

“The Importance of Being Filled with the Holy Spirit and Speaking in Tongues”

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Sermon Text: 2 Timothy 3: 1-5

Introduction: One of the signs of the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ is that perilous times will come—in the marketplace, educational systems, government, church, family, and other spheres of life. With the evil condition of men’s hearts described in the Scripture, the world and our communities may appear *beyond restoration*. Men have employed every known technique and initiative to reform the human personality, character, and behavior. Advances have been made in educational methods; law enforcement; practical, spiritual, or religious development; and economic reform with hope toward a more stable and just society. Nonetheless, all these efforts seem to result in minuscule change in the condition of the human heart. We need a radical restoration and transformation that involves a deepening relationship with the Holy Spirit, resulting in benefits that can be witnessed in our world as a result of the transformational process.

I. Restoration and transformation will occur when people receive the Holy Spirit. Acts 1:6–8; 2 Timothy 3:1–5; Joel 2:28–32; Acts 2:1–4

- A. A correlation exists between restoration and being filled with the Holy Spirit!
 - (1) Jesus’ answer to the disciples questioning about the kingdom revealed the necessity for the character, attitude, and personality of the people to be changed.
 - (2) People have been created with a free will to choose whether or not they want to obey God.
 - (3) As long as people are still bound by the spirit of the world that drove them to do ungodly things, restoration of all things will be far from the picture.
 - (4) If our lives are not constantly filled with the Holy Spirit, we will fall easily to temptations, feeling hurt, offended, hopeless, and bitter because of the cruel and hard realities of life.
- B. God’s way to restore the condition in this end time is by pouring out His Spirit on all people.
 - (1) The initial evidence of someone who is filled with the Holy Spirit is to speak with new tongues, but this filling will also be evident in their impact on the world around them.
 - (2) When people are filled with the Holy Spirit, they are endued with the power of God to be transformed.
 - (3) Transformed people will transform their surroundings—families, neighborhoods, cities, and nations—through a powerful witness of God.
 - (4) Spirit-filled people will possess good character, producing the fruit of the Holy Spirit in their lives.
 - (5) Disciples, who were timid, hopeless, and powerless, suddenly changed from denying they ever knew Christ to proclaiming the gospel message with power and performing many miracles.

II. Through Ezekiel’s description of the river that flowed from the temple, we can draw a lesson about four levels of growth in the life of the Spirit-filled individual.

Ezekiel 47:1–12

- A. Ankle-deep: This experience of walking in the *ankle-deep* river with minimal hindrances pictures a level of spiritual growth far from sufficient to have any impact on someone’s life because the self and the flesh still dominate the personality much stronger than the influence of the Holy Spirit.
- B. Knee-deep: A person, who walks in the *knee-deep* river and begins to feel some resistance from the flow, illustrates the level of relationship with God in which the Holy Spirit begins to influence the will of the flesh and the self so that person is more careful to do things according to the nudging of the Spirit.
- C. Waist-deep: A person, who walks in the river that is *waist-deep*, will find it extremely difficult to walk against the flow, and this illustrates a level of spiritual maturity in which one begins to surrender their self-will and bring the desires of the flesh under the control of the Holy Spirit.
- D. Submerged: A person, who is totally *submerged* in a river with a depth sufficient for swimming, follows wherever the river is flowing, and this illustrates a maturing relationship with the Holy Spirit in which a person no longer desires to do the will of the flesh, especially when it is obviously in contrast with the will of the Holy Spirit (compare it with 1 John 3:9).

III. Obvious benefits of being filled with the Holy Spirit and speaking in tongues will be witnessed in the Spirit-filled believer.

- A. We are cleansed and set free from the defiling atmosphere of this world (2 Cor. 3: 17, John 4:14).
- B. We become more intimate with God (1 Cor. 14:2).
- C. We become more sensitive—able to discern between the flesh and the Spirit (Matt. 26: 41; John 16:8–11).
- D. Our spirit becomes stronger (1 Cor. 14:4).
- E. We worship God more completely—spirit, soul, and body (1 Cor. 14:14–15).
- F. Our prayers are aligned with the will of God (Rom. 8:26–27).
- G. We receive supernatural things—things to come, visions and dreams (John 16:13).
- H. The enemy will not be able to stand against us (1John 4:4).

Conclusion: In Jude 17-20, we are reminded to guard carefully this infilling of the Holy Spirit in our lives, so we do not become mockers of God that live according to our own lusts! Let us be filled by the Holy Spirit. Let us open our hearts and ask the Lord to pour out His Spirit upon us with the initial sign of speaking in tongues. Afterwards, we need to keep using the language of the Spirit in our personal lives, in our cell groups, and in our worship services. We will surely see amazing things done in our lives! Amen!