

A Spirit-Filled Father

“And his father Zacharias was filled with the Holy Ghost and prophesied . . .” (Luke 1:37).

A nationally known candy store advertises that their candy store is filled with nostalgic candy, fun candy, traditional favorites, gums, mints, lollipops, concession stand candy, sports candy, holiday candy, penny candy, wrapped candy, unwrapped candy, vending candy, movie-size candy, sugar-free candy, baby candy, wedding candy, candy bars, and even candy for your pets. Of course, they also offer candy store supplies, like bags, boxes and cards.

I confess that I probably enjoyed that ad a little too much. The idea of a store full of candy is rather overwhelming, isn't it? It intrigues me that the company carries so many different kinds of candy, even candy for every special occasion. Of course, if it is advertised as a candy store, the store ought to be filled with candy. Since you are probably wondering what this has to do with “Father's Day,” let's come to the emphasis.

If a candy store is to be full of candy, with what is a father to be filled? I'm sure our first answer would be: the traits of fatherhood, or fatherly characteristics. Some would say, “A father should be full of commitment, sacrifice, leadership, and love.” Our text states that Zacharias, the father of John the Baptist, was “filled with the Holy Ghost.” To be filled with the Spirit is one of the most important matters in the life of a Christian father.

A Spirit-filled father will be full of faith in God's Word! When Zacharias was first told he was going to be a father, he was full of unbelief. Consequently, he was not able to speak for nine months. Now, however, in “full assurance of faith” (Heb. 10:22), he named the child “John” (1:63), just as God had earlier instructed him (see 1:13). At this moment of faith, this father was “filled with the Holy Ghost.” May God save us from our unbelief and bring us into His fullness.

A Spirit-filled father will be full of praise to God's name! Upon believing God, Zacharias' “mouth was opened immediately, and his tongue was loosed, and he spake, and praised God” (1:64). We are also told that he said, “Blessed be the Lord God of Israel; for He hath visited and redeemed His people” (1:68). It is impossible to be filled with the Spirit and not have a desire to give God praise and thanksgiving. As seen in Zacharias' child, praise may influence our offspring.

A Spirit-filled father will be full of understanding of God's will! Where did Zacharias get his knowledge of the future? The only way he could speak authoritatively concerning God's “salvation” (1:69) and “mercy” (1:72), and the “light” and “peace” (1:79) that Christ would bring, was through the Spirit of prophecy which was in him. Oh, may God fill many Christian fathers with His Spirit, restoring faith, exalting His name, and granting spiritual understanding.