

THE FATAL FLAWS OF CHARISMANIA – Fatal Flaw #8: Conflating the Difference Between the Indwelling of the Spirit and the Filling of the Spirit (Part 3 of 3)

With the onset of the structural phase of the early Church, it was necessary for normative behavior to be established, in order to insure the long-term successful building of Christ's Church. This required the defining of a clear standard for the critical relationship between the individual Christian and the indwelling Holy Spirit. To no one's surprise, it proved to be the apostle Paul who would be responsible for enacting a paradigm which would serve that purpose.

Since the inter-actions between the Holy Spirit and the individual believer would now become the long-term norm, a clarification of that relationship was necessary. So, a different word is now used by Paul to communicate the concept of what it means to be "filled with the Holy Spirit," governed by a new grammatical construction. As a result, in Ephesians 5:18, the word "filled" is no longer "pimplemi" but "pleroo." The grammatical construction changes from the aorist passive to the present passive imperative. This change leaves no doubt for what would now be considered the appropriate interdependence between the indwelling Holy Spirit and the born-again believer. It would be one of **surrender/control**. The reciprocity would not be optional, but mandatory; not occasional, but continuous. In other words, in Ephesians 5:18, Paul takes the opportunity for commanding every believer to surrender the control of their individual life to the control of the Holy Spirit, in every aspect of their life, on a moment-by-moment basis. It is no coincidence that Paul's imperative regarding our relationship with the Holy Spirit, is then followed by the apostle's most detailed description of family relationships: marriage and the raising of children (5:22-6:4).

The other metaphor used by Paul in describing the Christian's relationship to the Holy Spirit is that of a "walk." This is not merely the result of the apostle's desire to vary his vocabulary. It is the Greek word "peripateo," rendered in the present active imperative. It is used twice in Galatians 5 (v16/v25), in order to initiate and conclude Paul's powerful discourse on the essential role of the Holy Spirit in a victorious Christian life. Why? First, it is impossible to overcome the sin nature within each of us without such a walk (Galatians 5:16-21). Second, it is equally beyond our own ability to generate a Christ-like life, apart from such a walk, which Paul describes as "fruit" in Galatians 5:22-23. The conclusion is equally compelling in Galatians 5:25, where we read this –

"If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit."

Combining Ephesians 5:18 with Galatians 5:16, the apostle is issuing a two-fold command to every Christian. One imperative admonishes us to respond with a VOLUNTARY SURRENDER, while the other requires the POSITIVE EXPRESSION of that surrender. The emphasis is upon allowing for the Holy Spirit to take control of every sphere of our life, manifested in an active Christ-like life. Whether the imperative directs us to be "filled" in Ephesians 5:18, or to engage in a "walk" in Galatians 5:16; neither of them calls for speaking in tongues. This was especially exemplified in the life and ministry of Stephen, the first martyr of the early Church (Acts 6:3-10; 7:55-56). In all of his activity specifically recorded in the book of Acts, there is never a mention of his speaking in tongues, which in turn, never prevented him from exhibiting an exemplary Christ-like life.

*If you have allowed yourself to be victimized by **FATAL FLAW #8** of the Pentecostal/Charismatic movement, in believing that speaking in tongues will solve all your problems, it is not too late for a Biblical reorientation of your Christian life, as detailed in Ephesians 5:18 and Galatians 5:16.*