

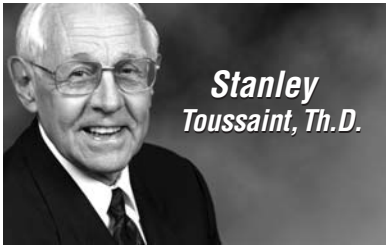


VERITAS

Equipping Christians to live by truth—*veritas*—from God.

Living in the Power of the Holy Spirit

Dr. Stanley Toussaint, Th.D.



*Stanley
Toussaint, Th.D.*

Dr. Stanley Toussaint (Th.M., '55; Th.D., '57) is a Dallas Seminary graduate and senior professor emeritus of Bible Exposition at the Seminary. He has been teaching the Bible passionately for nearly 50 years as a pastor, professor, college president, and conference speaker. A member of the Dallas faculty for over 30 years, Dr. Toussaint has traveled extensively to nearly every continent of our globe. He has written in numerous scholarly journals and has authored, contributed to, or edited six books, including *Behold the King: The Good News According to Matthew*. He is married to Maxine, and they have two adult sons. Dr. Toussaint delivered this address in Chafer Chapel on September 5, 2003.

We don't know what lies ahead of us, but we do know that there will be a lot of pressures. Pressures with regard to time. Pressures with regard to family. Pressures with regard to job and career. Pressures with regard to serving others. Pressures with regard to exercise and health. Pressures with regard to spiritual life.

All these things press upon us, besides emergencies that will come along that we have not anticipated!

Indeed, we are living in a pressure-packed time. How are we to live in times like these? Obviously, there are no one-word or one-sentence answers, but I would say that one critical element for every Christian is what the Bible calls "walking in the Spirit" or "the filling of the Spirit."

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So I'd like to talk a little about three questions: What exactly *is* the filling of the Spirit? How do I become filled and stay filled? And if I am filled, what does it look like in practical terms—how will it change my life?

What Is the Filling of the Spirit?

To be filled with the Spirit means to be controlled or influenced by God the Holy Spirit. Where did I derive that definition?

First, from the contrast you often find between drunkenness (or drinking) and the filling of the Spirit in the New Testament.

be drunk with wine where it is excess, but be filled with the Spirit.”

So you find this constant contrast with drinking or drunkenness and the filling of the Spirit. When a person is intoxicated, you say he is “under the influence” of alcohol. Driving while intoxicated is the same as driving while under the influence. Therefore, we would conclude that the filling of the Spirit means to be *controlled* by the Spirit.

The second thing that leads me to that conclusion is the vocabulary. Many words in the New Testament are translated “fill” or “fulfill.” But there are only three words that are used concerning the Spirit.

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- In Luke 1:13, the angel Gabriel appears to Zechariah, the father of John the Baptist, and says, “You’re going to have a son, and you’re going to call him John.” And he continues, “He will not drink wine or strong drink, but he will be filled with the Holy Spirit from his mother’s womb.”
- Acts 2 begins with the filling of the Spirit on the Day of Pentecost. And what do the people say? Why, they’re drunk with new wine. And Peter says, no, they’re not drunk; it’s just the third hour of the day.
- But the verse that really contrasts the two is Ephesians 5:18, “Don’t

The first word, a verb, is *pimplēmi*. It is used in Luke 4:28 of the people’s response when Jesus was preaching in his hometown of Nazareth. They became so angry that they were “filled” with wrath. Does that mean that they were filled with wrath like you fill a bottle? No, it means that they were so overwhelmed and *controlled* by wrath that they wanted to take Jesus out and kill Him.

Luke 1:67 says that Zechariah was “filled” with the Holy Spirit and that he prophesied. God the Holy Spirit moved in sovereignly upon Zechariah and *took control* of him, and he prophesied.

The second word, also a verb, is *plēroō*. It is used in John 16:6, where the Lord Jesus told His disciples that He was going to go away. He says in John 16:6, “Because I have said these things to you, sorrow has *filled* your heart.”

Sorrow gripped their innermost being: their hearts. Just as sorrow grips a person, so the Holy Spirit can control or influence him.

The third word is an adjective: *plērēs*. It is used in Acts 13:10, where Paul confronts Elymas, the sorcerer who tried to stop Paul from preaching to Sergius Paulus, the proconsul. And he says, “You are *full* of all deceit and fraud, you son of the devil.”

The same adjective is used for one of my favorite characters of the New Testament. In Acts 11:24 it is used for Barnabas, who is described as a good man, “full” of the Holy Spirit and of faith. He was gripped by the Holy Spirit and by faith.

How Can You Be Filled with the Spirit?

Now the question is, how do you get it? Amazingly, in the Bible you don't find “Step 1, Step 2, or Step 3” on the filling of the Spirit.

I think the reason is that God is so gracious toward us that anybody who really loves the Lord Jesus and wants to please Him is *going to be filled* with the Holy Spirit. But I do find a couple of very broad hints as to how to be filled with the Spirit. I'm assuming confession of sin, by the way, but I'd like to point out two very broad passages.

The first is John 7:37–39:

Now on the last day, the great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, “If anyone is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture said, ‘From his innermost being will flow rivers of living water.’ ” But this He spoke of the Spirit, whom those who believed in Him were to receive; for the Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.

Obviously, this passage is talking about the Holy Spirit—it says so. And it must be talking about somebody who is filled with the Spirit because it says out of his innermost being will flow rivers of living water, meaning he's going to be a blessing to other people.

Now the question is, how do you get that? The answer is in verse 37, “If anyone is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink.”

MISCONCEPTION ALERT!

“Some people think that the filling of the Spirit means that you receive more of the Holy Spirit. But the Holy Spirit is a person, not a divine liquid poured into a bottle. When you receive the Holy Spirit, you have all of the Holy Spirit you are ever going to receive. The issue is not getting more of the Holy Spirit. The issue is the Holy Spirit controlling more and more of us.” — Dr. Toussaint

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That's it! *Coming and drinking of Christ is the same as trusting in Christ, believing in Christ.*

To illustrate, let's suppose that I am in a car parked at the curb, and I turn it on and the engine is roaring. But I'm going nowhere. Why? Because I haven't put the car into gear—that's the problem.

Now, you have all the power of God the Holy Spirit within you. So how do you put it into gear? Trust in Christ. Begin the day by saying, "Lord, I can't live this day by myself. I'm trusting You."

When I come to my classes, even after all these years of teaching, I still say, "Lord, I'm overwhelmed; this is

another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God. Whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to God the Father.

How do you know it's talking about the filling of the Holy Spirit? Look at Ephesians 5:18–21:

And do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord; always giving thanks for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the

If you don't know the spiritual condition of a church, just listen to the people sing. Singing is a dead giveaway.

beyond me. I'm trusting You." When I speak in chapel, I pray, "Lord, I need You." When you trust in Christ, God the Holy Spirit loves to go to work.

The second clue is found in Colossians 3:16–17:

Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one

Father; and be subject to one another in the fear of Christ.

Notice the similarity? The results of being filled with the Spirit are parallel to letting the word of Christ richly dwell within you. The fact is that Ephesians and Colossians are sister epistles. They were written by Paul at the same time and carried by the same messenger to churches only 100 miles apart. So there are parallels between them.

MISCONCEPTION ALERT!

"Notice what the Bible does *not* say. It does not say you are filled by praying to the Holy Spirit. It does not even say you are filled by trusting in the Holy Spirit. It is the work of the Holy Spirit to glorify Christ. So when you trust *in Christ*, God the Holy Spirit goes to work." —Dr. Toussaint

The filling of the Spirit is paralleled with letting the word of Christ richly dwell within you. What does that mean? It means you have a heart of simple submission and obedience to God's Word. It is just that simple.

So if you put the two together, you can see that when you (1) trust Jesus Christ and (2) obey the Scriptures, that is when God the Holy Spirit goes to work.

What Happens When You Are Filled with the Spirit?

One manifestation of being filled with the Spirit is *music* (Eph. 5:19). If you don't know the spiritual condition of a church, just listen to the people sing. Singing is a dead giveaway. Dead churches don't sing; they just kind of stand there and mumble.

I grew up in Hinckley, Minnesota, attending a gospel-preaching, Bible-believing church. On a Sunday morning in that little town, we'd have 110 people in Sunday school. Yet that little church, in one 30-year period, put 25 people into full-time ministry. That was the kind of church it was. We had a youth choir, an adult choir, a combined choir, a boy's quartet, a men's quartet—we even had a band—I mean music all over the place. Sunday evening services were a delightful time of singing.

Another manifestation is *giving thanks* (Eph. 5:20). "Always giving

thanks for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ in God, even the Father." First Thessalonians 5:18 says, "In everything give thanks."

You can give thanks in any circumstance.

If you have an automobile accident, be thankful the car wasn't totaled. If it was totaled, be thankful no one was hurt. If somebody was hurt, be thankful no one was killed. You can always give thanks.

Easy for me to say? No.

When I was 11 years old, I was infected with a bad case of polio. I was totally paralyzed from my hips down—I could not move a muscle in my legs and couldn't even move a toe. To this day, when I see Jell-O, it makes me think of my legs when I had polio because I'd lift up my legs and the muscles would have total atrophy.

By God's grace, I was able to walk again. I praise God that I've been able to live a very active life. No sports, obviously, but a very active life. But as I'm getting older, I am experiencing what is known as "post-polio syndrome." Post-polio syndrome simply means that the polio comes back, though not in the same way exactly. My legs are getting weaker and weaker every year. I don't know how long I'll be able to walk.

Do I give thanks for my polio? Yes, I do give thanks for polio.

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I have learned things through polio that I never would have learned any other way. Polio has taught me many lessons. I must say, though, I don't *always* give thanks; I haven't licked that one yet!

But I can tell you that when a person is filled with the Spirit, he begins to see things from God's perspective. He sees God's sovereignty, and he gives thanks because God is at work.

Another manifestation is in **repenting of self-centeredness.**

The Bible says, "Submitting yourselves, always giving thanks in the name of the Lord Jesus and then be subject to one another in the fear of Christ." This means when you submit your well-being to other people, you're concerned with other people, you're walking with other people, and thinking of other people, not just of yourself.

The working of the Holy Spirit in us means that we become involved in other people's lives, with many other results.

The filling of the Spirit also involves the **ongoing fruit of the Spirit.**

Galatians 5:22–23 says, "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law."

You will notice that it is in the present tense. *Keep on being filled.* You can't go on last week's experience, last year's experience, or yesterday's experience. It is

something that you must experience in the eternal *now*. Be filled with the Spirit constantly. It is a command.

Not for "Super Saints" Only

When I was younger, I would read about the filling of the Spirit. I would read Lewis Sperry Chafer's book *He That Is Spiritual* and other books like Hudson Taylor's *Spiritual Secrets*, and I would think to myself, "I'll never be spiritual. I'll never be filled with the Spirit." I realized I was wrong.

We *can* be filled with the Holy Spirit. All of us are to be filled with the Holy Spirit; it is a command. The filling of the Holy Spirit is the chassis—the drive train—of our Christian experience. Let's pray:

Our Father, we thank You for the wonderful provisions that You've made for us—beyond our comprehension, the third Person of the Trinity indwelling us. We pray, Father God, that we all may have a heart that is open on the godly side, that we are consistently trusting in Christ for every task, every moment, and that we may have a heart of obedience to the Scriptures. Quiet, humble submission. Speak, Lord, Your servant hears. We pray these things for this day, the coming weeks, and the coming year, even for the rest of our lives. In Jesus' name. Amen.

The Basic Necessities of Life

What comes to mind when you think of the phrase “the basic necessities of life”? Probably food, air, water, and shelter. Without them, you can’t survive, let alone thrive.

But what Dr. Stan Toussaint makes so clear in this issue of *Veritas* is that every Christian’s “basic necessities list” must also include the filling of the Holy Spirit.

It will carry you through the stresses of today. It will carry you through whatever stresses you’ll be clobbered with tomorrow—crouching around the corner are crises you do not even know about.

The enemy has done such a good job at taking our eyes off this essential! If you think the filling of the Holy Spirit must be accompanied by a continual fireworks show of “mountaintop” experiences and revved-up emotions or the carnival atmosphere of much of Christian television, then you’ll miss it.

On the other hand, there can be a tendency for those of us who don’t hold to charismatic or Pentecostal doctrine to shy away from pursuing the filling of the Spirit due to our disdain for such extremes. But that shyness also misses the mark.

Instead, the truth about the filling of the Holy Spirit is found in Scripture.

And what a “find” it is!

That’s why, along with reading Dr. Toussaint’s exhortations in these pages, I also urge you to ask for the classic book *He That Is Spiritual* by Dr. Lewis Sperry Chafer, founder of Dallas Seminary. Along with newer releases that we have offered you before, I love occasionally to fall back on old favorites.

He That Is Spiritual has blessed countless people over the past nine decades. Dr. Chafer’s uncanny gift of explaining Spirit-led living *as the Bible teaches it* strips away the errors and exposes the gleaming jewel God wants you to have.

We’ve made it available to you as our thank you for your support of the work of Dallas Seminary. See the back cover and the enclosed reply card for details. Your gifts help us equip leaders who will carry on Dr. Chafer’s passion of filling the church with biblical leaders.

So remember to focus on the basics—the necessities of life—and enjoy Christ’s life in you to the fullest!



DR. MARK L. BAILEY
President
Dallas Theological Seminary



A Classic For Christian Readers



He That Is Spiritual

Lewis Sperry Chafer

True spirituality is the nitty-gritty reality of God living and working *in you*—right where you are—right in the middle of the messy challenges you may be facing at this very moment.

Let us help guide you into the blessings of **daily spiritual power!** We want to send you the book *He That Is Spiritual* by Dallas Seminary founder Lewis Sperry Chafer.

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To receive *He That Is Spiritual* as our thank you for your support of Dallas Seminary, use the enclosed reply card (for subscribers) or call 800-992-0998. Thank you!



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