

## Filling the House

Matthew 12:43-45

“When an unclean spirit goes out of a man, he goes through dry places, seeking rest, and finds none. <sup>44</sup> Then he says, ‘I will return to my house from which I came.’ And when he comes, he finds it empty, swept, and put in order. <sup>45</sup> Then he goes and takes with him seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter and dwell there; and the last state of that man is worse than the first. So shall it also be with this wicked generation.”

In our past studies of *deliverance*, we have looked at *steps leading to deliverance*, and *steps to maintaining deliverance*. In this study we are going to look at *our responsibility to fill the void in our spiritual house*.

In Matthew 12:43-45 we are told in plain language that it is possible for a demon that has been cast out to return, and not only so, but even to bring other and more wicked spirits with him. The implication is clear. If the "house" is left empty, swept and garnished, it is an open invitation for worse trouble. The house must be *filled*.

This same account is found in Luke 11:24-26. I want to share with you the truths of these two passages. In Luke's account Jesus cast out a "spirit of dumbness" from a man and he was able to speak. Some expressed the belief that Jesus did this by the power of "Beelzebub," the chief of the demons. Jesus explains that if this were true, then Satan's kingdom was divided against itself and therefore could not stand. Then He added, "But if I with the finger of God cast out devils, no doubt the kingdom of God is come upon you."

Jesus was addressing a Jewish audience who had developed a religion of negatives. Their legalistic religion had taken a lot of things out of their lives, but they had not replaced them with anything of any real value. And now, because of their closed mindedness they were refusing the *positive ministry* of Jesus Christ. So, to emphasize this point Jesus used an illustration that they would

**understand.** If they did not put something *positive* in their lives after eliminating so many *negative* things, they would be like a man delivered of demons who did not replace the *demonic activity* with anything *positive* in his life. They would end up in worse condition than when they started.

**The context in Matthew is even clearer. Jesus had just been condemned for picking corn on the Sabbath.** He also *healed a man's withered hand on the Sabbath.* Again the Pharisees accused Him of casting out demons by "*Beelzebub.*" **Jesus reminded them that their words were an evidence of having an evil heart.** They had already seen enough to change their lives, but they had not changed. And the truth of the matter is that unless they changed they would grow worse and worse - *like a man cleansed of demons who did not fill his house with something of God.*

**Jesus is simply teaching us that there comes a time when we had better put some positive things in our lives.** There must always be a *balance* between the *positive* and the *negative* factors. *After* we take *authority over the demonic forces,* and *dealt with the flesh desires,* we must put in Jesus - *let Him rule our lives.* In fact, **the reason for getting rid of demonic activity from our lives is to make more room for Jesus!**

**Now, the question that we must answer is this - How do we fill the house with more of Jesus?** We must be very careful right here, because when we were saved, we got all of Jesus when He took up residence in our lives. But, we must also realize that in order for Jesus to fill our "house" we must *be willing to get ourselves out of the way, and allow Him to do His work through us!!*

**To be filled with Jesus is to be filled with PURITY and POWER.** These two words summarize His person. As we shall see, *our purity comes through abiding in Christ* and *the result of the fruit of the Spirit:* our power comes through the *filling of the Holy Spirit* and the *gifts of the Spirit.*

**For every deliverance of demonic activity, the gifts and fruits of the Holy Spirit must replace it.** This is the express responsibility of the delivered person.

We are filled with PURITY as we allow the Word of God to continually conform us "to the image of his Son (Jesus Christ)." The blood of Jesus has cleansed us from all unrighteousness, but, as we "walk by faith" and *look forward to His blessed Return*, we will *purify ourselves*, according to 1 John 3:3, "And every man that has this hope in him purify himself even as He is pure."

We are filled with POWER as *we allow the Holy Spirit to fill us*, as seen in Acts 1:8, "But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth." **After the Holy Spirit was poured out at Pentecost, the Word of God tells us in 1 Corinthians 12:7-11 that this Holy Spirit power was manifested through the nine supernatural gifts of the Spirit.** These gifts are listed as: (1) *The Word of wisdom*, (2) *The Word of knowledge*, (3) *Faith*, (4) *Gifts of healing*, (5) *Working of miracles*, (6) *Prophecy*, (7) *Discerning of spirits*, (8) *Kinds of tongues* and (9) *Interpretation of tongues*.

**The entire book of Acts shows us how the power of the Holy Spirit operated through these gifts of the Spirit.** Through Peter and John a *gift of healing* was ministered to the lame man (Acts 3); Peter spoke the *word of faith* to Ananias and Sapphira and they fell dead (Acts 5); through Peter a *miracle of resurrection brought Dorcas back to life* (Acts 9); *words of wisdom and knowledge* came to Ananias for ministry to Saul (Acts 9); while Peter preached in the home of Cornelius there were *tongues and interpretation* (Acts 10); and through a disciple named Agabus the church was blessed through *prophecy* (Acts 11); Paul dealt with the demon of divination in a young woman harassing his ministry, through *discerning the spirit* (Acts 16).

**Demons despise these gifts of the Holy Spirit and cause men to despise them.** Why? Because the operation of these supernatural gifts

of power counter-act the work of demons. Listen, demonic activity is exposed by the discerning of spirits and the word of knowledge. Their evil is undone by the word of wisdom, faith, gifts of healing and miracles. Their plans to bring harm are thwarted by a timely word of prophecy. No wonder demons so strongly oppose these gifts!!

Apart from the gifts of the Spirit the church cannot function. And that is the reason that Satan, the enemy of the church, has set himself against that which is designed to build up the Body of Christ.

We must also fill our spiritual house with the “FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT,” as seen in Galatians 5:22-23. We need to be careful to realize the difference between “Spiritual Gifts” and the “Fruit of the Spirit.” The “fruit of the Spirit” is: (1) Love, (2) Joy, (3) Peace, (4) Longsuffering, (5) Kindness, (6) Goodness, (7) Faithfulness, (8) Gentleness, and (9) Self-control. The fruit of the Holy Spirit represents the very nature of Jesus. Romans 8:29 reminds us, “For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.” The words “conformed to the image of (Christ)...” does not refer to His physical likeness but His character. And Romans 12:2 says, “And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.” Child of God, when the fruit of the Holy Spirit is produced in a believer's life, he becomes identified with Jesus in character.

I am convinced that many, many Christians who are saved, are not producing any “fruit” because they are not “abiding” in Jesus, as seen in John 15:4, “As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me.” Notice that the “fruit” is not produced by independent action or by self-effort. It only comes by abiding in the Vine! So the key word here is “abide,” which indicates a continuing and personal; decision to draw from the power of the Resurrected Christ in my everyday living!

It seems to me, far too many Christians today seem content to live what they think is an *adequate* Christian life. Though they go through the motions, but they do not enjoy the *power*, *peace*, and *joy* that should come with the abundant life Jesus promised in John 10:10, “I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.”

Please remember, we are talking “*spiritual warfare*” and if we are going to live as “*more than conquerors through (Christ) who loves us*” - we must be willing to have a *daily relationship with Him, where we experience His presence and trust Him for wisdom, courage, and strength in all situations.* With every *step you take, decision you make, conversation you have, and thought you entertain, the Lord wants to glorify Himself through you.* He desires to shine in your life - with His *love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control* illuminating *your unique talents, traits, and personality* as you walk in obedience to Him.

In other words, “*to abide*” in Christ is to *allow Jesus to live in and through you.* That is why Paul wrote in Galatians 2:20, “I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.”

**Child of God, we need to spend some time in fellowship with the Savior!!**

If you have never been saved, why not today?

**Please stand for prayer.**

Father,

Your Word is true. Today I choose to be more determined to spend more time in fellowship with You. I want to experience being “more than a conqueror through Christ who loves me” on a daily basis not just quote the Scripture! In Jesus name. Amen.