

# Have You Made the Wonderful Discovery of the Spirit-Filled Life?

By Dr. Bill Bright

Every day can be an exciting adventure for the Christian who knows the reality of being filled with the Holy Spirit and who lives constantly, moment by moment, under His gracious direction.

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The Bible tells us that there are three kinds of people

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## 1. Natural Person

(Someone who has not received Christ.)



### **Natural Person (Self-Directed Life)**

Self is on the throne, directing decisions and actions (represented by the dots), often resulting in frustration. Jesus is outside the life.

"A natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised" (1 Corinthians 2:14).

## 2. Spiritual Person

(One who is directed and empowered by the Holy Spirit.)



### **Spiritual Person (Christ-Directed Life)**

Jesus is in the life and on the throne. Self is yielding to Jesus. The person sees Jesus' influence and direction in their life.

"He who is spiritual appraises all things... We have the mind of Christ" (1 Corinthians 2:15).

## 3. Carnal Person

(One who has received Christ, but who lives in defeat because he is trying to live the Christian life in his own strength.)



### **Carnal Person (Self-Directed Life)**

Jesus is in the life but not on the throne. Self is on the throne, directing decisions and actions (represented by the dots), often resulting in frustration.

"And I brethren, could not speak to you as to spiritual men, but as to carnal men, as to babes in Christ. I gave you milk to drink, not solid food; for you were not yet able to receive it. Indeed, even now you are not yet able, for you are still carnal. For since there is jealousy and strife among you, are you not fleshy, and are you not walking like mere men?" (1 Corinthians 3:1-3)

## God has provided for us an abundant and fruitful Christian life

Jesus said, "I came that they might have life, and might have it abundantly" (John 10:10).

"I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me, and I in him, he bears much fruit; for apart from Me you can do nothing" (John 15:5).

"But the fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law" (Galatians 5:22, 23).

"But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth" (Acts 1:8).

### **The Spiritual Person**

Some spiritual traits which result from trusting God:

#### **Spiritual Person**

Christ-centered  
Empowered by the Holy Spirit  
Introduces others to Christ  
Effective prayer life

Understands God's Word  
Trusts & obeys God  
Experiences love, joy, peace,  
patience, kindness, faithfulness,  
gentleness, goodness & self-control



The degree to which these traits are manifested in the life depends upon the extent to which the Christian trusts the Lord with every detail of his life, and upon his maturity in Christ. One who is only beginning to understand the ministry of the Holy Spirit should not be discouraged if he is not as fruitful as more mature Christians who have known and experienced this truth for a longer period.

*Why is it that most Christians are not experiencing the abundant life?*

**Carnal Christians cannot experience the abundant and fruitful Christian life**

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The carnal person trusts in his own efforts to live the Christian life:

1. He is either uninformed about, or has forgotten, God's love, forgiveness, and power (Romans 5:8-10; Hebrews 10:1-25; 1 John 1; 2:1-3; 2 Peter 1:9; Acts 1:8).
2. He has an up-and-down spiritual experience.
3. He cannot understand himself - he wants to do what is right, but cannot.
4. He fails to draw upon the power of the Holy Spirit to live the Christian life.  
(1 Corinthians 3:1-3; Romans 7:15-24; 8:7; Galatians 5:16-18)

## The Carnal Person

Some or all of the following traits may characterize the Christian who does not fully trust God:

### Carnal Person

Unbelief  
Disobedience  
Poor prayer life  
No desire for Bible study

Legalistic attitude or critical spirit  
Impure thoughts, jealousy, guilt  
Frustration, aimlessness  
Worry, discouragement  
Loss of love for God and others



(The individual who professes to be a Christian but who continues to practice sin should realize that he may not be a Christian at all, according to 1 John 2:3; 3:6, 9; Ephesians 5:5).

*The third truth gives us the only solution to this problem...*

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## Jesus promised the abundant and fruitful life as the result of being filled (directed and empowered) by the Holy Spirit

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The Spirit-filled life is the Christ-directed life by which Christ lives His life in and through us in the power of the Holy Spirit (John 15).

1. One becomes a Christian through the ministry of the Holy Spirit, according to John 3:1-8. From the moment of spiritual birth, the Christian is indwelt by the Holy Spirit at all times (John 1:12; Colossians 2:9, 10; John 14:16, 17). Though all Christians are indwelt by the Holy Spirit, not all Christians are filled (directed and empowered) by the Holy Spirit.
2. The Holy Spirit is the source of the overflowing life (John 7:37-39).
3. The Holy Spirit came to glorify Christ (John 16:1-15). When one is filled with the Holy Spirit, he is a true disciple of Christ.
4. In His last command before His ascension, Christ promised the power of the Holy Spirit to enable us to be witnesses for Him (Acts 1:1-9).

*How, then, can one be filled with the Holy Spirit?*

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We are filled by the Holy Spirit by faith; then we can experience the abundant and fruitful life which Christ promised to each Christian

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You can appropriate the filling of the Holy Spirit right now if you:

1. Sincerely desire to be directed and empowered by the Holy Spirit (Matthew 5:6; John 7:37-39).
2. Confess your sins. By faith thank God that He has forgiven all of your sins - past, present and future - because Christ died for you (Colossians 2:13-15; 1 John 1; 2:1-3; Hebrews 10:1-17).
3. Present every area of your life to God (Romans 12:1, 2).
4. By faith claim the fullness of the Holy Spirit, according to:  
**His Command:** Be filled with the Spirit. "And do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit" (Ephesians 5:18).  
**His Promise:** He will always answer when we pray according to His will. "And this is the confidence which we have before Him, that, if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests which we have asked of Him" (1 John 5:14, 15).

*Faith can be expressed through prayer...*

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## How to pray in faith to be filled with the Holy Spirit

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We are filled with the Holy Spirit by faith alone. However, true prayer is one way of expressing your faith. The following is a suggested prayer:

"Dear Father, I need You. I acknowledge that I have been directing my own life and that, as a result, I have sinned against You. 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 now thank You for directing my life and for filling me with the Holy Spirit."

Does this prayer express the desire of your heart? If so, ask God to fill you with the Holy Spirit right now and trust Him to do so.

## How to know that you are filled (directed and empowered) with the Holy Spirit

Did you ask God to fill you with the Holy Spirit? Do you know that you are now filled with the Holy Spirit? On what authority? (On the trustworthiness of God Himself and His Word: Hebrews 11:6; Romans 14:22, 23.)

Do not depend upon feelings. The promise of God's Word, not our feelings, is our authority. The Christian lives by faith (trust) in the trustworthiness of God Himself and His Word. This train diagram illustrates the relationship between fact (God and His Word), faith (our trust in God and His Word), and feeling (the result of our faith and obedience) (John 14:21).



The train will run with or without the caboose. However, it would be futile to attempt to pull the train by the caboose. In the same way, we, as Christians, do not depend upon feelings or emotions, but we place our faith (trust) in the trustworthiness of God and the promises of His Word.

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## How to walk in the Spirit

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Faith (trust in God and in His promises) is the only means by which a Christian can live the Spirit-directed life. As you continue to trust Christ moment by moment:

1. Your life will demonstrate more and more of the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22, 23) and will be more and more conformed to the image of Christ (Romans 12:2; 2 Corinthians 3:18).
  2. Your prayer life and study of God's Word will become more meaningful.
  3. You will experience His power in witnessing (Acts 1:8).
  4. You will be prepared for spiritual conflict against the world (1 John 2:15-17); against the flesh (Galatians 5:16-17); and against Satan (1 Peter 5:7-9; Ephesians 6:10-13).
  5. You will experience His power to resist temptation and sin (1 Corinthians 10:13; Philippians 4:13; Ephesians 1:19-23; 2 Timothy 1:7; Romans 6:1-16).
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## Spiritual breathing

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By faith you can continue to experience God's love and forgiveness.

If you become aware of an area of your life (an attitude or an action) that is displeasing to the Lord, even though you are walking with Him and sincerely desiring to serve Him, simply thank God that He has forgiven your sins - past, present and future - on the basis of Christ's death on the cross. Claim His love and forgiveness by faith and continue to have fellowship with Him.

If you retake the throne of your life through sin -- a definite act of disobedience -- breathe spiritually.

Spiritual breathing (exhaling the impure and inhaling the pure) is an exercise in faith that enables you to continue to experience God's love and forgiveness.

1. **Exhale** -- confess your sin -- agree with God concerning your sin and thank Him for His forgiveness of it, according to 1 John 1:9 and Hebrews 10:1-25. Confession involves repentance - a change in attitude and action.
  2. **Inhale** -- surrender the control of your life to Christ, and appropriate (receive) the fullness of the Holy Spirit by faith. Trust that He now directs and empowers you; according to the command of Ephesians 5:18, and the promise of 1 John 5:14, 15.
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