



God Filled

Brownsburg Church of Christ

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AM Assembly



Introduction:

We have now started the biggest year of revival and growth and fulfillment and victory in this congregation's history...unless we blow it. If we get distracted by the rat race of life and neglect the fullness of God and His glory, this year will be a waste. But if we grasp the great promises of Ephesians 3:14-19, we will experience great things.

“For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named, that according to the riches of his glory he may grant you to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith—that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God” (**Ephesians 3:14-19**, ESV).

“Filled with all the fullness of God.” To have within us all that is God. To partake of His divine nature. I can't imagine a greater promise than this. I can't imagine a greater pursuit than this. And that is our pursuit this year. We have been saved by grace through faith that we might be the workmanship of God. And what is the goal of His workmanship? That we may be filled with His very fullness, not only filled but overflowing, that all that is divine might be the overflow of our hearts and minds. But what would that mean for us? Why would we want this?

Discussion:

I. God Filled means having full fellowship with God.

- A. Can you imagine what it must have been like to be Adam and Eve before the fall? Walking with God in the Garden? Talking with Him? Can you imagine what such a fellowship was like? We're talking about something even greater than that. Not just God beside you, but God within you.
- B. Take yourself back about 3500 years. You were brought up as a slave under Egyptian tyranny. Your life had been making bricks. Over the past several months, you have witnessed Egypt dominated by your God YHWH. You fled in haste following the death of their firstborn. You made it to the Red Sea. You got scared and even thought of mutiny, but YHWH did something you couldn't even imagine. He parted the Red Sea, and you walked through with your family on dry land. Then you watched the Sea close up on the Egyptian army. All this time a pillar of cloud and fire were there to tell you God was with you. But then Moses went up on the mountain and the people got scared. They thought their leader was gone. You were caught up in the frenzy as well as Aaron made a calf that reminded you of the gods of Egypt. When Moses returned, the guilt and shame awful. But then he instructed the Israelites in building a tent, a tabernacle. There were all kinds of furnishings and drapes and decorations. Moses said it would be the tent of YHWH. It would be a tent of meeting, where God met His people. It would be the sign of God's presence, of His fellowship with the people. How could you expect that after you had bowed to that calf? And yet it was completed. Look in **Exodus 40:34-38**. What must that have meant for the Israelites.—the very presence of God smack in the midst of their camp. Despite their past, God had fellowship with His people. Consider a similar event when the temple was built and dedicated in **II Chronicles 7:1-3**.
- C. But we are talking about something even greater than that. We are not talking about God dwelling in a tent or in a building. We are not talking about this meeting house being filled with God. We are not talking about a place we have to travel to three times a year or even a week. We are talking about our own selves. We are talking about the constant and abiding presence. As **I Corinthians 6:19** claims, we are the temple of God's Spirit. And as **II Corinthians 6:16** explains, we are the temple of God. But notice the awesomeness of what this means in the following verses: “I will make my dwelling among them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people...and I will be a father to you, and you shall be sons and daughters to me, says the Lord Almighty” (**II Corinthians 6:16, 18**, ESV).
- D. Who wouldn't want this? Full fellowship with God, His presence, His glory.

II. God Filled means having our hearts and minds liberated by God.

- A. Being filled with God means having the thoughts of our hearts and minds set free from the tyranny of sin. **Genesis 6:5** shows the ultimate end of a heart enslaved by sin. Man ultimately only thought evil continual-

ly. I doubt many of us would describe ourselves as thinking only evil continually, especially since most of us are children of God and He has already been working on us. But we need to see this extreme because we are constantly at the crossroads. If we give our hearts and minds back to sin, that is where sin will take us. But we are talking about being God Filled. We are talking about submitting our hearts and minds to Him. We are talking about His fullness filling up our hearts and minds. He will take us a different direction.

- B. **Isaiah 55:8-11** tells us about God's thoughts. They are different from ours. They are better than ours. And they work. I don't want to be ensnared and enslaved by my thinking and my way. I want to be liberated by the truth of God. I want Him to fill my heart and my mind that I may think what He thinks, that I may value what He values, that I may honor what He honors. I do not believe God will "take over" in the sense of tyrannizing my free will. But I have seen where my sinful thinking ends up. I don't want any more of that. I want my thoughts to come from Him. I want my heart dominated by His grace and glory.
- C. **I Corinthians 2:11-16** expresses the great joy of being God Filled. When we are God Filled we can know the thinking of God, at least that thinking which He reveals to us. We can understand the things freely given to us by God. We can discern spiritual things. We can see the great value of God's things.
- D. As **I Corinthians 3:1-4** demonstrates, this is a growth process. But it is one I want to pursue. I want God's thinking to liberate my heart and mind from the sinful habits I developed as a sinner. I want to be God Filled. Who wouldn't want this?

III. God Filled means having our lives led by God's Spirit.

- A. If my heart and mind are liberated from the enslavement of sinful thinking, my life will be liberated as well. As **Proverbs 4:23** explains the actions of life flow from the heart. Jesus explained this in **Mark 7:14-22**. Sinful actions proceed from sinful thinking. If my heart and mind are filled with all the fullness of God, then what is going to be the overflow of action in my life? God's things.
- B. In **Ephesians 3:17**, Paul talked about Christ dwelling in our hearts by faith. **Galatians 2:20** explains what that does for our living. When faith in Christ is what dominates our hearts and minds, then surrender and submission to God is what dominates our lives, behavior, and actions. But more than that is that all of this comes from the empowering strength of the Holy Spirit in our inner being (**Ephesians 3:16**). In **Galatians 5:22-23** we see what comes from being led by God's Spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. This is the fruit of God's Spirit. If I am filled with all the fullness of God, this is what overflows from me.
- C. Don't you want to get to the point where your natural reaction to all things is God's reaction? Who wouldn't want that? That is where being God Filled will take us.

IV. God Filled means finding true satisfaction.

- A. Now let's deal with the great pink elephant in the room. What we've already described sounds great, except to the person who is listening to the whispers of Satan as he points to the forbidden fruit and says, "It will make you like God." Remember his tactics with Eve? In **Genesis 3:4-5**, he denied the Word of God and promised great things to Eve if she would just eat that fruit. Her dreams would come true. She would find meaning and fulfillment. God was holding out on her. She had only thought she had all she wanted. There was something more, and God was withholding it from her. She wanted satisfaction. And she would do anything to get it, even disobey God. So she did. But what did she learn? Satan lied.
- B. As I try to picture being God Filled in magnificent images and pictures, as I try to talk to you about with grand language and figures of speech, I know I'm not pulling the wool over anyone's eyes. We already know enough about what God says to know that being God Filled is going to mean avoiding a lot of things. The problem is in a world dominated by Satan, those things look good to us. Those things are appealing. They call out to us and promise us the world. They promise us meaning and fulfillment. And sometimes Satan convinces us that we are missing out if we don't pursue them. Sometimes Satan convinces us that God is holding out on us. He even convinces us that we can have it all. We can pursue some of what Satan offers and keep coming to church to get what God is offering too. He convinces us to give Sundays to God, but spend the rest of the week in pursuit of finances, fame, fortune. He sets some pretty young thing or some hunk of a man before us and says lusting for and sex with that person we aren't married to will bring us satisfaction. He places that person who stabbed us in the back before our eyes and tells us that revenge is sweet. He walks us through the store and shows us that gizmo, gadget, or toy we want but can't afford and explains that we have a right to it, just steal it. On and on his lies go. And we know that if we choose to be God Filled, we are turning our backs on those things. We cannot pursue those things and be God Filled at the same time. And so, yes, being God Filled will sometimes seem like a great sacrifice.

- C. But what I want to share with you is that it really isn't. It is not a sacrifice at all. We are talking about being God Filled. That means being full. That means being satisfied. That means having meaning and being fulfilled. When we are God Filled, we will truly know what it means to not want anything else. Satan is doing everything in his power to convince us that being God Filled isn't all that great. But he is lying to us.
 - D. As Jesus said in **Matthew 5:6**, the ones who hunger and thirst for righteousness will be satisfied. When we seek first God's kingdom and righteousness (**Matthew 6:33**), we are the ones who will actually find satisfaction. "The Rolling Stones" got it right when they sang about the guy pursuing sin, but he just "can't get no satisfaction." Satisfaction doesn't come from being sin filled or Satan filled or even me filled. It comes from God Filled. I have a verse I hope you memorize this year. **Proverbs 27:7** says, "One who is full loathes honey, but to one who is hungry everything bitter is sweet" (ESV). The point being that when we are full, we don't need anything else. Nothing tempts us. But when we are hungry, even bitter things seem sweet. Satan is playing us. He wants us to believe we are empty and throws up these bitter things that lead to death. If we let him convince us we are missing out, we'll take in those bitter pills and they will destroy us. But when we are God Filled, we will find satisfaction and nothing can turn us away.
 - E. And please understand that satisfaction really is found only in God. As **Psalms 16:11** says, when we are God Filled, we have life, the fullness of joy, and pleasures forevermore. Being God Filled means avoiding a lot of things, but it doesn't mean missing out on life, joy, or pleasure. It just means finding what is truly life, joy, and pleasure. Being God Filled means finding true satisfaction. Who wouldn't want that?
- V. God Filled means being like Jesus Christ.
- A. But perhaps the greatest part of all of this is seen in **Colossians 1:19; 2:9**. Jesus Christ was filled with all the fullness of God. If we are filled with God's fullness, we will be like Jesus. I understand the difference. Jesus was filled with the fullness of God because He was the incarnation of deity. He was God in the flesh. He was the divine human. I am not saying that we will become divine. Paul's point in **Ephesians 3:14-19** is not that we will become divine, but rather that if Christ is dwelling in our hearts by faith, the One who has the fullness of God within Him is in us. Therefore we have the fullness of God in us. But having recognized the difference in the nature of this filling, we should still recognize the great glory of being like Christ.
 - B. As we grow in faith, we are so governed and controlled by Jesus and our faith in Him, we become like the Master we love. As people see us, they will no longer see us, but see Jesus Christ in us. Our actions and reactions will be governed by Him. Our joy will come from Him. We will be conformed to the image of Christ as Paul taught in **Romans 8:29**. When we are God Filled, we are dwelling in Him as He is dwelling in us. That can't help but rub off on us. We become like those we spend our time with. We become like Christ.
 - C. But perhaps the great part is we understand the ultimate fulfillment of this. **I John 3:2** explains we become fully like Jesus in eternity. When we are God Filled (dwelling with and in Him, and Him with and in us) and all this material and physical is stripped away (either in death or at the end of time), then all that will be left is us in God and God in us. We will be in the absolute and utter presence of God, having been conformed to the image of Jesus Christ. That will be heaven. And while Satan is working his hardest to get us to believe the God Filled are missing out on stuff down here, let us recognize that the only thing that is really missing out is if we miss out on the eternal presence of God. If we miss out on heaven, we have missed it all.
 - D. The God Filled are like Jesus at His appearing and throughout eternity. Don't miss out on that. Who wouldn't want that?

Conclusion:

God Filled—who wouldn't want that? This is our theme for 2014. I hope it is a year of renewal. I pray it is a year of revival. I pray that by the end of this year anyone and everyone who ever assembles with the Brownsburg church will say, "Now that is a God Filled congregation;" and anyone and everyone who ever meets any of us will say, "There goes someone who is God Filled." I'm tired of mediocrity, emptiness, vacant, wasted, and deserted. I want abundance. I want overflowing. I want God Filled. How about you?