

Holy Ghost

Under The Influence: Part 2

June 12, 2002
Rev. Dr. Tony Soldano

SERMON DESCRIPTION

Do not ruin and waste your life with substance abuse but rather be filled with Holy Ghost and fire.

SERMON QUESTIONS

1. What do they need to know?
 - **Before Christ sent His church into the world, He sent His Spirit into the church.**
2. Why do they need to know it?
 - **Because the normal Christian life is a life that is spirit-filled and spirit-lead.**
3. How should we apply it?
 - **Continuously be filled with the power, anointing and presence of Holy Spirit.**

INTRODUCTION

- Ephesus – the city – in Paul’s day, the city of Ephesus (was in modern day Turkey), what is a mega booming metropolis that is very common to our modern-day cities. Despite its economic and social influence and uplift, it had many morality downfalls.
- The Apostle introduced Christianity among the people that were entrenched in the following:
 - Diversity
 - Immorality and sexuality
 - Witchery and occultism
 - Curses against other businesses and competitors
 - Worship of the goddess Diana
 - Paul cast out an evil spirit from a girl (Acts 19)
 - Economic:
 - Trade and money
 - Shipping and ports and a bridge city to the rest of the world.

CENTRAL TRUTH

To live under the “influence” means that you are living a Spirit-filled life that is under the control of Holy Spirit and the “in Christ” realities.

MAIN PASSAGE

Ephesians 5:14-21

¹⁴ Therefore He says: “awake, you who sleep, arise from the dead, and Christ will give you light.”

¹⁵ See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, ¹⁶ redeeming the time, because the days are evil. ¹⁷ Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is. ¹⁸ And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit, ¹⁹ speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord, ²⁰ giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, ²¹ submitting to one another in the fear of God.

Thoughts Regarding the Passage

Paul instructs the believers in the city of Ephesus to be wise because the days are evil. He exhorted Christians to live a Spirit-filled life in the midst of wickedness and dark spirituality.

TRANSITION STATEMENTS

The city of Ephesus was a wicked spiritual city that had many false gods, idol worship and immorality. All the traps of a modern society were present within its borders. Therefore, the Apostle Paul writes to these believers and communicates to them that they need to be wise and not foolish amid this prevailing darkness. More importantly, he indicated that the only way to live a victorious Christian life was to be continuously filled with Holy Spirit.

Paul communicates to the church of Ephesus that they need to be under the “influence” of Holy Spirit, meaning, under the control and rule of His authority, power, and anointing. Paul illustrates his point by creating a contrast between Holy Spirit and being drunk with wine or alcohol. Clearly, both substances have the ability to impact life, emotions, body, relationships, and so forth. Paul is, in effect, saying that a believer needs to live a life that is under the control of Holy Spirit and not of any other foreign substance. In other words, be under the influence of that which is godly, life-giving, and leads to eternal life.

Paul was very careful to point out that being drunk with wine and being under the influence of alcohol or any other substance would destroy and ruin their lives. Furthermore, alcohol is not only a stimulator, but it is also an anti-depressant. Substantially, it is a pain killer, and its effects are temporary at best. People often run to alcohol, drugs, and other anti-depressants in order to kill their pain; however, it is momentary, and it will require another dose soon after. Any stimulus has no long-lasting effects, and once the effects wear off, the cycle would have to be repeated. Sadly, in the process of repeating the cycle, it thrusts the individual into slavery and bondage.

By contrast, Holy Spirit is a life-giving Spirit that continuously fills the children of God with the very substance and nature of the Almighty Himself. Again, Holy Spirit does the very opposite of any stimulus; He is not temporary, He does not bring people into bondage but rather liberates them and fills them with joy, righteousness, and peace. Therefore, if wine causes dissipation, then Holy Spirit causes blessing and prosperity.

Paul is telling the believers in Christ how they ought to live in adversarial times. Seeing that they were surrounded by wicked spirituality it was essential for them to be filled and under the influence of Holy Spirit in order to live out a victorious and holy life. He encouraged and commanded them not to be caught up or swallowed up by the evil that was around them but rather to focus on the life-giving power and anointing and the realities of being in Christ.

MAIN POINTS

Principles of the Spirit Filled Life:

- The Spirit-filled life is a “normal” Christian life
- FILL up the standards of your faith walk in Jesus
 - Nothing good ever comes out of lowering the standards of our faith
 - We are no longer living up to the standard of the New Testament, we lower the standards
 - We call the normal weird and the weird normal
- Focus on being FILLED rather than what is empty in your life
 - As you fill your life with God, other things will automatically depart. Therefore, focus on the filling rather than what is lacking.

What does a life that is under the influence look like?

1. We are FILLED with ORDER that routes the chaos

- a. From the very beginning of creation and from the book of Genesis, Holy Spirit hovered over the deep and the darkness, and He brought order out of the chaos. This communicates to us as believers that the very first thing the Holy Spirit does in our lives is to create order - God's order and functionality that is based in truth and the knowledge of God.
 - Holy Spirit hovers over us from a life of chaos to order (Genesis 1)
 - Holy Spirit brings about order by speaking the word of God.
- b. ***Forward: Make a daily commitment to move forward in God.***

2. We are FILLED so that POTENTIAL does not go to waste

- a. As Paul wrote to the Ephesians, he created a contrast between Holy Ghost and alcohol - he indicated that we should be filled with the Spirit and not with wine.
- b. Dissipation – this means that things are wasted, much like wine, its effects wear off and the person must re-intoxicate themselves. It is a vicious and horrible circus that brings people into bondage and slavery.
- c. By contrast, the Spirit of God brings us into joy and into the freedom and liberty that is found in Christ - it is a life that is full and satisfied and it is not dependent on foreign substances.
- d. Invest in eternal things
- e. Illustration and contrast:
It would be foolish to say that everyone that gets drunk is a pleasant person but there are some behaviours that can be linked to being filled with the Spirit of God consider:
 - People that drunk act funny – they bypass their brain
 - Generally happy
 - Generous – buys everybody drinks – who is drunk at offering time?
 - Fun and friendly
 - People that are drunk think they can sing
 - They believe they are stronger than they really are
 - Alcohol slurs your speech – Holy Ghost clears your speech.
- f. ***Action: Redeem the time and use every opportunity for godliness.***

3. We are FILLED to live under the AUTHORITY and rule of Holy Spirit

a. *The concept of control is not that Holy Spirit is some prison warden but rather a loving God that leads and directs His children:*

- Under the control that occurs through relationship
- Godly direction of safety and protection
- On paths of life and righteousness
- In ways that will please God rather than offend Him
- Fruitful and meaningful ventures and opportunities.

b. **Action: Submit yourself to the will of God and trust that His plan is amazing.**

4. We are FILLED with AWARENESS of His PRESENCE

a. An intimate relationship with Christ will cause us to be sensitive to His presence and His working in and around us. This does not mean that we are constantly supernatural but rather, in our daily walk, the supernatural invades our lives.

b. Ananias and Sapphira lacked awareness of the presence of the Holy Spirit while Peter being filled with the Spirit indicated to them that their lies were towards God not to him.

c. **Action: Live in the awe and fear of God daily.**

5. We are FILLED to create atmospheres of POWER and ANOINTING

a. Everything the apostles and the early believers accomplished was by the enablement and empowering of Holy Spirit

b. The very shadow of Peter would heal people. We read this in the Book of Acts where the sick were placed on the street so that as Peter walked down the street people would be healed and touched. Incidentally, we have no record of Jesus ever doing this type of healing or miracle. Perhaps, this is what Jesus meant when He said, “and greater works shall you do”.

c. Even the deacons were required to be filled with wisdom, to be of a good reputation, and to be full of the Holy Ghost (Acts 6:3)

- Men of good reputation
- Full of the Holy Ghost
- Full of wisdom
- Full of faith – Acts 6:5

d. **Action: Stir up the gift within you**

QUOTES

Before Christ sent His church into the world, He sent His Spirit into the world. ~John Stock

When we are not filled with Holy Spirit, we will be filled with other things.

During Covid, spirits of alcohol were deemed essential, while Holy Spirit was deemed unnecessary.

Lying to the Holy Ghost is bad for your health.

Today we call weird normal and normal weird.

It is God's will that you're filled with the Holy Spirit.

Be under the influence of the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit can give you joy that substances cannot.

The Spirit-filled life is a normal Christian life.

The Spirit of God raises our standards.

In Christianity we turn the normal into the weird and the weird into the normal.

No one asked, "Is this a Spirit-filled church?" in the New Testament.

God wants to fill you more than you want to be filled.

Focus on being filled by God rather than where you feel empty

SERMON CONCLUSION

1. The will of God is for you to be FILLED

- a. The promise of the Father
- b. For Everybody.

2. Be open to the will of God – open vessel – FILLED

- Every Greek word has three components to it including mood, tense and voice:
Be FILLED – imperative mood – it is a COMMAND
 - Present tense – continuous action – keep being filled – you always must be filled
 - Passive voice – in other words, someone else must do it for you – God does the filling – you cannot fill yourself – Jesus must do it – I am an open vessel.

3. Believe and receive – rivers of living water

- a. Everything in God starts with believing, which is faith, and then receiving by the grace of God:
- b. John 7:37-39 - On the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, "If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. ³⁸ He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water." ³⁹ But this He spoke concerning the Spirit, whom those believing in Him would receive; for the Holy Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.

Acts 19:2-5 - He said to them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" So they said to him, "We have not so much as heard whether there is a Holy Spirit." ³ And he said to them, "Into what then were you baptized?" So they said, "Into John's baptism." ⁴ Then Paul said, "John indeed baptized with a baptism of repentance, saying to the people that they should believe on Him who would come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus." ⁵ When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.

QUESTIONS & DISCUSSION

1. Describe, in more detail, what it means that we should be filled with the Spirit instead of wine.
2. Should believers drink alcohol?
3. How does Holy Spirit make us naturally supernatural? Give real examples.
4. Describe some ways in which Peter and the Apostles in the early church walked in the sensitivity and awareness of Holy Spirit.
5. What does the statement, "Do not grieve Holy Spirit" mean?
6. Describe some of the supernatural demonstrations of power by the Apostles, the deacons, in the early church.
7. How does Holy Spirit direct our path, decisions, and life? List some of the examples that you see in the Book of Acts.