

FULLNESS

Πληρώματος

(fullness, that of which something is packed)

"I am sure that, when I come to you, I shall come in the fullness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ" (Romans 15:29). Paul wrote these words to the Christians in Rome and he was telling them, "I have no doubt that when I meet you, it will be in the fullest measure of Christ's blessing." The apostle's words imply something that every believer should fully understand. That is, there are various degrees, or measures, of Christ's blessing. Some believers obtain a full measure of this blessing, which is probably their hearts' desire. Yet, God's word tells us that we're all meant to come into a full measure of the Lord's blessing! God does not intend for you to enter into only a small measure of Christ's power.

In his letter to the Ephesians, the apostle Paul urges everyone to pursue the fullest measure of this blessing: "*Unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ. . . . Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the **measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ***" (Ephesians 4:7, 13).

The previous chapter climaxes with these incredible words: "*that you may **be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.***" But how do we live in the measure of the fullness of God? Let's examine this passage a little closer:

"For this reason I kneel before the Father, from whom his whole family in heaven and on earth derives its name. I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled (flooded) to the measure of all the fullness of God" (verses 14-19).

Note the word "fullness" is used in both these passages. The Greek word Paul uses here means "to complete the task of filling up to the full." This word emphasises fullness and completion. It is a state of complete plenitude (superabundance).

Picture this: You have just finished a ten mile hike on 35 degree heat and on the entire journey you haven't had a thing to drink. Stumbling with thirst, you reach home and plea for water. With love and concern your wife brings you a large glass of water and tells you she's got plenty more. What do you do? You take a couple of sips and quit. Drink more, she insists, you must be parched. But you decline because you don't want to look too needy. Why did you do that? Why do you do that spiritually? Your heavenly Father wants you to experience fullness... fullness of life... fullness of joy... fullness of God Himself. And yet you insist on only taking a few sips of living water. The importance of this story illustrates that we are the deciding factor when it comes to fully experiencing God's fullness.

Listen to Paul's prayer again... that we might be flooded to the measure of all the fullness of God! That's what we should be yearning for, that's what we should be chasing, that's what we should so desperately be demanding! Wouldn't it be incredible to be **flooded to the measure of all the fullness of God?**

I'm sure we would all like to experience more health, abundance and success in our lives. God, being God, has access to all of these things, won't you agree? So to be full of God is to be full of health, abundance and success. Therefore, what the Holy Spirit is revealing to us in Ephesians 3 must be the key to unlocking all these things.

I'm sure many of you were told that to be "filled with all the fullness of God," you had to fast a certain number of days, pray a certain number of hours and speak in tongues incessantly! I am not belittling fasting, praying or speaking in tongues, but to be filled with all the fullness of God is not about what you do. It is not even about your love for Christ. It is actually about **knowing** the love of Christ! No one ever told me that if I knew how much God loves me and focused on His love for me, I would become full of Him.

When God made you, He designed you to run at optimal level when you are **filled with His love**, like a car that runs at its best when it is filled with the right kind of petrol.

When you realize how much God loves you and you feed on that love constantly, you will be supernaturally filled (flooded) with the fullness of God. And to be full of God is to be full of love (for God is love), and everything He has for you. To be full of God is to come to a place of superabundance, with His exceeding blessings having overtaken you.

However, there may be times when we are running on empty, physically, emotionally and spiritually, and you need to refuel. To be "filled with all the fullness of God" is not a one-time filling. It's a constant refuelling. Why? Because you have a constant (draining) need. There are always things in your life which are trying to exhaust your God given resources, challenging you and wearing you down. And when you get to that point, you have a choice to make. What are you going to do about it! You can keep running on empty or you can ask the Holy Spirit to fill you! Ephesians 5:18 states that we should keep on being filled, constantly and continually! This verse also tells us that it is the will of God for your life. Therefore, when you know that the Holy Spirit desires to fill you, and keep filling you, there is no reason to give up.

Notice how this process all started with the Holy Spirit working in your innermost being, and ends with everything being done according to the power that is at work in you. The Holy Spirit is at the centre of you **living in the fullness of God**. He leads you every step of the way. He is the guarantee that exceeding and abundant blessings that God has stored up for you, flood your life, from start to finish!

Back to our opening passage... Once you are conscious of how much God loves you, and you become **filled with the fullness of God**, what then follows is the next verse... God doing exceedingly abundantly above and beyond all that you can ask or think, according to the power that works in you (see Ephesians 3:20). Yes, you will experience the tremendous blessings of God exploding in your life! You will become God's chosen vessel - laden with His blessings! And like the apostle Paul you can boldly declare, "*I shall come in the fullness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ.*"