

December 09

Part- 12...The Greatest need in the church today

“ The Spirit filled Christian”

**Ephesians 5:18 - 21 (NKJV)** <sup>18</sup>And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit, <sup>19</sup>speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord, <sup>20</sup>giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, <sup>21</sup>submitting to one another in the fear of God.

In the past year we have reviewed the fruits of the Holy Spirit and how they determine the maturity of a believer. In the coming year we are going to study the promises of God and just how they apply to our lives in this 21<sup>st</sup> century. But first as we conclude this study on the fruits of the Holy Spirit let's look at the three main characteristics of a spirit filled life.

1) First of all they are **devoted** to the study of God's word.

**2 Timothy 2:15 (NKJV)** <sup>15</sup>Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

The word of God is of top priority to a spirit filled Christian. They have also devoted their bodies to be living sacrifices doing what God's word instructs them to do and not what their flesh tells them to do. They are renewing their minds daily and surrendering to God's plans for their life and not their own. Also they are devoted to keeping themselves pure from the world's filthiness. Friends sometimes this is not an easy task. In my own life I've had to tell my flesh no several times before it finally got the message that I meant no.

**1 Timothy 5:22 (NKJV)** <sup>22</sup>Do not lay hands on anyone hastily, nor share in other people's sins; keep yourself pure.

Also look at the words of the apostle Paul to the Corinthian believers about purity.

**2 Corinthians 6:17 (NKJV)** <sup>17</sup>Therefore “Come out from among them And be separate, says the Lord. Do not touch what is unclean, And I will receive you.”

**2 Corinthians 7:1 (NKJV)** <sup>1</sup>Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God

2) Not only are spirit filled believers devoted but they are also **dedicated**. You may wonder just what are they dedicated to? It's quite simple. Their main desire is to just love God. When you love God and are really dedicated to him you are willing to accept whatever comes your way. The Apostle Paul's dedication to his master; strengthened him to endure an abnormal amount of suffering for the gospel's propagation.

**2 Corinthians 11:24 - 27 (NKJV)** <sup>24</sup>From the Jews five times I received forty stripes minus one. <sup>25</sup>Three times I was beaten with rods; once I was stoned; three times I was shipwrecked; a night and a day I have been in

*the deep; <sup>26</sup>in journeys often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils of my own countrymen, in perils of the Gentiles, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; <sup>27</sup>in weariness and toil, in sleeplessness often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness—*

All Paul's suffering and beatings left scars on his body like his master Jesus had after the crucifixion. He of course considered it a great privilege to be marked up like the master.

*Galatians 6:17 (NKJV) <sup>17</sup>From now on let no one trouble me, for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus.*

According to the book of Philippians a dedicated Christian only has one true desire or wish. *“to know God more intimately.”*

*Philippians 3:10 (NKJV) <sup>10</sup>that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death,*

3) The third true characteristic of a spirit filled Christian is to be **determined**. Paul gave the testimony that claimed that even though he had to endure great hardships for the gospel's sake he would not be ashamed or shaken in mind.

*Acts 20:24 (NKJV) <sup>24</sup>But none of these things move me; nor do I count my life dear to myself, so that I may finish my race with joy, and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God.*

All of us if we desire to live Godly will suffer persecution. We must understand that trials and testing are a way of life for the truly devoted follower of Christ. In my own life I've had my two daughters from a previous relationship- before I knew Christ- taken away from me for more than ten years not knowing what happened to them. Then finally after ten years of praying and waiting on God He would have one of them call me and wish me happy Father's Day. Then let's not forget going to the doctor for a routine visit and having them tell you that you have cancer and they want to operate immediately to get it out of your body, which will shake you up a bit. And let's not forget the treatment of friends or so called friends that treat you like you have the plague after you get saved and they leave you all alone because none of them want to hang around with you anymore. Yea if you are really saved and are really trying to live Godly you will suffer persecution. We must develop a heart like Paul that is determined to live for Christ regardless of what it costs.

*Galatians 6:9 (NKJV) <sup>9</sup>And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart.*

We must find ourselves happy to endure trials that come our way.

*James 5:11 (NKJV) <sup>11</sup>Indeed we count them blessed who endure. You have heard of the perseverance of Job and seen the end intended by the Lord—that the Lord is very compassionate and merciful.*

Friends our determination is only purifying us more clearly and making us more ready to enter into the kingdom of heaven.

Now don't forget next month we are going to be entering into a new teaching on the promises of God and how they apply to our lives in these last days.

Until next month God bless.