

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?

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Acts 2:1-8, 11-24, 32-33, 36-39

In the events of Pentecost, the 120 God-fearing Jews in the Upper Room had to share their feeling of exhilaration when they experienced the Holy Spirit coming upon them as wind and fire. There was a surge of praise. One would call it an outflow. The Holy Spirit gives us unconditional love. You remember a time when you have had a peace and joy that was flooding your heart. It was like fire shut up in your bones and you wanted to tell everybody with whom you came in contact. Then something changed. We have let the fire die down and lost our passion. Where is your passion for God?

The praise coming from the Upper Room caught the attention of Pentecost pilgrims traveling from other lands. As Christians, we mark Pentecost as the beginning of church. It is when we experienced the outpouring of the Holy Spirit and became new in God. When the Spirit came upon the 120, they begin to witness as God commanded. Those who were speaking had an Aramaic native language but they were able to pray in a language that the people of other native tongues understood. This was a miracle of communication. In the text, every time they had a chance, they declared His glory among the nations and His marvelous deeds among the people. **Psalm 196:1-2** God did this so that we would know that although salvation started with the Jews, salvation is for all people. He wants all others to be reached with His gospel. He is the answer for this world's needs. Whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved. It is important that we reach out to all people.

Some of the men who heard the witness wanted to know the spiritual implications of this. What does it mean? Others mocked them accusing them of being drunk with wine. Peter clarified that it wasn't the influence of wine. He remained passionate. Even when you are saved and filled with the Holy Ghost your personality is not totally eradicated. The Holy Spirit comes to get rid of those things that prevent you from being what God called you to be. It is not our personality that needs to change. You can't be so high and mighty that you can't reach others through your witness. The fact that you have become a Christian does not mean you have to become dull and boring. Those things about us that are good just need to be surrendered to God and used for His glory. The fact that Peter was impetuous was useful to God.

Be careful to not allow others to make fun your faith and make church irrelevant. Remind them of who Christ is. People won't believe us if we just talk the talk and not walk the walk. Some people don't get it with just talk. You have to show them. In the text, they were accused of being drunk with new wine. They may have appeared to be out of control to those looking on. **Ephesians 5:18** When one is drunk on wine, one is carefree and loose. Being under the influence of wine and being filled with the Holy Spirit is often compared. The term, filled, can be translated as "controlled by."

When we are filled with God's Holy Spirit, it means God has control of you and your body. The baptism of the Holy Spirit is a one time event but you have to be refilled constantly. It is a necessity that we must be filled everyday; but you must be open to it. The challenges of life can drag us down and drain us of energy. Being filled means emptying yourself so that God can fill you up with all that He is. That's what praying and fasting is all about. Being filled with the presence and power of God changes us. When you get the Holy Ghost, you can't stay the same. You are literally being moved by God's control. Don't fight it. Just flow. Whatever God tells you to do, consider it a joy to do. Some of us work too hard at being saved because we think we know what we are doing. It is too much assertion of your flesh. Allow the Holy Spirit to have His way in your life. You constantly question God because you won't flow and trust Him. **I John 5:3**

Being filled with the Spirit carries the idea of permeation. God is trying to keep you and flavor your life. Whatever is filling you right now is controlling you. A person filled with anger, fear, bitterness, unforgiveness, frustration, or insecurity is dictated by that overwhelming emotion. Wouldn't it be nice to be control by God's joy, peace, and love? Can you imagine the atmosphere in your home or place of employment if everyone was filled with the Holy Spirit? God wants to use us to bring others to Christ like the 120 did on the Day of Pentecost. They wouldn't have been able to do that if they didn't allow the Holy Spirit to permeate them. Let God flavor your conversation and the way you carry yourself. Your own flavor is not working. When we live by the Spirit, we don't get all caught up in the flesh. You kill the flesh by fasting and praying. Whatever you starve will die. You keep feeding that flesh and that flesh lives and rises up to turn on you. However, when you feed the Spirit it wants what is best for you. God used those persons to share His wonders with the people around them. When you allow the Spirit to permeate you, it is the bait that God uses to attract others to you. Somebody is watching you to see how you handle life and its pressures.

We walk in the authority and power of God. The words we speak have power to change lives. When Peter concluded his sermon, the men were "cut to their hearts." They saw themselves for who they really were. The Word is dangerous. **Hebrews 4:12** You can't argue with the Word. When it hits you, you must come clean. The Holy Spirit convicted the hearers of Peter's sermon. They wanted to know what they needed to do to be saved. Repent. You gave your life to Christ but did you get baptized? People in the world can come to Christ by watching you and hearing you. The problem is church folk aren't witnessing any more. In the text, three thousand gave their lives to Christ and joined the church. When is the last time you took the opportunity to share the good news? How many people did you leave behind when you came to know God for yourself? Are they still left behind? Why? You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you and you shall be His witnesses. God would not expect you to witness if you didn't have anything to share. When you think about the goodness of God you can't keep it to yourself. What good is your life if there is no outflow? You are stagnant like the Dead Sea. You don't want to talk to the person next to you when they could be dying and going to Hell. If you have life and God said share, it is your responsibility to give. If that person doesn't take it, it is not your fault. Just plant the seed, someone else will water it, and God will bring about increase. We are His ambassadors, His representatives. Tell people that God loves them.

Peace

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