

Being Spirit Filled

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I am convinced more and more that whether we call it being filled with the Spirit, living the crucified life, dying to ourselves, demonstrating grace, or walking in the Spirit, it all comes down to the same thing—relying on the Spirit of God. It is important—no, it is *essential*—for us to learn to depend on the Holy Spirit, rather than on our own strength. Here are four simple, but helpful steps to being empowered by the Spirit of God.

Walk in the Spirit. We have all read, heard, and listened to sermons on Galatians 5:16. “This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.”

A helpful thought came to me not long ago, which makes it easier for me to fulfill the command to walk in the Spirit. Our walk is made up of a series of steps. Each decision we make throughout our day is a step in this walk. We choose to either walk in the Spirit or to walk in the flesh.

Think with me through a couple scenarios. When I wake up in the morning, part of me wants to hit the snooze button on my alarm and stay in bed. Another part of me wants to get up and read my Bible. If I stay in bed, I’ve taken a step in the flesh. If I get up and read the Bible, I have taken a step in the Spirit.

At work, a coworker says something unkind or insulting. An immediate zinger pops into my mind—the perfect put-down. Everyone will laugh, my coworker will be embarrassed, and I will feel like a winner. The problem is that I will limit my opportunity to witness to that person. I will have yielded to my ungodly impulse, and I will have displeased Christ. If I make the statement, I have taken a step in the flesh. If I do not, I have taken a step in the Spirit.

Our walk is made up of our steps. By the grace of God we can continually, one moment after another, take the right steps and walk in the Spirit.

Submit Your Will to the Spirit’s Control. You are both flesh and Spirit. Paul explains in Romans 6:14, “For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace.” There is a part of you that still wants to do wrong (the flesh) and a part of you that wants to do right (the Spirit). Though you are still flesh, you don’t belong to the flesh. “Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh” (Romans 8:12). We don’t owe the flesh anything.

Our feelings are irrelevant in the matter of who we choose to obey. “Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord” (Romans 6:11). We belong to the Lord Jesus. We are told not to yield ourselves to the flesh, but rather, to yield ourselves to the Spirit.

Recognize Your Weakness. Paul understood his weakness. “For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not” (Romans 7:18).

God even gave Paul a permanent reminder of his weakness. “And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure” (2 Corinthians 12:7).

We think that we need to become strong so God can use us. While it is wise for us to fortify ourselves spiritually, the bottom line is that God uses our weakness, not our strength. It is when we are aware of our weakness that we depend on God’s strength. Our inability becomes God’s ability.

Thirst for the Spirit’s Power. Many of us do not enjoy the power of the Spirit of God because we do not desire it. We do not beg for Him to use us; we do not implore Him to fill us. The term *thirsty* indicates more than just obedience to a preset formula. It indicates an earnest, eager desire for the Spirit of God to fill us and use us in His work. There is no method that can take the place of a genuine desire for the Holy Spirit’s power in ministry. “Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price” (Isaiah 55:1).

Do you recognize the weakness of your flesh? Do you desire the power of the Spirit in your life? Start right now submitting your will to the Holy Spirit’s promptings by choosing to take one step at a time walking in the Spirit.