



Word Filled

Brownsburg Church of Christ

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PM Assembly



Introduction:

One of the problems everyone faces when they start trying to talk about something like being God Filled is making the dividing line between what God does and what we do. Sadly, some people talk about being God Filled as if it is something completely accomplished by God and we simply sit on our backsides waiting for Him to accomplish it. Their theology usually includes action on our part, but once they are done describing the role our actions and work really play, our work and actions are really left out of it. On the other hand, there are others so afraid that people won't do what God has told them to do that being God Filled is explained as something completely accomplished by us as God just sits up in heaven watching and waiting to see how it will all turn out. Their theology usually includes words like grace, indwelling, power, but once they are done describing how God does His part, it almost seems like God's working and action are completely left out. We want to avoid both extremes. As we talk about being God Filled, I hope we are free to say about God's work and action exactly what the Bible says without always feeling the need to caveat it to death with explanations about all the work we have to do. At the same time, I hope we are free to talk about our work and action exactly the way the Bible does without feeling the need to caveat it to death with explanations about God's working. Can we understand that God is working and we are working? (cf. **Philippians 2:12-13**; **I Corinthians 15:10**). Because we are working, God works with us. Because God is working, our work matters. As the old adage says, "Without us, God will not. Without God, we cannot."

With all this being said, as we talk about being God Filled, let's begin this year by looking at one of the most important aspects of what we must do if we long for God to fill us. **Colossians 3:16** says, "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly..." (ESV). Consider also **Ephesians 3:17**. Jesus Christ dwells in our hearts by faith. Remember that **Romans 10:17** tells us where faith comes from—the Word of Christ/God. In other words, if we want to be God Filled, we have to be Word Filled. God has given us a lifeline, a connection to Him in His Word. There are so many things we can say about God's Word. I have no doubt we'll have many lessons this year connecting back to time in His Word. Tonight, I'd like to share with you a story that I think paves the way for why we want to be in God's Word and then explain the true importance that God's Word holds.

Discussion:

I. Background story: David's Armor

- A. I know it is odd to start with the account of David and Goliath to talk about being in God's Word. But I believe it gives us a background that should prompt us to be in God's Word. I hope I can make it clear.
- B. For a long time, I read **I Samuel 17** in a vacuum. We've all heard the story of David and Goliath, right? We know that David steps out on to the battlefield without armor. He didn't have any of his own. While King Saul offered his, David refused (**I Samuel 17:38-39**). He stepped on to the battlefield with a staff, 5 stones, and a sling. I can imagine most of the armed soldiers on Israel's side were worried and afraid. How can a boy with no armor survive? I can definitely see the Philistine soldiers laughing and ridiculing. "He has no armor, what can he do? Go get him, Goliath!" But we know how the story ends. David wins. David takes a stone, places it in the sling, spins it round and around, then lets the little stone fly through the air, and the giant comes tumbling down. David runs to Goliath, takes the giant's own sword, and cuts off his head.
- C. As I said, I've often read this story in a vacuum. I've made plenty of applications of it, usually ones that work. I've talked about "manning up." I've talked about facing our temptations and sins. I've talked about fighting the fight of faith. All of these are true and, I believe, are perfectly good applications of this story. However, something is missing—the actual historical and theological context of the story.
- D. This account takes place in a unique part of Israel's history. Israel was transitioning into a kingdom. They had been a tribal nation with judges that led them to various victories, but now they were following a king—King Saul. Consider a brief history of Israel's leaders and judges leading up to King Saul.
 1. **Numbers 27:18**—Moses' successor was Joshua, a man in whom is the Spirit.
 2. **Judges 3:10**—The first judge, Othniel, had success because the Spirit of the Lord was with him.
 3. **Judges 6:34**—Gideon successfully threw off Midianite oppression because the Spirit of the LORD clothed Gideon (clothed—might we see armor here?).
 4. **Judges 11:29**—Jephthah defeated the Ammonites because the Spirit of the LORD was upon him.

5. **Judges 13:25; 14:6, 19; 15:14**—All of Samson’s great feats were accomplished because the Spirit of the LORD rushed upon Him.
- E. While the Spirit of the Lord is not mentioned in conjunction with each judge, we recognize that all of their success happened because the Lord’s Spirit was with them. Then we come to Saul, who would be king. When God made the transition from tribal judges to national king, what did He do? **I Samuel 10:10-13** explains that the Spirit of God rushed upon Saul and Saul prophesied. And while Saul acknowledges the Spirit of God at first in the defeat of the Ammonites (cf. **I Samuel 11**), he eventually gets too big for his britches. He starts taking the glory to himself, disobeying the Lord. **I Samuel 16:14** is perhaps the saddest statement made about anyone in the whole Bible: “Now the Spirit of the LORD departed from Saul...” (ESV).
- F. Enter David. Notice what happened just prior to this statement about the Spirit departing from Saul. In **I Samuel 16:13**, Samuel had anointed David, the son of Jesse, to be the next king. And the text says this: “And the Spirit of the LORD rushed upon David from that day forward” (ESV). Do not let the significance of this statement pass you by. Though there is no miraculous manifestation, David is now in a line of individuals that have a special, empowering presence of God. Like Saul when he defeated Nahash the Ammonite, like Samson who brought the house down, like Jephthah who defeated enemies, like Othniel the first judge, like Joshua God’s warrior, like Gideon who was clothed in the Spirit, David is armed with the Spirit of the Lord.
- G. The fight with Goliath is not a story to be told in a vacuum. It is a story to be told in this long line of Spirit-filled judges and deliverers. This story marks the transition between Saul, whom the Spirit of the Lord had abandoned, and David, whom the Spirit of the Lord had filled and clothed. Saul had man’s armor. But he stayed on the sidelines quaking in his boots. David didn’t have man’s armor; he had something better. He was clothed in the Spirit. He had God’s armor. What was he able to do? He was able to win. He gained the victory because He was armed by God.

II. The Word of God: God’s Armor

- A. And now you are asking what all of this has to do with us? Either that, or you already know where we are going. We are in a battle. According to **Ephesians 6:10-12**, we are facing an enemy that seems insurmountable. Sadly, many in the Lord’s army are relying on their own armor and sit on the sidelines quaking in their boots or step on to the battlefield only to be repeatedly defeated because their armor cannot stand under the attack. Some decide the battle is hopeless and so defect to the enemy. But we do not have to be either of these. Instead, according to **Ephesians 6:13**, God invites us to put on His armor. We can walk onto the battlefield like Joshua, Othniel, Samson, Jephthah, Gideon, and David. We can be clothed in the Spirit. We can be God Filled. We can courageously step out of the line of the fearful and win the victory.
- B. But here is the kicker. Take a look at that armor. How can we put on God’s armor? We put it on by spending time in God’s Word. I’ll show you.
1. *Sword of the Spirit*: Of course we all know our offensive weapon is not a literal sword. It is not even a shepherd’s staff or a sling with stones. It is the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God (**Ephesians 6:17**). **Hebrew 4:12** defines the power of the Word as a weapon. It is so sharp it can even divide between soul and spirit, the dividing line which we can’t even define. But notice the rest of the armor.
 2. *Belt of truth*: We must fasten on the belt of truth. Or as some translations put it, gird up our loins with truth. The word picture of girding up loins was one of getting ready for battle. It meant wrapping up whatever part of your robes that might get in the way of the free movement of your legs and tucking it into a belt so you could move around on the battlefield. Thus truth prepares you for the fight. But where do we find truth? **John 17:17** says, “Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth” (ESV). What prepares us to step onto the battlefield with our Goliaths? Time in the Word.
 3. *Breastplate of righteousness*: The breastplate guards the heart. We are told that all evil begins in the heart and that we need to guard our heart because from it flow the springs of life. The breastplate of righteousness will protect our heart from Satan’s attacks. But where do we learn about righteousness and how are we trained in that righteousness? **II Timothy 3:16-17** explains that God’s Scripture is profitable for training in righteousness. As Roman soldiers of old drilled their formations and their fighting tactics in order to protect themselves and their companions in battle, we are drilled and trained in the righteousness that will protect our hearts by time in God’s Word.
 4. *Shod with the gospel of peace*: Shoes may not seem like a really important part of the armor, but we must not take them for granted. The most skilled and ferocious of soldiers could be brought down with ease if he didn’t have shoes. As his eyes and defense are focused on the direct assault of the enemy, a misstep onto a sharp rock could quickly bring him to his knees, distract him from the enemy, and end his life. If we want to maintain our maneuverability in the battle, undistracted by side issues, we need

to prepare our feet with the gospel of peace. No doubt this calls to mind the beautiful feet of those who preach the good news (**Romans 10:15; Isaiah 52:7**). But where do we find this gospel that prepares us with beautifully shod feet? **Colossians 1:5** explains we hear about the gospel in the Word of Truth. We shod our feet with the gospel by time in God's Word.

5. *Shield of faith*: Satan is hurling fiery darts at us. He is attacking in every way he can. These attacks can chip away at our resolve. But we can carry a shield that will protect us—our faith. An absolute conviction that God wins the war will protect us from Satan's assaults. Let's face it. When we think about the part of God's armor that gave David the victory, isn't it faith? Saul no longer believed in God's protection and deliverance. All he could see was his own armor that couldn't stand up to Goliath. But David saw God. David stepped out in faith. We need to carry this shield with us at all times. However, where does faith come from? We've already referenced **Romans 10:17** once, which says, "So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ" (ESV). We pick up the shield of faith by spending time in God's Word.
6. *Helmet of salvation*: I read once that there is really only one cause of death: lack of oxygen to the brain. The brain is what controls the body and gives direction to every part of it. You may have had a heart attack, but the real problem was the heart quit working and pumping oxygen to the brain. The head then is a pretty important part of the body. We want to protect it. What protects it? The helmet of salvation. Understand this. We aren't fighting the battle in hopes of receiving salvation. Rather, we are able to fight in this battle because of the salvation we have from God. If you are going out there trying to gain salvation through the fight, you are unarmed. But if you lay claim to the salvation God has given you, you can fight with faith and ferocity. But where do we gain this salvation? **II Timothy 3:14-15** explains that the Sacred Writings, the Scriptures are what make us wise unto salvation. If we want that helmet of salvation, we have to spend time in God's Word.
- C. Are you getting the picture? Do you want to follow in the long tradition of God-Filled, Spirit-clothed warriors in God's kingdom? Do you want to step on to the battlefield and come out victorious? Then there is one thing you must not fail to do. You must get in God's Word. There are no Spirit-clothed warriors who are not Word-Filled warriors. I am pretty certain that I cannot explain all the ways in which the Spirit works. I am pretty certain I cannot fully explain all the things that God actually does in the battle. However, there is one thing I am certain of. If you want God with you in the battle, if you want the Spirit to rush upon you so that you can be victorious, having spiritual victories that are tantamount to ripping apart a lion with your bare hands, defeating an army with only 300 men, or cutting off the head of a giant with his own sword, you have to dwell in God's Word and let God's Word dwell in you. You have to be Word Filled.

Conclusion:

Is Christ's Word dwelling in you? Are you Word Filled? Of course, this is not a one-time thing. This is an ongoing process. You can't just read the Bible once and be Word Filled. You need to have a habit of reading. With that in mind, we want to help each and every one of our members who are striving to be God Filled. We have established a reading plan, a God Filled Reading Plan. The beauty of this plan is not so much that if you keep up with it you'll get through the whole Bible in a year. The beauty is simply that it is a plan. If you miss a few days, don't worry, just pick back up either where you left off or where that day's new assignment is. In addition to that, we are going to have a blog that goes along with this daily reading. You can find the link on the church's website and each day you can get a little God-Filled boost from God's Word to help you grow and fight the good fight of faith. Whether you participate in our published plan or you have your own, please do not think you will be God Filled just by making it "to church" each week. You need to be spending regular time in God's Word. Don't be unarmed. Be clothed in the Spirit. Be Word Filled.