

God, Why Do You Love Us So Much?

2) We are God's Work of Art

**In Adam we were created in the image of God
for His glory**

**In Christ we recreated in God's image in *true*
righteousness and holiness**

***'put on the new man which was created
according to God, in true righteousness and
holiness'***
(Eph.4:24)

'We are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them'
(Eph.2:10)

- ✓ **In Christ we are God's work of art - His masterpiece**
- ✓ **He has left us in a fallen world, ruled by Satan and in an unredeemed body that we should radiate His glory**

- ✓ **Jesus is our prototype. He came into the world and functioned as the perfect man**
- ✓ **He offered His humanity to God by the Holy Spirit. *'...how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?'* (Heb.9:14)**
- ✓ **The Father gave Himself to the Son by the Spirit at baptism, and the Son gave Himself, by the Spirit, back to the Father in obedience**

It is through the same Holy Spirit that we offer our humanity to God and He offers His divine life and power to us

□ *'But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord'*
(2 Cor.3:18)

□ *'And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit'*
(Eph.5:18)

What does it mean to be filled with the Spirit?

- ✓ **Evangelicals emphasize the fruit of the Spirit**
- ✓ **Pentecostals emphasize the gifts of the Spirit**
- ✓ **Spirit-filled ministry vs Spirit-filled character**
- ✓ **Pentecostals have seen far more growth, yet seem to have huge character defects and a tendency to be super-spiritual**
- ✓ **The Holy Spirit doesn't make us flakey, weird or religious (super-spiritual)**
- ✓ **Being Spirit-filled does not mean we leave our brains at home**

✓ **Being filled with the Spirit means our soul is led by the Holy Spirit and not under the control of the body. Spirit vs flesh**

✓ **The Holy Spirit transforms every part of us - mind, will and emotions**

✓ **In redemption, we are turned the right way up. *'But God be thanked that though you were slaves of sin, yet you obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine to which you were delivered. And having been set free from sin, you became slaves of righteousness'* (Rom.6:17-18)**

✓ **With the Holy Spirit and the Word we will grow up**

1) A renewed mind (metanoia)

The Holy Spirit does not seek to influence us on the basis of our emotions, but on the basis of our renewed mind, i.e. the mind of Christ

'...put off, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, and be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness'

(Eph.4:22-24)

- ✓ *'If you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law'* (Gal.5:18)
- ✓ **The subtlety of Satan is such that it is when we are most determined to live righteously, he deceives us into using the law to pursue holiness**
- ✓ **The Holy Spirit leads us to focus on our position in Christ.** *'If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth. For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God'* (Col.3:1-3)

**We are learning to bring every thought into
obedience to Christ**

***'For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal
but mighty in God for pulling down
strongholds, casting down arguments and every
high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge
of God, bringing every thought into captivity to
the obedience of Christ'***

(2 Cor.10:4-5)

2) An empowered will

- ✓ **We have been given the freedom to choose. The Bible shows us the decisions people made, why they made those decisions and their consequences. Examples:**
- ✓ **Abraham chose to leave Ur of the Chaldees**
- ✓ **Lot chose to live in Sodom and Gomorrah**
- ✓ **Moses chose to suffer affliction with the people of God**
- ✓ **The children of Israel chose to listen to the ten spies and never entered the Promised Land**

Satan cannot usurp our will, and God won't. Yet, He will influence us for good in our decisions

How God influences us

1) Love

God woos us and wins us by love, not fear

**He leans on us with godly persuasion
(Deut.30:19-20)**

**When we are tempted to walk according to the
flesh, He goes to war for us**

***'For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the
Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to
one another, so that you do not do the things that
you wish. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are
not under the law'***

(Gal.5:17-18)

2) Grace

'For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age'

(Titus 2:11-12)

But grace doesn't just teach us; it empowers us

'It is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure'

(Phil.2:13)

3) Healthy emotions

When experts use the term 'mental health problems' it is to describe those who are struggling with *negative* emotions

- God gave us feelings so that we can respond to life, not to be controlled by them
- If negative emotions are primarily responders, what are they responding to?
- Negative emotions are like a smoke detector, warning that something is wrong
- Our emotions are mainly a product of our thoughts. Think right and you will feel right!

**□ Circumstances do not determine how I feel.
My response to them does**

'Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things'

(Phil.4:6-8)

Examples:

God who has met our greatest need will meet every other need

'He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?'
(Rom.8:32)

□ God will never allow us to be tempted or tested beyond our ability to endure, but will give us grace for every situation in life

'No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it'

(1 Cor.10:13)

□ We don't need to compare ourselves with others, or live up to their expectations

'...with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged by you...'
(1 Cor.4:3)

'For we dare not class ourselves or compare ourselves with those who commend themselves. But they, measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise'
(2 Cor.10:12)



The trials and problems God does permit are opportunities for our spiritual growth

'...we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance; and perseverance, character; and character, hope. Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us'

(Rom.5:3-5)



□ Everything that takes place in our lives will ultimately work out for good

'And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose'

(Rom.8:28)