

## ***Be Filled With The Spirit.* – Dr. Lee Roberson**

### **Chapter 9**

#### **Channels Of Blessing**

**“Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send Him unto you. And when He is come, He will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment”**  
(John 16:7,8).

It is evident from a study of the Scripture before us that the Holy Spirit works through believers. Very plainly our Savior said, **“I will send Him unto you.”** The next sentence begins, **“And when He is come** (that is, when he is come to believers) **He will reprove, or convict, the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment.”**

Here is a truth that apparently the great masses of believers have forgotten. Or, perhaps they have never known it. The Holy Spirit works through believers to bring about the things which Christ has appointed for Him to do.

How wonderful that God wants to work through us to bring about the greatest blessing unto men. Though we are poor and weak, if we are saved, we are indwelt by the Holy Spirit, and He is ready to work through us to bring conviction to others.

How fearful is this responsibility, for should we fail to be open channels, then the Spirit will not be able to do His work.

I want to be a channel of blessing. By God’s help, I want the Holy Spirit to have full right of way in my life.

If we are to be channels of blessing, three things are necessary.

#### **I. We Must Be Ready For The Holy Spirit To Use Us.**

If we would be channels of blessing, then we must put ourselves at the disposal of the Holy Spirit. We must make ourselves ready, and we must remain ready for His holy purposes. Three things must be true of your life and mine:

**First**, we must be separated from the world. God is not looking for the great and the mighty, but He is looking for clean vessels and clean channels through which to work.

We all receive great encouragement as we read (1 Corinthians 1:27-29) **“But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty. And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: That no flesh should glory in His presence:”** (1 Cor. 1:27-29).

Our God is ready to use the weakest of people if they are clean vessels and separated from iniquity. Paul tells us that **“In a great house there are not only vessels of gold and silver, but also of wood and of earth, and some to honor, and some to dishonor. If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honor, sanctified, and meet for the Master’s use, and prepared unto every good work”** (2 Timothy 2:20,21).

If the Holy Spirit is to work through us to the unsaved, then there must be an open channel. If our lives are not separated from the world, then the channel will be choked.

If wives are to win their husbands, then they must so live that the Holy Spirit can work through them. If the life is not pleasing to God, and if it is full of compromises, then the Holy Spirit cannot use it. I saw this illustrated some years ago when I was visiting in Birmingham. A pastor and I went to see a man about his salvation. The four of us sat and talked for a long time, but the man was not interested. His wife was a member of the church and she seemed concerned about him, but he did not show any concern for his soul. After we had spent quite a bit of time talking with him, showing him his need of Jesus suddenly his wife fell out of her chair upon the floor and began to cry, "It is my fault! It is my fault! I thought I could win my husband if I would go with him to the places of amusement and if I would do the things he does, but I can see now that this will never win him." The wife poured out her confession to God. It was not long until the husband was upon his knees, and he accepted Jesus as his Savior.

A poor woman came crying to me only a few hours ago, asking prayer for her husband. She said, "I was a Christian when we married, but he was not. Throughout the years, I have gone with him to places of amusement. I have played cards with him and his friends, and allowed him to bring whisky into the home, though I did not believe in it. We are now separated from each other, and both of us are miserable, and unhappy, but I know it is my fault because I did not live in such a way that he could see Jesus."

There must be separation from the things of the world if God's Holy Spirit is to work through us to bring blessings to others.

**Secondly**, if the Spirit of God is to use us, we must be dead to self. We must die to sin, to self, and to the world, or fail in Christian service. There is absolutely no other way to be used of God.

Jesus said, "**Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit**" (John 12:24).

This is without question the reason why so many Christians are failing in their service—they have not died to self. We may be energetic and faithful in church attendance and tithing, but if self is still alive and has not been reckoned dead then we will not bear much fruit in Christian service.

"I am crucified with Jesus,  
And the cross has set me free;  
I have risen again with Jesus,  
And He lives and reigns in me.

"It is sweet to die with Jesus,  
To the world and self and sin;  
It is sweet to live with Jesus,  
As He lives and reigns within.

"This the story of the Master,  
Through the cross He reached the throne  
And like Him our Path to glory,  
Ever leads through death alone."

Have you reckoned self to be dead in order that the channel might be clean and open for the Holy Spirit to work?

**Thirdly**, if we are to be used of the Holy Spirit, then we must be willing, absolutely willing, for God to use us. Some people are afraid to surrender for fear that God will ask some hard thing of them; therefore, they go through life fighting against the Lord because of fear of the price they might have to pay if they surrendered. If that is your condition, then let me testify that one day in the will of God is better than a thousand days outside of His will. He may not want you to do the hard thing which you fear, but He wants you to be willing to do anything that He asks you to do.

Yes, make ready for the Holy Spirit to use your life, by separation, death to self, and surrender to God's will.

## **II. If We Are To Be Channels of Blessing, We Must Be Sensitive To The Holy Spirit.**

By this I mean that we must listen for His voice, and follow those divine impressions which come to us by the Spirit.

Jesus said of the Holy Spirit that when He is come, **"He will guide you into all truth"** (John 16:13). Not only does He guide into truth, but He guides in everything if we are sensitive to hear and obey. This was true in the experience of Philip the deacon who conducted a successful revival in Samaria, and the Spirit of God sent him down to the desert to preach to one lone man. If Philip had followed the human way, he would have remained in the crowded cities of Samaria and preached to the multitudes, but it was the Spirit's desire for him to reach the Ethiopian eunuch.

Let us not be too sure that we are doing what the Spirit wants us to do simply because we have apparent success. Though I may preach to a large crowd the Spirit of God may want me to leave here and preach to one person in a distant and isolated place.

The apostle Paul was guided by the Holy Spirit. He was separated to the work of missions by the Spirit, and his trips were planned according to the Spirit's guidance. On one occasion we remember that Paul desired to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit suffered him not.

Peter was directed by the Spirit of God to go to the house of Cornelius and preach the Word of God. Had he not been sensitive to the Holy Spirit, souls would have perished, and the apostle would have lost the joy of obedience to God.

The Holy Spirit not only guides, but He provides: He provides opportunities for service. I do not believe that any Christian who is willing to follow the Spirit will ever be without opportunities to serve God. Those who are constantly lamenting their dearth of opportunities are without question men and women whose hearts are not sensitive to the Spirit's direction, and whose ears are deaf to His call.

Since I began to seek the Spirit's guidance for my life in all things, I have never lacked for opportunities to serve God. Doors of opportunity are open on every side and strength to undertake every task will be given when we follow Him.

He provides opportunities and when we are sensitive to the Spirit, He will give us words to say. Many of you have told me how the Lord has helped you in your witnessing; when sometimes it seemed that the person to whom you were talking had problems that could not be answered, the Lord gave you the words to say.

As we read through the book of the Acts, we will see how God's servants never lacked the proper words to speak when they were led by the Spirit. We see an illustration of this in the message of Peter on Pentecost, and in the sermon of Peter and John at the Beautiful Gate. We see an evidence of this in Peter's sermon in the household of Cornelius. He was breaking all traditions. He was going against all Jewish conceptions, but God gave him the words to speak as he followed the Holy Spirit.

Go as the Spirit guides you, and speak as He directs you speak. Be very sensitive to His leadership.

### III. Depend On The Holy Spirit To Convict Sinners.

It is the work of the Holy Spirit to convict men of sin. It is only through His work that they are made to see their personal sinfulness.

Conviction is absolutely necessary before men are to be saved. After conviction seizes the heart, it is not difficult to get a man to receive the Lord. A few nights ago, after the close of a service in Beckley, West Virginia, the Sunday School superintendent grabbed me and said, "Come with me. You must help me at once." He drew me down to the basement of the church and there, in a dark room, was a man pacing the floor, weeping, crying, and wringing his hands. His conviction was so great that it was hard to talk to him. But after a few moments of simple instruction, he cried out, "Lord Christ, I will receive You as my Savior."

One of the greatest needs of the present day in sacred work is conviction of sin. Let us remember that this conviction must be done by the Holy Spirit. We cannot convict people. The telling of stories and the singing of sentimental songs may bring tears, but there is a difference between tears of emotion and conviction for sin. We must use the Word of God and point men to the Lamb of God and let the Holy Spirit do His work.

Now, let us notice briefly what Jesus said He would do when He is come unto you. "He will reprove, or convict, the world of sin, and of righteousness and of judgment" (John 16:8).

What is the sin of which He will convict men? "**Of sin, because they believed not on me**" (John 16:9). This is the sin that the Holy Spirit deals with. It does not say that He convicts men of drunkenness or stealing, or immorality, but He convicts of the sin of unbelief.

This is the hardest sin to get men to see. They can understand the awfulness of certain social sins, but they fail to see the awfulness of rejecting Jesus Christ. Many people stand proudly in the house of God and boast of their goodness when they are guilty of the greatest of all sins—the sin of unbelief.

Note also that the Holy Spirit will convict the world of righteousness. This is not our righteousness, but the righteousness of Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit makes men to see their guilt and sin, and then points to that righteousness which they must have in our Savior.

Lastly, He convicts the world of judgment. "**Because the prince of this world is judged**" (John 16:11). The devil is judged and will go to his appointed place in hell. All who reject our Savior will be judged and sentenced also to that terrible place of fire and brimstone.

Judgment and hell are two words that we do not hear so much in our churches. We have sought for softer words when we need to be plain and honest about this matter. The Holy Spirit works through believers to convict men of sin, of righteousness, and of that judgment which is to come.

Depend on the Holy Spirit in all of your work, whether teaching, preaching, or singing. Depend on Him. As we do so, there will be greater joy in service, greater liberty in our work, and more fruit will be borne to the glory of God. **Ω**

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