

Now may God, the fountain of hope, fill you to overflowing with uncontainable joy and perfect peace as you trust in him. And may the power of the Holy Spirit continually surround your life with Her super-abundance until you radiate with hope! In Jesus name I pray. Amen.

Romans 15:13 - I pray that God, the source of all hope, will infuse your lives with an abundance of joy and peace in the midst of your faith so that your hope will overflow through the power of the Holy Spirit.

FILL ME UP

Before self-serve gas stations, we would fill up our cars at the filling station. When the attendant approached the vehicle we would say, "Fill it up," or sometimes we said, "fill me up." This meant don't hold back; don't put just $\frac{1}{4}$ or $\frac{1}{2}$ or $\frac{3}{4}$ but fill it to the top...till it could overflow. We wanted the gas tank to be full, so the car would go the distance and not go dry. My Dad would look at the gas gauge just to be sure that he got just what he asked for, he received, a full tank of gas. At 30 cents a gallon; it was important to make sure Daddy got what he asked for.

As my brothers and I began driving, our great uncle Lennon told us, "As soon as your tank gets to $\frac{1}{4}$ tank, fill up with gas. Don't let it go down to empty or too low before filling up."

How many times have we allowed our spiritual tanks to go to $\frac{1}{2}$ tank, $\frac{1}{4}$ tank, or to empty? Are there other things filling your heart, your spirit, and your soul? What are those things that are filling you that shouldn't be? There are warning signs, triggers, and indicators that help us to determine if we are running low and need to "fill up."

For example, how do we respond to the calling of God on our lives? to God's direction for our life? to our Pastors' preaching and instructions? to Godly leadership? How do we respond to those inside and outside the church?

How do we respond to people (spouse, partners, children, family, friends, leaders, strangers, co-workers, etc.)? How do we respond when confronted with something uncomfortable? to devastating news? unexpected news? health challenges? financial challenges? relationship issues?

These are all indicators of the status of our spiritual tank. But here's the good news: all we need is to go to the well and "fill it up." Go to the Word (daily devotions), to prayer, to the presence of the Lord, and allow God's Word, God's presence, God's power, and God's Abundant Love to fill you up.

One of the most significant ways we are called to fill up as a church is through prayer. Imagine, filling the atmosphere with faith-filled, powerful, consecrated, sanctified, and surrendered prayers. We are focused, intentional and purposeful in our prayer because we are believing for the "More." Together we can do "More," and we will do it because we are the church! Colossians 3:16 tells us to "Let the message about Christ, in all its richness, fill your lives" (NLT).

There is a worship song that always resounds in my spirit, and it is titled, "Fill me Up" by Tasha Cobbs Leonard. I remember the first time I heard this song, I cried out from the depth of my spirit

for that ongoing, continuous filling. I cried out from deep within my spirit, “I’ll provide the sacrifice,” “and I will open up inside.” The lyrics of the song remind us of what we must do daily to stay filled with God’s Word, God’s forgiveness, God’s light and God’s power for our lives. “Fill me up” by Tasha Cobb Leonard -

....You provide the fire	We need more of you
I’ll provide the sacrifice	I’ve been running on empty
You provide the spirit	I need you to feel me again
And I will open up inside....	We cry out for more
....Fill me up God	We cry out for more....
Fill me up God	...More of your spirit is what we need, more of your anointing, more of your glory, fill me
Fill me up God	Fill me up God (fill me up God)
Fill me up...	Fill me up God (fill me up God) Fill me (that’s what I really want).....

There were times when we know we’re running on low. You can tell by your attitude, defiance, or reactions to things. We do not respond rightly; we’re reactive, taking things personally, and being easily offended. When we siblings of Christ surrendered to the Lord, Jesus helped us to realize that our hearts are being occupied with other things, and these things are crowding the spiritual things we are needing and pressing for.

We need a transforming, Holy Spirit, wrestle until you change me Encounter with God. People of God come to the Lord this morning with an open and repentant heart and re-committed your heart, mind, and spirit to the Lord. Filling up is not a one-time thing; it must be first thing in the morning (Psalm 5), and it must be daily, sometimes 3-4 times a day if necessary. Just a little will not do it. We must go for the more!

Father, today I recommit my heart to You. I repent and ask You to forgive me where I’ve occupied my heart with other things. Today, I commit to fill up all the time. I will not let my tank get empty. There is too much at stake. The Lord needs each of us to minister the Good News of the Gospel and to win souls and make disciples for the transformation of the world. Only when your heart is filled with God’s presence can and will you be truly obedient to God’s calling upon your life. Amen.