Review:

Did you gain any insights as you read through Genesis 31-41?

THE SPIRIT-FILLED LIFE

_Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery._

_Instead, be filled with the Spirit._

*Ephesians 5:18 (NIV)*

What happens when one is “filled” with alcohol?
Alcohol influences the body and mind to such a degree that people no longer act as they normally would. Instead, they act according to the amount of alcohol they have consumed and surrendered themselves to. The more they drink, the more things change, such as their perspective of life, their behavior and their level of self-control. Unfortunately, this is usually for the negative and has a destructive effect on their lives.

What does it mean to be “filled” with the Holy Spirit?
Keep in mind, Paul is writing to believers who already have the Holy Spirit in their lives, yet they still need to be “filled” with the Holy Spirit.

To be filled with the Spirit implies that the Holy Spirit is in our life in such a way that his presence influences and affects every aspect of our lives. As we come under his control we start to think differently about life and the world; our behaviour changes to become more Christ-like and our level of self-control changes. Unlike alcohol, which decreases our control, the Spirit’s presence actually increases our degree of self-control so we can live the way God desires us to. This occurs because the Spirit restrains our sinful nature, helping us to resist temptation and, as a result, make godly choices instead of choices that are being driven by sinful impulses.

A Spirit-filled life is a Spirit-controlled life.

How does one become “filled” with the Holy Spirit?
_Bumper Sticker: “God is my Co-Pilot”_
_Bumper Sticker: “If God is your Co-Pilot, you’re in the wrong seat!”_

Who is on the THRONE of your life?
Some people like to set their watches to beep on the hour. Whenever the beep goes off it is a reminder for them to evaluate their life to see who is sitting on the throne – them or God.
Being filled with the Spirit is an act of obedience. In Ephesians 5:18, the verb is an imperative from God, not a request to God, meaning it is something we are commanded to do. This may create a tension in some people when their perspective leads them to “plead” with the Holy Spirit to fill them. We allow the Spirit to fill us when we align our lives with his character and purposes, surrendering to his daily control.

You may want to show the video: The Stool by One Time Blind
http://onetimeblind.com/resources_videos.html (Also on YouTube)

The House Illustration

We invite the Spirit into the “house” of our life, telling him to make himself at home. However, we sometimes knowingly or unknowingly, keep some areas of our life off-limits (locked doors) to the Holy Spirit. The Spirit-filled person is the one who goes through his home unlocking all the doors allowing the Spirit to enter that room, clean it up and use it for God’s glory. As we release the control of our life and submit in obedience to his will we will be led and directed by the Spirit.

We are filled with the Spirit when we surrender our will, agenda, pride and life to the will of God – as Jesus modeled at his baptism and in the Garden of Gethsemane. The Spirit then has full access to our life and will accomplish his purposes in our lives.

What are some areas of our life we might keep closed off to the Holy Spirit?

What are some of the results of being “filled” with the Spirit?

Galatians 5:22-23 (NLT)
22 But the Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against these things!

Why are these traits called “fruits of the Spirit”? These are not characteristics we need to struggle to achieve; these are character traits that accompany the Spirit when he comes into our life. The more we allow the Holy Spirit to pervade every area of our life, the more we experience the evidence of these fruits.
If you could experience one of these traits right now, which one would you like to experience most?

What do you think is the key to experiencing this fruit in your life?

LIVING THE SPIRIT-FILLED LIFE

How might we relate to others if we are filled with the Holy Spirit?

Look at the remainder of the Ephesians 5 passage. Underline what the Spirit-filled person starts doing.

Ephesians 5:18-21 (NLT)

18 Don’t be drunk with wine, because that will ruin your life. Instead, be filled with the Holy Spirit, 19 singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs among yourselves, and making music to the Lord in your hearts. 20 And give thanks for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. 21 And further, submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.

Why do you think singing worship songs tops the list?
We are created for praise. When filled with the Spirit, music becomes a powerful expression of our love and adoration of God, for who he is and what he has done. It is a bonding experience when we can gather with other believers to join with us in praise and worship. Worship can often be a barometer about the spiritual climate of a congregation. Believers filled with the Spirit of God often worship in either broken quietness or exuberant praise.

Why would we give thanks for everything?
If the Spirit is in control, he will only allow us to experience what he wants us to experience for his purposes. We simply need to rest, confident that God is in control and that he loves us.

Corrie Ten Boom and her sister Betsy were placed in a Nazi concentration camp because of their commitment to help rescue the Jews. As Christians, they read that they were to give thanks in all circumstances, so they started to thank God for everything they were experiencing in the camp: the bible they were able to smuggle into the camp, the fact that they had freedom to hold bible studies in the room without being disturbed by the guards and the crowded rooms, so more could hear about Jesus. Betsy even gave thanks for the fleas although Corrie struggled with that and was convinced Betsy was wrong about that one. Later Betsy discovered that the main reason they had
so much freedom to hold bible studies in the large room was because of the fleas. The guards would not go anywhere near the room. *(The Hiding Place by Corrie ten Boon)*

The Spirit-filled life finds its joy from a relationship with God and that supersedes (surpasses) any circumstance we might encounter. Circumstances, then, simply become a means by which God will accomplish his purposes in our lives.

**What does it mean to submit to one another?**
Submission does not mean obedience. It means putting the needs and well being of others ahead of your own.

*Philippians 2:3-4 (NIV)*

3 Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. 4 Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others.

Give some examples of how you think Jesus modeled the Spirit-filled life?

Read the following verses and discuss how Jesus modeled the Spirit-filled life.

*Matthew 4:1 (NIV)*

Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil.

*John 12:49 (NIV)*

For I did not speak of my own accord, but the Father who sent me commanded me what to say and how to say it.

*John 14:31 (NIV)*

but the world must learn that I love the Father and that I do exactly what my Father has commanded me.

**Jesus followed the Spirit's leading** whenever it prompted him. The Father was able to direct Jesus because Jesus was open to being directed by the Spirit.

**He only said** what the Father told him to say
**He only did** what the Father directed him to do
By developing an intimacy with God, Jesus learned to recognize the voice and leading of the Spirit. The more time we spend with God, the more we step out in faith, trusting him in whatever he brings our way and the more we focus on his purposes, the more we can identify his will.

*Galatians 5:25 (NIV)*

Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit.

How can we live in step with the Spirit tomorrow? How can we live the Spirit-filled life?

1) **We need to be reading the Bible.**
   If the Holy Spirit primarily teaches us by bringing to life the Word of God in our lives, it makes sense that we need to be reading it to allow him to teach us.

2) **We need to be praying.**
   Through prayer we ask God to lead us and guide us through all life’s challenges. The Holy Spirit leads as we invite him to show us the way.

3) **We need to take seriously the mission of Jesus**
   The Holy Spirit is continuing the ministry of Christ on earth through his people. If you are not interested in carrying on this mission there will be a disconnect between what you are doing and what the Spirit desires to do through you.

4) **We need to obey the Holy Spirit’s promptings.**
   The Holy Spirit convicts and leads us through promptings to our spirit

   This can be quite subjective and caution needs to be exercised. Sometimes our promptings can be evoked by our own desires, fears, or insecurities. Sometimes our promptings can be evoked by, or initiate from, Satan. In every case, whenever we sense a prompting that we believe may be from God, we need to test it.

   **If it is from God it will:**
   a) Be in complete harmony with God’s moral will as expressed in scripture
   
   b) Be a continuation of the work and mission of Jesus Christ
   
   c) Bring glory to God
   
   d) Require a step of faith
Sample Morning Prayer

“Father, I hand over control of my life to you today. It is yours to do with whatever you wish. Help me to recognize and follow your Spirit’s leading, both in what I say and in what I do. I will trust that whatever circumstances I experience, you have allowed to come my way for your purposes. I will choose to be thankful at all times, knowing you love me and are watching over me. May I simply live in a way that is pleasing to you and may I represent you well today.”

HOME STUDY:

Read: Genesis 42-50