

# ONLINE 3

## EXPERIENCING GOD'S POWER: FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT

What words would you use to describe your experience of the Christian life this week?

Living the Christian life in our own strength is impossible. Jesus says in JOHN 15v5: *“If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit. Apart from me you can do nothing.”* The only way to live the Christian life is for Jesus to dwell in us, living his life through our life by the Holy Spirit. As we submit ourselves to the Spirit, he shows us how to live us through the Bible and his prompting and gives us power to obey him. Jesus introduced the Spirit in JOHN 14v16-18:

JOHN 14 v 16-18

I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counsellor to be with you forever, the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you. I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you.

From these verses we learn much about the Spirit:

1. The Spirit is not a force, but a personal being.
2. The original Greek for ‘another counsellor’ literally means ‘another counsellor of exactly the same kind’. In other words, the Spirit perfectly represents Jesus.
3. It is by the Holy Spirit coming and living in us that Jesus is with us.

What do you understand to be the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives?

I CORINTHIANS 2v14 onwards describes 3 types of people: the person without the Spirit (a non-Christian), the spiritual person (a person directed and empowered by the Spirit) and the worldly or fleshly person (a Christian who is not obeying God’s word or depending on his Spirit): *“The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God... The spiritual man makes judgments about all things... Brothers, I could not address you as spiritual but as worldly, mere infants in Christ.”*



The circles represent our life, the thrones who we’re living for. All Christians have the Spirit in their life but not all believers are filled with the Spirit. The critical question is not how much we have of God but how much God has of us. When we sin, we take control of our life and run it to our own ends

To be filled with the Spirit is to keep Christ on the throne of our life. We do this by surrendering ourselves to him, obeying him and trusting him to empower our obedience.

Which circle best describes you?

Which circle would you like to describe you?

Jesus explains how he lives his life through us in JOHN 15v4-12:

JOHN 15 v 4-12

4 Remain in me, and I will remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me. 5 "I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. 6 If anyone does not remain in me, he is like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned. 7 If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you. 8 This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples. 9 "As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. 10 If you obey my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have obeyed my Father's commands and remain in his love. 11 I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete. 12 My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you.

v 4-6

What does Jesus mean by "remain in me"?

What are the implications of remaining or not remaining in him?

What does it mean to bear fruit? What promise does Jesus give?

What is his warning?

What does this mean in light of our assurance of salvation?

v 7-8

What do we learn about prayer?

What does it mean for his words to remain in us?

Why is it good to ask God for things?

v 9-12

What do we learn about Jesus' love for us?

How do we remain in his love?

What is Jesus' command?

Christ lives in us by his Spirit. Jesus promises the Spirit to all who really want him:

LUKE 11 v 9-13

9 So I say to you: Ask, and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened to you. 10 For everyone who asks receives, he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks the door will be opened. 11 Which of you fathers, if your son asks for fish, will give him a snake instead? 12 Or if asks for an egg would give him a scorpion? 13 If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!"

What promises does Jesus give in this passage?

What are the conditions?

What is he seeking to emphasise by talking about asking, seeking and knocking?

Jesus is keen to emphasise that the Holy Spirit is a good gift. Why is this so important?

How do you feel about being filled with the Spirit?



We know that it's God's will for us to be filled with the Spirit. In EPHESIANS 5v18 we are commanded to be continually filled with the Spirit. In LUKE 11v9-13 we saw that God promises to fill us if we ask him to. Consider the following questions:

Do I want to wholeheartedly give myself to God?

Am I willing to turn away from sin?

Do I really want to be directed and empowered by the Holy Spirit?

Do I trust God to fill me when I ask him to according to his promise in the Bible?

If you can answer yes to the above, ask God to fill you now and he will. When we've asked God to fill us with the Spirit, our confidence that he has filled us does not come from any experiences we may have, but from our trust in his promise to fill us when we ask.

We can achieve nothing apart from the Spirit. However, when he fills us, it doesn't mean that we need do nothing more and become passive. It's as we obey God, trusting in his Spirit, that he empowers our efforts. The Spirit lives through us, not for us. Being filled with the Spirit is not a one-off action, but an ongoing lifestyle of surrendering ourselves to God and trusting him to empower us as we obey Jesus.

