



weekend

resource guide for the week of 15 April

Ephesians 5:18-20: Be filled with the Spirit. Speak to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord, always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

These verses present four consequences of being filled with the Holy Spirit.

First, a Holy Spirit-filled man is one who loves to worship God. You will recognize him by

his intensity in prayer,

his attentiveness to God's presence,

his exuberant praise,

his expressive joy, and

his gracious freedom.

One of the most frequent and wonderful impressions visitors to worship celebrations describe is the joy, beauty, and freedom they perceive when our congregation worships. On one occasion a woman commented that she noticed one of the men worshipping with his eyes open. She went on to say, "His countenance possessed joy and wonderment. I was sure he was looking at someone so I just had to follow his gaze. The way he looked, I really expected to see Jesus standing there!"

Second, the Holy Spirit-filled man does not stop worshipping when the church service is completed. His worship continues throughout the week as he sings and makes music in his heart to the Lord. Worship songs, hymns, scriptures, and God-honoring images and ideas regularly fill his mind throughout the week. He will frequently be aware that this well-spring of adoration is not his own creation but instead it is being "poured" into him by the Spirit of God Himself!

Third, the Holy Spirit-filled man is not a worshipping "lone-ranger." He looks forward to praising God with others and strives to encourage and release vital worship in his church. Like King David, he exclaims, "Glorify the Lord with me: let us exalt his Name together." (Psalm 34:3) His enthusiasm is contagious and he remains steadfast in his resolve to gather with other believers even when inconvenienced by weather, travel, vocation, or even family.

Nothing excites me more than when people share with me that they attend our church because of the worship. Do I desire to pastor, lead, and serve the congregation I serve through the message I bring each Sunday? Yes! Do I want to be affirmed as a good Bible teacher? Yes! But I am a realist too. I recognize that when God is not first loved and adored there can be no heart-felt expectancy, no authentic responsiveness, and no transforming impact. It has always been so with the people of God. The best seed in the world cannot grow where the soil is ill-prepared to receive it.

Fourth, the Holy Spirit-filled man expresses his trust in God for every situation through thanksgiving and praise. The Spirit-filled man knows that he is not called to praise God for evil or tragedy. He also understands that circumstances do not judge the presence or absence of God nor the verity of His ways. Through worship the Spirit-filled man is free to give thanks to God because he knows with his mind and in his heart that God is in control and loves him as his own.

Descartes epitomized the Enlightenment when he postulated, "I think, therefore I am." The Holy Spirit-filled man counters, "I worship, therefore I am." Human identity is not formed by our cognitive capacity to contemplate or ponder. Identity is formed in the incendiary crucible of worship. There the Holy Spirit apprehends, fills, and vitally reveals to each man that he is made in the image of God and destined for glory.

What would our lives and congregations look like if these four signs of the Holy Spirit were abundantly evident?...

Enjoy your LifeGroup!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mark". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Getting to know one another better..

If you could speak another language fluently, which one would you choose? Why?

Acts 11-14:

When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. 2 And suddenly there came from heaven a noise like a violent rushing wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. 3 And there appeared to them tongues as of fire distributing themselves, and they rested on each one of them. 4 And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit was giving them utterance.

5 Now there were Jews living in Jerusalem, devout men from every nation under heaven. 6 And when this sound occurred, the crowd came together, and were bewildered because each one of them was hearing them speak in his own language. 7 They were amazed and astonished, saying, "Why, are not all these who are speaking Galileans? 8 "And how is it that we each hear them in our own language to which we were born? 9 "Parthians and Medes and Elamites, and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, 10 Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the districts of Libya around Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, 11 Cretans and Arabs — we hear them in our own tongues speaking of the mighty deeds of God." 12 And they all continued in amazement and great perplexity, saying to one another, "What does this mean?" 13 But others were mocking and saying, "They are full of sweet wine."

What? (does the Bible say)

NOTE: Luke says "LIKE a violent rushing wind" and "tongues AS OF fire". This is a description not a literal rendition.

Read Acts 2.1-4. Imagine you are present there... what do you think you would see and hear? How would you describe it?

What was originally celebrated on the day of Pentecost? (The answer is NOT in the passage!)

Why is it significant that the Holy Spirit was poured out on the day of Pentecost?

What did these believers do to receive the Holy Spirit?

Now what? (how will I think based on what this passage says)

What comes to your mind when the Holy Spirit is mentioned?

In what ways was Pentecost a unique event? In what ways can this event be repeated today?

What does it mean to be filled with the Holy Spirit? What are the effects/consequences of being filled with the Holy Spirit?

To whom is the power of the Holy Spirit available?

How can a person receive the Holy Spirit?

So what? (difference will this passage make in how I live)

What do you think it would be like if the Holy Spirit were suddenly withdrawn from the church, your Life-Group, and/or your life? Do you think you would recognize the difference?! Why or why not? ... what do you think the difference would be?

How has your life and your LifeGroup been impacted by the Holy Spirit?

What areas of unbelief must you address to in order to become more open/hungry for the move of God in your life?

How can you cultivate greater sensitivity to the Holy Spirit? How can your LifeGroup create greater sensitivity to the Holy Spirit?

What can you do each day to invite the Holy Spirit to use you?

My prayer requests (write in advance what you want your group to pray for...)

Praying for my group...