I'll turn a corner and all of a sudden something will happen, God will lay something on me that will just change everything, and it never happened. I had a lot of emotional experiences, I got inspired by inspirational speakers, and I would come back and after two or three weeks I'd fizzle out again. Back down in the valley. I remember kneeling in my office many a time, and saying, Lord, I don't know what it is I need, but I need something. I don't know what's wrong, but I know there's got to be more to it than this. And I'd just say, Lord, would you do something, Lord just do something for me, do something in me. I prayed ~~xxxxxx~~ that for years. I knew all about the deeper life, I'd preached sermons, I'd preached conferences on the deeper life. Listen, you can preach it and not know it. And I knew all of the facts but I didn't know it. There was just something missing. Until the day, a night, about

two years ago. When I was away in a reviva meeting, the power of God just came down like I've never seen it before. And that week I went to the ~~MSJ~~ mountain, and that week I walked in glory. And on a Tuesday night after a service I said, Lord, I can never go back to what I was. I dreaded leaving the meeting, but I knew I had to go home. I just said, I can't stand to go back to the drudgery, the forcing myself. The trying to live up to it all. I said, Lord Jsus, ~~Wj~~ why can't it always be like this? And the Spirit of God seemed to say to me, Jesus isn't Lord in your life. Since the day you were saved, since the day you surrendered to preach, Jesus has never been ~~YSSX~~ absolute total Lord in your life. And he was when I was saved, He's got to be be or you are not saved. Since that time I had taken the controls of my own life, and the minute the HS told me that, I knew it was true. All of a sudden, things begin to come back moments when I became aware in years past that I was holding back and had some reservations. And I can't tell you this afternoon what happened. But all I know is that when that plane stepped down in Dallas the following Monday, and I stepped off that plane, J_esus was Lord in my life. And man, I tell you things changed, oh, man, things changed. ~~XMX~~ There was a love - you know I always loved people because I was supposed to - I think I tolerated them - you know. And people were a bother. And I loved people who would help me and were for me, I loved people who loved me. But all of a sudden I found myself loving everybody. Man, I just loved everybody. There were some people in our church that we didn't see eye to eye with, we had been dead locked to and opposed to in certain issues, something strange happened. All of a sudden, I loved

that man,

I loved those people. And I couldn't help myself. I just couldn't help myself, I just loved them. And there was a joy that I've never known before. And my wife even remarked on it. I was just so happy and there was such a joy, and there was peace. I've never known such peace. I'd come home after working at the church and I'd walk up and take my little girl and walk up the ally and just think about the peace, the fact that Jesus is Lord. I don't know, all of a sudden, everything was just so peaceful. I'd lay awake at night, couldn't go to sleep, just thinking about Jesus, Lord. What a change. Peace. There was self-control, there was victory. I'd had problems as you do, weaknesses, and sins and habits as you have, that I'd never been able to get victory over, and all of a sudden they were gone. One of my deacons came to me and said, Ron, it's evident that God has done something in your life, how can the same thing happen to us? I said, I don't know. Because I don't know what's happened to me. I don't know what's happened, but I started then, saying, Lord, show me what you did, show me what happened. I went to the book, I wanted to know if this was Scriptural or not. And I wanted to know, and I said, God, teach me. I needed to tell my church this. Because when I came back on a Wednesday night I wrote every member of my church and I said I want you to come, I want to tell you about the revival, and I told them about that revival and I told them about mine, I told them Jesus was Lord and that I wanted Him to be Lord in this church and if people didn't want Jesus to be Lord in this church, they can go somewhere else. We want Jesus to be Lord in this church. And I finished and I didn't give an invitation or anything, I just

... down, the congregatin as one lined ~~XXX~~ in a long line and came to me and said, Praise the Lord, we're with you. And I thank God for a church that didn't turn me off. They said, we want what you've got. I said, Lord I've got to tell these folks. They're wanting to know what happened, and I don't know what happened, Lord, show me. You know what I discovered, when I made Jesus really Lord there was love, there was joy, there was peace --- you know what that is? That's the first three things mentioned in the fruit of the Spirit. What happened was when I made Jesus Lord, really Lord after the HS had awakened me to my need, He has to do that, just saying it doesn't make it so. The HS must reveal to you and awaken you to the ~~XXXXX~~ need, and when I made Jesus Lord, you know what happened? The HS filled me, He filled me. And it's made all the difference in my life. It made all the difference in my ministry. It's made all the difference in my home. I discovered that you can't fulfill Eph. 5:21, ~~22~~, 23, about wives submit yourselves to your husband, and husbands love your wife, until you are filled with the Spirit. That follows verse 18, did you know? That is the result of being filled with the Spirit? It made all the difference in our home. We have a new home. I've got a new church, the church has a new pastor, I've got a new Jesus, a new Lord. All things were new. And the filling of the HS, to control.

Now in closing, let me mention this one last thing. To be filled with the Spirit is a command of God, it is a command to be controlled, and IT IS A COMMAND TO BE CONTINUALLY CONTROLLED.

That verse literally reads "and be ye being filled with the Spirit." It's not a roller-coaster type of existence friends,

I'm not talking about a little inspiration now and then. ~~XXX~~ I'm not talking about a little holy kick once in a while, I'm talking about a daily walk, a daily abiding in Jesus, continually filled with the Spirit. That's ~~WHY~~ why I phrased the questions, not, HAS THE HOLY SPIRIT FILLED YOU -- but IS THE HOLY SPIRIT, AT THIS MOMENT, FILLING YOU? Is He at this moment controlling you? Is He? And I've discovered that in my own life, there is two ways for me to continue to be filled w/ the Spirit.

One - is instant confession of sin. The moment I become aware of sin, to instantly confess it. Secondly, by immediate obedience. The moment the Spirit of God impresses me to speak, to witness, to ~~pray~~ pray, to whatever, immediate obedience and instant confession. And it is a continual filling ~~of~~ the Spirit of God wants to give us.

Now let me ask you ~~XXXX~~ the question again --- IS THE HOLY SPIRIT OF GOD FILLING YOU RIGHT NOW? Is He? Is the HOLY SPIRIT OF GOD FILLING YOU RIGHT NOW? By that, I mean is the Spirit of God in absolute sovereign control of you, right now? If He's not in control, if there's any unconfessed sin, if there's any disobedience, if you know of a command in this Bible that you are not obeying, He's not in control, if there's unforgiveness, if there's any sin at all, the Spirit of God is not in control. ~~XXX~~ Is the Holy Spirit filling you, controlling you, right now?