



COLLABORATIVE DISCIPLESHIP

2 Cultivate

How to be Filled with the Holy Spirit

1 Connect

Summary It has been said that the Christian life is not difficult—it is impossible when living it in our own strength. Jesus desires to live His life in and through us by the power of His indwelling Holy Spirit. In John 14:16-17 Jesus promised that He would send His Holy Spirit to live in all of His followers. By faith we can be filled with the Holy Spirit and empowered to live fruitful lives.

Jesus desires all of his followers to be filled With The Holy Spirit.

Being empowered by God's Spirit isn't simply one of many menu options for followers of Jesus. Scripture is clear that it is God's will, and an absolute necessity to enable us to live fruitful lives of impact and purpose.

Read Ephesians 5:15-20

“Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord’s will is. Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another with psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit. Sing and make music from your heart to the Lord, always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

Discuss

- 1 Describe the similarities and contrasts between being filled with the Spirit and being filled with something else.
- 2 What characteristics would you use to describe someone who is filled with the Holy Spirit?

How would you describe your current experience as a Christian?

3 Care

Since we last met, what happened as a result of expressing Christ's love to others?

How can you, or we, express Christ's love to others this week?

Here are a few ideas:

Pray God would meet their deepest needs.

Help meet a felt need they have.

Encourage them with a text, note or verbally.

Give them a thoughtful gift or buy them coffee.

Invite them to do something fun or meaningful.

Listen to their story.

Explore their thoughts on the gospel.

We have a natural tendency to live the christian life in our own strength.

Read Galatians 3:1-9

“You foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you? Before your very eyes Jesus Christ was clearly portrayed as crucified. I would like to learn just one thing from you: Did you receive the Spirit by the works of the law, or by believing what you heard? Are you so foolish? After beginning by means of the Spirit, are you now trying to finish by means of the flesh? Have you experienced so much in vain—if it really was in vain? So again I ask, does God give you his Spirit and work miracles among you by the works of the law, or by your believing what you heard? So also Abraham ‘believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness.’ Understand, then, that those who have faith are children of Abraham. Scripture foresaw that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, and announced the gospel in advance to Abraham: ‘All nations will be blessed through you.’ So those who rely on faith are blessed along with Abraham, the man of faith.”

Discuss

1 How are our own fleshly or human efforts viewed in this passage?

2 Can you think of a time where you lived by human effort rather than by the Spirit? Describe the differences in living by the Spirit and living by human effort.

3 Why is our belief or faith so important to God?

The filling of the Spirit produces the fruit of the Spirit.

Read Galatians 5:16-25

“So I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. For the flesh desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the flesh. They are in conflict with each other, so that you are not to do whatever you want. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.

The acts of the flesh are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God.

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit.”

Discuss

1 What difference can the Spirit make in our lives?

2 What character qualities does the Spirit produce?

3 What do you think it means to “live by the Spirit” and “keep in step with the Spirit”?

God answers when we pray in faith for the filling of His Spirit.

Being filled with the Spirit won't necessarily change your emotional state or circumstances. What God wants to do instead is give you the quiet confidence that He is in you, empowering you, and giving you everything you need to experience His heart, attitudes, and actions in any situation you face.

Read 1 John 5:14,15

“This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. And if we know that he hears us—whatever we ask—we know that we have what we asked of him.”

Discuss

1 What happens when we pray, with faith, for something that's God's will?

2 Since Paul commands Christians to be filled with the Spirit in Ephesians 5:18, can we pray in faith and expect God to fill us with the Holy Spirit?

Apply Take a few minutes of silence right now to reflect on what you've just discussed. When you're ready, ask God to fill you with His Spirit. (A sample prayer has been provided here.)

Dear Father, I need you. I acknowledge that I have sinned against You by directing my own life. I thank You that You have forgiven my sins through Christ's death on the cross for me. I now invite Christ to again take His place on the throne of my life. Fill me with the Holy Spirit as you commanded me to be filled, and as You promised in Your Word that You would do if I asked in faith. I pray this is the name of Jesus. I now thank you for filling me with the Holy Spirit and directing my life.

Note: If you have any questions about being filled with the Holy Spirit, you can find more resources on this topic on cru.org.

Pray In light of what we've discussed, how can we pray for each other right now?