

Series: Desire Overflow	Reference: Romans 15:13	Title: Taste & See	Date: 06.27.2021
Website Writeup: We long to be filled to overflowing, but to be filled, we must desire it. We do nothing without desire. How are we filled? How do we, like David said, taste & see that the Lord is good?			

COLOR CHANGES IN TEXT INDICATE SLIDE CHANGES

We long to be filled to overflowing in Christ. But filling necessitates true desire for it. We do nothing without desire. You go through school writing papers you'd never choose to write because you desire a degree. Moms endure long pregnancies & painful births because they desire a child. Couples struggle through difficult times in marriage because they desire their spouse. Think about what you've desired in life & to what lengths it has driven you. We pursue Jesus in spiritually formative disciplines, and sometimes endure great emotional pain, because Jesus is what we desire. And in doing so, His desires become our own.

Following our missions study in past weeks, where we studied the mechanics of missional theology, we now want to study the blowing of the Spirit of God which brings that all to life!

My son was sailing a small Sunfish sailboat on our vacation. I watched as he tacked against the wind to move forward. You couldn't go anywhere without the mechanics of the sail, mast, ropes & rudder. But they're useless without the blowing of the unseen wind which propels you forward. We want to catch the wind of the Holy Spirit, overflowing Jesus to those close to us, our neighbors & even cross-culturally among the unreached people groups of the earth. As it says in Romans 15:13...¹³ *May the God of hope fill you with all joy & peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.*

David invites us in Psalm 34:8 to *'Taste & see that the Lord is good.'* If we're tasting for the first time, there's probably nothing standing in our way of seeing the Lord's goodness - when we're new to faith, we don't lack enthusiasm. But, if you've eaten a meal 1000 times, familiarity breeds contempt. Filet Mignon gets boring eaten at every meal! Replace that filet with bologna, in a week you'll want it back. It's too easy to slow boil in a personal pot of contempt.

Life can sometimes seem like Bill Murray in *Groundhog Day*, waking up to the same thing day in day out. Murray portrays Phil Connors, a cynical television weatherman covering the annual *Groundhog Day* event in Punxsutawney, Pennsylvania, who becomes trapped in a time loop, forcing him to relive February 2nd repeatedly. He's sort of a childish sexist jerk & it's not until he learns what's really important, that being to actually love his co-star played by Andie MacDowell, that he breaks the loop.

Like him, we're bored with the monotony. We're always looking for the exciting thing. The next thing. The sexy thing. The simple thing which will satisfy us without working at

it. We look past all the beauty & wonder right before us. Yet all the while that one thing which fills is right in front of us...

In the last scene of the movie Bill Murray wakes up to the exact same morning scene he'd woken up to for who knows how many days before. But this time, instead of rolling his eyes & sighing in desperation & disgust, he says, "It's so beautiful!" He now could see & taste something new - he could regard the day differently *because* he'd been filled with love which had changed his world view.

Ultimately what fills & satisfies us is Jesus. If we want to taste & see His goodness, it must be seen in the light of who He is to us. Charles Spurgeon once started a sermon like this...

"There is something exceedingly improving to the mind in a contemplation of the Divinity. It is a subject so vast, that all our thoughts are lost in its immensity; so deep, that our pride is drowned in its infinity. Other subjects we can compass & grapple with; in them we feel a kind of self-content, and go our way with the thought, 'Behold I am wise'.

But when we come to this master-science, finding that our plumb-line cannot sound its depth, and that our eagle eye cannot see its height, we turn away with the thought that vain man would be wise, but he is like a wild ass's colt; and with solemn exclamation (we say), 'I am but of yesterday, and know nothing'. No subject of contemplation will tend more to humble the mind, than thoughts of God...

But while the subject humbles the mind, it also expands it. He who often thinks of God, will have a larger mind than the man who simply plods around this narrow globe...The most excellent study for expanding the soul, is the science of Christ, and Him crucified, and the knowledge of the Godhead in the glorious Trinity. Nothing will so enlarge the intellect, nothing so magnify the whole soul of man, as a devout, earnest, continued investigation of the great subject of the Deity.

And, while humbling & expanding, this subject is eminently consolatory. Oh, there is, in contemplating Christ, a balm for every wound; in musing on the Father, there is a quietus for every grief; and in the influence of the Holy Spirit there is a balsam for every sore. Would you lose your sorrow? Would you drown your cares? Then go, plunge yourself in the Godhead's deepest sea; be lost in His immensity; and you shall come forth as from a couch of rest, refreshed & invigorated. I know nothing which can so comfort the soul; so calm the swelling billows of sorrow & grief; so speak peace to the winds of trial, as a devout musing upon the subject of the Godhead."

So, to be filled is to know God, and as Spurgeon said to his congregation, "It is to that subject that I invite you this morning" To contemplate; to taste & see that the Lord is good. I guarantee, I won't come close to taking you there. (pray)

In reading Psalm 34:8, and in this conversation of being filled to overflowing, I was led to Ephesians 5:15-20 ¹⁵ *Be very careful, then, how you live - not as unwise but as wise, ¹⁶ making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil.*

Stopping here briefly, there's a very real sense of a healthy fear conveyed in Scripture under which the Christian lives - *be very careful, the days are evil*. That fear we could define as a rational, balanced outlook at life & self. A sober acknowledgement of the reality of the fallen world we live in, and that we too are fallen creatures. When we acknowledge there is sin & evil in the world, even in us, someone may say we're being negative or fearful. Fearful yes, but not scared. Negative? Not one iota. We're simply maturely recognizing our condition before God. We're full of hope, not in our abilities to do or be good, or create abundance, but strictly in God's goodness. We need to regard ourselves rightly before God.

The fear we speak of is better expressed as maturity & wisdom. A fear meaning we're realistic, looking at ourselves & life through the eyes of Christ saying, "I too am a sinner deserving of death, my own heart tends to lead me astray. Only through Christ am I made right." That is positivity pointing to the grace of God in Christ sufficient even for my totally depraved nature. As stated in Romans 3:23, *'for all have sinned & fall short of the glory of God'*. So, in relationships & interactions of life, there's a very real sense of trust, but verify, even with our own hearts. Realizing there's not only sin within us at work, but other powers as well in the world & in relationships. That God loves us, but that we're a fickle sinful bunch mixed up in a complex stew of sin & self.

Therefore we're urged to be wise, making the most of every opportunity - not just some, but EVERY. Constantly aware. Having the ability to be active in faith in opening our mouth to be filled by the Living Word of God with a sense of urgency in maximizing time & opportunity.

It continues... ¹⁷ *Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord's will is. ¹⁸ Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery.* Like Bill Murray, don't go looking for love in all the wrong places. Don't be foolish. Devote your mind, as Spurgeon urged over a century ago in England, to plumb the depths of God. Take to heart what Ecclesiastes 12:13 says... *'Fear God & keep his commandments, for this is the duty of all mankind.'*

Don't go looking for filling in false ways. Don't get drunk on wine. Don't seek to be filled with things which were never meant to satisfy you fully; alcohol, drugs, the approval of others, wealth, sex, food, success, power, etc... They're God given pleasures, but not meant to fill the soul with meaning & purpose - that's reserved only for Himself...know the Lord's will, fear God & keep his commandments. The only way to find that out is through a thorough consistent daily diet of Scripture. Not a seminary degree, but daily quiet time. Push aside all other cares, sitting with the Lord reading & praying. Allowing His Word to soak into your heart & mind. Allowing the Holy Spirit to submarine us deep into an ocean of God's thoughts.

That's why it says...*'Instead, be filled with the Spirit,'* Which is reflective of not only Romans 15:13, but also of Psalms 34:8, taste & see that the Lord is good! And what comes out of this willing act of submission to God's filling is overflow. Ephesians 5:15-20 continues to describe it by saying, *'Instead, be filled with the Spirit,¹⁹ speaking to one another with psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit. Sing & make music from your heart to the Lord,²⁰ always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.'* A healthy picture of interaction between the body & of constant thanksgiving - living our life in awe at the wonders of God daily.

It's easy though for us to grow contemptuous. Like Bill Murray to come out the front door viewing every day as the same garbage as before. We fill ourselves & surround ourselves with contempt. Think about the news, the songs, the literature we read.

David was surrounded with contempt as well. He wrote Psalm 34 in the midst of being chased down by King Saul, his own mentor who'd gone crazy with pride & paranoia wanting to kill David. And also King Achish, David's enemy, who'd vowed to take him out. David could've looked at his situation thinking God wasn't with him - but David, being filled with the Spirit, could see the greater goodness of God even through his difficult situation. The filling he experienced didn't allow for contempt to grow. David filled his heart & mind with the Word of God, the Truth of who God is - he contemplated & plumbed the depths of God's Word & was better for it.

What do you fill yourself with? Because as we think of filling we must realize, we both have some control, yet no control over the process at the same time. We swim in a world geared to fill us with junk food & junk messages. We have little control over some of it. We can choose more wisely concerning what we put into our mouths & eyes - that's for sure, but it'll not turn off our own dark hearts - that takes divine intervention.

Yet when it comes to being filled with the Spirit instead, in John 3 Jesus tells us the Spirit of God won't be caged & manipulated. The Spirit blows where the Spirit pleases. So what's the Christian to do? How are we to be filled? How do you net the wind?

Remember, for the redeemed, whose life is now hidden away with Christ, a few things stand true of us. One is, you've been given the seal of the Holy Spirit as an everlasting guarantee of your adoption as a son or daughter - the Spirit's chosen to blow in your life already. As it says in Ephesians 1:13...¹³*And you also were included in Christ when you heard the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation. When you believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit.* That can't be taken from you, you didn't earn it, it was God's gift & promise to you. Not even you can screw that up!

Secondly, Scripture commands us to be filled with the Word of God as it says in Colossians 3:16, *'Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching & admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms & hymns & spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God.'* Being filled means, I acknowledge my absolute need for God, my total depravity - I'm at the mercy of His blowing. And also that I submit myself to His Word allowing it to enrich my thinking in the context of

community (CG's/Discipleship Relationships). Open to teaching & admonishing someone in light of the Scriptures, but also to have that done to us.

Being filled means we choose to walk in the way of holiness, craving God's leading. As it says in 1 Peter 2:1-3...*'Therefore, rid yourselves of all malice & all deceit, hypocrisy, envy & slander of every kind. ² Like newborn babies, crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation, ³ now that you have tasted that the Lord is good.'*

What that says to us is the same - live wisely, throw off sin, live in holiness, crave to be filled with the Word of God & like Lays Potato Chips, as we taste a little we'll want more. Peter has credibility to say these things, since in Acts Chapter 5, people were literally bringing their sick out in the streets in the hope that even Peter's shadow would fall on them & they'd be healed - Peter was filled with the Spirit overflowing with the Living Word of God.

So, our part of this act of filling is to pursue Jesus, to feed on His word. Where do we go for that? We go directly to the source...Jesus who said, *"I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst..."* Remember Peter said to him, *"Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life."* (John 6:35,51,66-69). These Words have been left on the pages of Scripture, those words alone can fill a lifetime of study, never exhausted. If we say we love Jesus, then we must be in love with the Scriptures. If we say we follow God, but never crack the Bible, that's incongruent. Being filled by the Spirit means being filled by His Word.

So, get hungry & get thirsty...

"Blessed are you who hunger now, For you shall be filled." (Luke 6:21).

"For I will pour water on him who is thirsty, And floods on the dry ground; I will pour My Spirit on your descendants, And My blessing on your offspring." (Isaiah 44:3).

God's Word tastes good...

"How sweet are Your words to my taste, Sweeter than honey to my mouth." (Ps. 119:103).

"The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life." (John 6:63).

"Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God." (Matthew 4:4).

God's Word is refreshing...

"If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me... out of his heart will flow rivers of living water." But this He spoke concerning the Spirit." (John 7:37-39a).

Choose to meditate on it...

"May you be rooted deep in love & founded securely on love. That you may have the power to grasp with all the saints the experience of that love... That you may know [practically, through experience for yourselves] the love of Christ, which far surpasses

mere knowledge [without experience]; *that you may be filled with all the fullness of God* [may have the richest measure of the divine Presence, and become a body wholly filled & flooded with God Himself]!" (Eph. 3:17b-19, Amplified).

Plumb the depths of the Divine...

"Yes, furthermore, I count everything as loss compared to the possession of the priceless privilege (the overwhelming preciousness, the surpassing worth, and supreme advantage) *of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord...* (For my determined purpose is) *that I may know Him*, (that I may progressively become more deeply & intimately acquainted with Him, perceiving & recognizing & understanding the wonders of His Person more strongly & more clearly)." (Phil. 3:8,10, Amplified).

There is nothing more urgent & rewarding than knowing Jesus more fully, of being filled with the Spirit. So I invite you today to begin your journey of exploring the vast oceanic wonders of God this year; be filled to overflowing!