TITLE: Our New Identity!

TEXT: Eph. 5:18; Col. 1:24-27; 1st Co. 12:12;

Eph. 1:22-23; Jn. 14:12; 1st Co. 6:19-20; Gal. 2:20;Jn. 14:20; 2 Cor. 5:17-20

 INTRODUCTION: This morning I want to talk about Gods true calling for, we the Church. We have in essence been called to be saturated in the Holy Spirit.

 Not as a static experience (one time saturation or filling), but to seek to be filled to the full with His Spirit on a continuing basis, to constantly and continually seek this saturation experience.

 This is not only important but essential if we are going to become the men and women of God that He expects us to be, and if we are to fulfill His purpose and plan for us as His Church.

 To be filled and seek to remain full of the Holy Spirit was never intended to be an option for the believer.

 **Ephe 5:18 (NIV) Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit.**

 I want to key in on the phrase. "Be filled with the Spirit"!

 “Be Filled” comes from the Greek:

 **pleroo {play-ro'-o}**

**2a) to fill to the top: so that nothing shall be wanting; to full measure, fill to the brim ( be full, be saturated)**

 What does it mean to be saturated with the Holy Spirit?

 I love an example that Loren Caudill once shared when speaking about being saturated in the Holy Spirit.

 Have you ever forgot to drain the dishwater in the sink after having a spaghetti dinner and then the next Day find the dishrag floating around in the water and it has absorbed all the grease and goo of the dirty dish water?

 You look at it and you don’t even want to touch it!

 I might take my grill thongs and grab the thing and dump it right in the trash.

 What has happened is that the dishrag has been totally and completely saturated by the environment it was placed in.

 This is what this scripture is telling us to do when it says: **"Be filled with the Spirit"!**

To place ourselves in the environment of Christ and become totally saturated by His Spirit!

**"Be filled with the Spirit".**

 This is in the present Tense

The present tense represents a simple statement of fact or reality viewed as occurring in actual time.

 Now, at this moment, we are to be filled with the Spirit!

 But not only in this moment but as each subsequent moment arrives, we are to be filled with the Spirit.

 Our filling, our saturation into the Spirit of Christ is to always be in the present tense, never just in the past tense!

 Secondly, the mood that is used here is the imperative mood.

The imperative mood expresses a command to the hearer to perform a certain action by the order and authority of the one commanding.

 Thus, when Scripture says here to be, “filled with the Spirit" is not an "invitation," but an absolute command.

 God is not asking us, as believers, to be filled with the Spirit; He is commanding us to be filled with the Spirit.

 Why has God made it an imperative that we, moment by moment, be filled, be saturated with the Holy Spirit?

 Because of the new identity we take on as a Christian and as a member of the body of Christ.

 Here we run into another imperative…

 It is imperative that we realize just who we are, just what our new identity is in Christ Jesus in order for us to do that which God has called us to do.

 Our new identity is the Church, which is the body of Christ!

 So just what does that mean?

 **Colo 1:24 (NIV) Now I rejoice in what was suffered for you, and I fill up in my flesh what is still lacking in regard to Christ's afflictions, for the sake of his body, which is the church.**

**25 I have become its servant by the commission God gave me to present to you the word of God in its fullness--**

**26 the mystery that has been kept hidden for ages and generations, but is now disclosed to the saints.**

**27 To them God has chosen to make known among the Gentiles the glorious riches of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.**

 Here, we are told again the new identity of the believer!

 **Now I rejoice in what was suffered for you, and I fill up in my flesh what is still lacking in regard to Christ's afflictions, for the sake of his body, which is the church.**

 The Church is the new identity of the believer..

 Paul goes on to say---

**25 I have become its** (the bodies) **servant by the commission God gave me to present to you** (the body**) the word of God in its fullness--**

 Then he tells us what the Word of God in its fullness is!

**26 the mystery that has been kept hidden for ages and generations, but is now disclosed to the saints.**

 What is this mystery that has been hidden for ages and generations, but now is disclosed to the saints?

**27 To them** (The saints) **God has chosen to make known among the Gentiles the glorious riches of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.**

 This mystery that God has kept hidden for ages and generations and He has now chosen to reveal to the saints is.....

**Christ in you the hope of Glory!**

 This mystery is the ability for us as believers, the saints, to be saturated into the very presence of Christ.

 To be baptized in the Holy Spirit, not just ounce as a onetime experience, but a continual saturation which transforms us into the very Nature and Character of Christ Jesus.

 And in doing so we start to lose our identity and take on His!

 Several years ago Pam said something very profound and insightful as she was being baptized....

 She said: may I decrease and Christ increase in my life.

 This should be the ultimate goal of every believer!

 That we, that self, should decrease and Christ increase in our life…

 As Christians we have been called to take on a new identity! The identity of Jesus Christ Himself!

 We need to make a distinction here.

 What was Jesus’ last name?

 Let me tell you what it wasn't!

 It wasn't Christ!

 The word Christ is not a name it is a position!

 Often we say Jesus Christ as if it were a proper name, and in doing so we can cloud the identity of just who Jesus is!

 Jesus is the name! Christ is his title!

 Does anyone know what the Hebrew equivalent to the Greek word for Christ (Kristos) is?

 ***maw-shee'-akh***

***Anointed*; usually a *consecrated* person (as a king, priest, or saint); specifically the *Messiah:—*anointed one.**

 Jesus is the Christ, the Messiah!

 The phrase “Christ in you, the hope of Glory " is synonymous with the phrase, "Messiah in you, the hope of Glory"!

 When we are saturated in the Spirit of Jesus and start to take on His divine nature and character we are being saturated into the character and nature of the Messiah!

 What all this boils down to is this:

 As believers, we have not just been called by God to bear witness of Jesus to the world, but we have been called to literally take Jesus into the world around us!

 To reveal to them the "Him" that is in us!

 Paul makes an astounding statement in describing, we the Church, in 1st Co. 12:12.......

 **1Cor 12:12 (NIV) The body is a unit, though it is made up of many parts; and though all its parts are many, they form one body. So it is with Christ.**

 Paul is using the analogy of the Human body and comparing it to Christ and the church!

 Just as our physical body is made up of many parts and form one body and is called by one name, it is the same with Christ and the church.

 (Example: when talking about our body parts we would identify them as: Terry's foot, Terry's hand, Terry’s arm, Terry’s eyes, ect.)

**The body is a unit, though it is made up of many parts; and though all its parts are many, they form one body. So it is with Christ.**

 Paul is saying that Christ in the world is actually composed of many members!!

 We, as Spirit filled believers, as the body of Christ, are the manifestation of Christ the messiah to our world!

**Ephe 1:22 (NIV) And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way.**

 In other words, the spirit filled Church is the earthly manifestation of Jesus and possesses all the fullness of Christ!

 Jesus says this in:

**John 14:12 (NIV) I tell you the truth, anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing. He will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father.**

 What had Jesus been doing?

 Simply, He was fulfilling His role as Messiah, as the Christ to this world!

Jesus said: **Anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing.**

 Jesus is speaking about, you and I, the Church here! We are to do what He had been doing!

 And what was it that Jesus did when He was here?

 He was messiah, the anointed one of God to this world! The manifestation of His messiah-ship was healing the sick, giving sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf and many other miracles and wonders, all to lead men to God!

 And when Jesus ascended to the right hand of God He passed on this messianic ministry to we the Church!

 We, the Church, are to be Christ, be Messiah to our world to help lead others to God and become a part of this Messianic ministry.!

Jesus said that we wouldn't only do what He had been doing but we... **Would do even greater things than these, because He was going to the Father.**

 The purpose of Jesus’ ascension to Heaven was to send back the comforter, the Holy Spirit, to saturate His body, the Church!

 And with this miraculous event, the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, the size and scope of messiah to this world became much greater!

 When Jesus said that, we the Church, would do greater things than He did while He was here, He was speaking of what happened after the day of Pentecost!

 As the Church was filled to the full with His Spirit, they took on a new identity! The new identity that the Church took on was that of Christ to the world!

 If you are full of Jesus, you are full of Christ the Messiah!

 Do you see the magnitude of what God did on the day of Pentecost with the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon His Church?

 When Jesus walked the earth He was still God but He had limited Himself by becoming as human as you or me!

 While He was on this earth Jesus was bound by time and space just as we are! He could only be in one place at one time!

 In earthly form it wouldn't have been possible for Jesus to reach the whole world!

 So, how does God address the problem?

 Jesus, as man, is limited by time and space!

Jesus, as God the Spirit has no limitations!

 He can fill me with His Spirit and send me over here-

 He can fill you with His Spirit and send you over there---

 Do you see the dynamics here?

 On the day of Pentecost 120 believer's where filled, where saturated, in the very Spirit of Christ!

 And Jesus in our world exploded!! Talk about the big bang theory--- This was thee big bang!

 Peter immediately starts bringing Christ the messiah to those in Judea!

 Phillip goes to Samaria with the ministry of Christ the messiah!

 Peter is then called to Caesarea and brings Christ the Messiah there!

Paul and Barnabas take Christ the Messiah to Antioch, then Cyprus, then Iconium, then Lystra and Derbe!

 Paul and Silas take Christ the Messiah to Philippi, then Thessalonica, then Berea, then Athens, then Corinth, then Ephesus, then Macedonia!

 While at the same time, Barnabas and John Mark are bringing Christ the Messiah in the opposite direction!

 And with each stop many more come to Christ!

 As the Holy Spirit saturates other believers this messianic ministry keeps on expanding!!

 Even until it reached you and I…

 Simply speaking, when Jesus sent His Holy Spirit to saturate His Church, He was multiplying Himself in this world!

 With the outpouring of the Holy Spirit He was multiplying the ministry of Messiah! He was giving His Church His identity!

 Church that is our calling! That is, or should be, our new identity-- bringing the Messiah, Bringing the Christ, Bringing Jesus to our world!

 **1Cor 6:19 (NIV) Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own;**

**20 you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your body.**

 Our body is the temple of the Holy Spirit!

 He lives within us! We are no longer our own! We have exchanged our identity for the identity of Jesus Christ!

 It is what Paul means when he says....

**Gala 2:20 (NKJV) "I have been crucified with Christ; 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 for me.**

 **I no longer live but Christ, the Messiah, Jesus now lives in me!**

 And He doesn't reside in me just so that I can feel all good and fuzzy on the inside!

 He resides in me so that I can take on His identity and His ministry and take Him into my world!

 Church, we have been called by God to saturate and continue to be saturated in His Holy Spirit!

 To become so full of Jesus that we literally take on a new identity, His identity!

Jesus said...

**John 14:20 (NIV) On that day you will realize that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you.**

This is speaking of our union with the Godhead!

 Church, are you, and am I truly realizing this new identity that God has for us as His Body the Church?

 Are we, in fact, being saturated by God and reflecting Christ the Messiah to our world?

**2 Corinthians 5:17-20(NIV)**  **17Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!**  **18All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation:**  **19that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men’s sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation.**  **20We are therefore Christ’s ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ’s behalf: Be reconciled to God.**

 What a privilege God has given us! What a high calling He has placed upon us!

 To bear the identity of Jesus, the identity of the Messiah in our world! To be His ambassadors His representatives to our world!

 Is that what the world is seeing in us?

 When we walk into a room does it have the same effect as if Jesus walked into the room?

 I believe It should! Because if we are indeed saturated in the Holy Spirit, Jesus did enter that room! He came in with us!

 Is it your desire to be so full of Jesus that you actually affect the part of this world that you live in for Him?

 Is it your desire to be so full of Jesus that when people see you they associate you with Him?

 That if they were to describe you they would use words like: Godly, Christ-like, full of the Spirit?

 This is the identity that God has called us to! His identity!

 Is it our desire this morning for us to decrease and Christ to increase in our life to the point that when people see us they see Christ, They see Jesus in us?

 If this is our desire than we need to become like that dishrag talked about earlier, where we place ourselves in the environment of Jesus so that we will become saturated with Him.

 We do that by immersing ourselves in His Word, staying in continual communication with Him through prayer and petition, and by not forsaking the rest of the Body but being united to the rest of His Body bringing about wholeness to His Body, and by truly giving Him Lordship of our life.

 We do this and we will become the ambassador of Christ Jesus that He has called and commissioned us to be in the world where we live.

 Our Nation needs to see Christ more today than it ever has, for so many have lost sight of Him!

 Are we, as Believers, willing to be Christ ambassador to our own nation, reflecting Jesus to our friends and neighbors across this country?

**Christ in you the hope of Glory!** That is the hope of America also!

 Will we allow God to use us to bring America back to the hope of Christ?

**2 Chron 7:14 If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and I will forgive their sin and will heal their land.**