

Eph 5:18 (ESV) And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit,

1. Such a vital scripture – to understand where it sits we must get context

- A. In Ephesians Paul has told us the great doctrines of grace
 - 1). Chosen - adopted – redeemed – forgiven – dead but have been made alive etc.
 - 2). We have a nature with new desires and a new power to live those desires out
- B. In Ephesians 4:1 he urges us to live a life worthy of all that has happened – live like who you are
 - 1). He exhorts the believer to put off the corruption of that old life
And put on the new created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness
- C. In chapter 5 he strengthens this even more – *be imitators of God*
 - 1). Warns there must not even be a hint of sexual immorality – impurity - greed
 - a). Those whose life are characterized by these *will NOT inherit the kingdom of God*
 - b). Therefore have nothing to do with such things
- D. Then exhorts us – in light of that warning – be careful how you live
 - 1). Not as unwise but wise – not as foolish but understanding what the will of the Lord is
 - a). Foolish would be to live a life of sinful indulgence and think you'll be OK
 - b). Wisdom is to dig into the Scriptures to see what walking in the light looks like
 - 1a). To know the promises – obey the commands – heed the warnings

Transition: So the command is to be wise – walk in the light and shun the deeds of darkness

- A. The exhortation is: to know the will of the Lord – know what he expects
 - 1). That comes through reading our Bible – His instruction manual for life
- B. The problem is: We can read our Bible and still fail to live it out
 - 1). So Paul continues on in v. 18 and tells us where the power comes from to live a Biblical life

I. BE FILLED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT

Eph 5:18 (ESV) And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit,

1. Here is the remedy for so much frustration that Christians have

- A. I know so many good, sincere individuals who see what the Bible requires and want to live it
 - 1). They see the exhortations of Ephesians 4:1-5:17 and want to obey
- B. They also see what the Bible promises and want to experience it
 - 1). Joy inexpressible and filled with glory – peace that passes understanding – the abundant life
Drinking from the river of God's delight – Rest – Satisfaction – victory - YES PLEASE!
 - 2). Yet if they're honest their experience doesn't seem to live up to the hype
 - a). Their experience can be described more as a chronic spiritual fatigue = struggle
- C. So they think "Maybe if I try harder something will eventually click"
 - 1). They ratchet up the discipline – put a little more oomph in their Christian walk
 - a). Problem: It's done in their own power - so it eventually fades away like it always does
- D. They're like the good old boy who bought his first chainsaw - took it home – next day brought it back
"This thing is useless...I'm cutting less wood than I was before with the old hand saw"
Salesman "That's odd...our best model" - pulls cord - fires it up - vroooooom
Good old boy says "What's that sound!"
 - 1). All that power available - but he wasn't benefiting from it at all
He was still sawing in his own strength *and it was wearing him out*

Point: That is exactly what will happen if you try to live out the commands in the Bible in your own power

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- A. The danger when we are worn out – we can just settle – just accept spiritual mediocrity
 - 1). Rather than living out a Christianity that Jesus called the “abundant life” – life with life in it
 - a). We settle for a stunted, shriveled sort of thing
 - b). A Christianity reduced down to what we can live in our own strength
 - 2). We settle for something that looks more like religion than an intimate relationship
 - a). Religion is man working out their spirituality in their own strength
 - b). Relationship (Christianity) is God’s work for man AND God’s work IN man
 - 1a). It is God working in us and then giving us the power to work that out
 - B. God doesn’t want you to have this shriveled up experience

This constant struggle and regular defeat – that’s why he put verse 18 in

 - 1). Here is the connection to the divine helper God has provided
 - 2). That divine enabler given to help us live out our Christianity in a way that is satisfying

I’m reminded of: John 7:37-39 (NIV) On the last and greatest day of the Feast, Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, “If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink. (38) Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, *streams of living water* will flow from within him.” (39) *By this he meant the Spirit...*

 - a). They were used to drinking well water – stagnant and unappealing

But stream water was pure and refreshing
 - b). What a picture of the life lived in our own strength – stagnant - unappealing – tedious
 - 1a). But the life lived in the strength of the Spirit is alive, fresh – the touch of God

2. This is our subject - being filled with the Spirit

- A. We will start by looking at why we need to be filled with the Spirit
 - 1). Why we need a power that is greater than our own
 - 2). My goal in this section is to turn the light on – to make you desire this
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I. WHY WE NEED TO BE FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT

1. Because the standards of Christianity are beyond us

- A. True Christianity is impossible for us to live out in our own strength
 - 1). That ability to love when you've been abused
 - 2). To do good to those who have wronged you
 - 3). To forgive others as Christ has forgiven us
 - 4). To choose joy in times of trial – thankfulness in all circumstances
 - 5). To consistently be patient, kind and gentle with others.....and on and on
- B. Because we are called to be like Christ!

1 Jn 3:2-3 (NIV) Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when Christ appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. ⁽³⁾ *All who have this hope in him purify themselves, just as he is pure.*

Transition: True Christianity calls us to a life that is far beyond our ability to live it

- A. So, you need this power to live the Christian life out – it is beyond mere human strength

2. Because the enemy that stands against us is to great

Eph 6:12 (ESV) For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, *against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.*

- A. We have a strong, crafty enemy determined to thwart any spiritual progress in our life
- B. An enemy who relentlessly stalks us – looking to trip us up – distract us – frustrate us – defeat us

Point: To win this war you are going to have to learn to fight in another’s power

2 Ch 20:15 (ESV) And he said, “Listen, all Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem and King Jehoshaphat: Thus says the LORD to you, *‘Do not be afraid and do not be dismayed at this great horde, for the battle is not yours but God’s.*”

Transition: Because the standards are so high – because the enemy is so strong

3. Because the flesh that resides in us is so persistent

Rom 7:21 (NIV) So I find this law at work: When I want to do good, evil is right there with me.

- A. We carry around this unredeemed flesh that still hates God and holiness and still loves sin
- B. Notice what it does – every time we want to do good – it rises up to oppose that
 - Paul says that is normal – that is a law that is at work within us
 - 1). Now you know why it is hard to go to church – read Bible – pray - fellowship
 - 2). Accept the truth that you’ll do anything that is spiritually good against a persistent resistance
 - a). You will have to overcome your own flesh to be spiritually healthy! How?

Ro 8:12–13 (ESV) So then, brothers, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh. ⁽¹³⁾ For if you live according to the flesh you will die, *but if by the Spirit* you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.

Point: The lofty standard – the powerful enemies without and the powerful enemy within

- A. To live this life successfully is going to take a power that is greater than our own
 - 1). The power that Jesus walked in

Luke 4:14 (NLT) Then *Jesus* returned to Galilee, *filled with the Holy Spirit’s power...*

Transition: Sounds important – so let’s see what the Spirit-filled life is

II. THE SPIRIT-FILLED LIFE DEFINED

1. Must clarify this because it’s been defined in so many confusing ways

- A. From extremely practical to extremely mystical - and everything in-between
 - 1). From getting shivers to falling down – to everybody speaking in tongues at the same time

2. The Spirit-filled life isn’t mystical – it is extremely practical

- A. To put it simply – it is the Spirit empowering us to live a Christlike life on earth

Ro 8:29 (ESV) For those whom he foreknew (every believer) *he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son...*

 - 1). It is that divine enabling – that gives us victory over the world, flesh, devil
 - a). So that we can grow in Christlikeness = Sanctification
- B. So we could say: The *primary purpose* of being Spirit-filled is to enable you to live like Christ

Therefore the *primary way* you will know you’re Spirit-filled is not getting chills or tingles

 - 1). You will see a Christ’s character being formed into you – the fruit of the Spirit

Ga 5:22–23 (ESV) But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ⁽²³⁾ gentleness, self-control... *(That’s all the character of Christ)*
- C. Therefore the *primary place* this happens is not just in church - during worship
 - 1). You’re not in church 95% of the time
 - a). So it’s not a 20 minute buzz that happens on a Sunday morning
 - 2). This is something that happens at home – school – the workplace
 - a). It’s seen in your relationships - how you treat your spouse, parent your child
 - b). It’s seen in how you represent our Lord when you’re out in the world

Point: The Spirit-filled life enables you to live Christianity out at street level, day-to-day stuff

Transition: With that said – let’s look at how Paul illustrates the Spirit-filled life

- A. If it is not getting chills and tingles – falling down etc. what is it?

- B. Paul uses a very interesting analogy to illustrate it – drunkenness

Spirit-filled illustrated:

Eph 5:18 (ESV) And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit,

1. The coupling of drunkenness and being filled with the Spirit is the key

- A. What is drunkenness? It is more than just having a drink
- 1). It means to be under the control and domination of alcohol –under its influence
 - 2). The alcohol affects everything about you – decisions – will - emotions

2. The comparison: Just as being drunk is more than just having a drink in you

Being filled with the Spirit is more than just having the Spirit in you

- A. It means to be under the influence of the Spirit
- 1). Just as the drunkard is dominated and controlled by wine
The Spirit-filled believer is dominated and controlled by the Spirit
Why NLT puts it this way: Eph 5:18 (NLT) Don't be drunk with wine, because that will ruin your life. Instead, *let the Holy Spirit fill and control you.*

Charles Hodge (that great theologian): "Men are said to be filled with wine when completely under its influence; so they are said to be filled with the Spirit, when he controls all their thoughts, feelings, words, and actions."

Thought: Now we see why one who has the Holy Spirit can live such an unremarkable Christian life

- A. They are still the one in control – they are not living under his influence

Transition: So I am called in Eph. 4:1-5:17 to a life that imitates God and brings him glory

- A. To do that I must be wise - searching the Scriptures to see what that life looks like
- B. AND I must be Spirit-filled to have the power to live that life out
- 1). Let's apply this – what our responsibility is in being Spirit-filled

III. OUR RESPONSIBILITY IN BEING FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT

First: To Be Under His Influence You've Got to Yield Yourself to Him

1. Watch how this works

Eph 4:1 (ESV) I *therefore*, a prisoner for the Lord, *urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called,*

- A. I therefore – in light of the previous 3 chapters of breath-taking grace – what God has done for you
- 1). The reasonable response is to live a life that brings God glory
- B. We get a clue how to do that over in Romans 12:1 – same thought – more detail

Rom 12:1 (NIV) *Therefore*, I urge you, brothers, *in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices*, holy and pleasing to God--this is your spiritual act of worship.

- 1). Same thing – based on what God has done – respond accordingly
 - a). Ephesians – “Walk in a manner worthy of the calling you've been called too”
 - b). Romans – The way we do that is by presenting ourselves as living sacrifices
- 2). Picture of the OT sacrifice - totally consumed by the flames
- 3). We offer our bodies in a full surrender - what we see, where we go, what we do, what we say

2. The Greek tense indicates this surrender is a repeated event

- A. It is a moment-by-moment, day-by-day choice of surrender
- 1). Let me simplify what that means – reduce it down to one “Yes” at a time

- a). I don't have to worry about the rest of my life – just the next “Yes”
- B. Why this is important. Each choice will determine if you remain Spirit-filled or not
 - 1). If you take control of your own life - you are no longer controlled by him
 - 2). You grieve the Spirit and begin to live life in your own power

Point: To be Spirit-filled is a deliberate moment-by-moment choice to hand ownership of your life over to him

3. Tragic thing – at this point I can lose people

- A. Many are interested in the Spirit-filled life until they see the necessity of surrender
 - 1). They want something easy - mystical - just lay hands on me and pray a prayer
 - 2). I liked it when it was just chills and tingles - But yield my life completely...uh...No!
- B. Truth is you can't enjoy his blessings if you refuse his conditions
 - 1). You trade in the abundant life Jesus came to give to you (John 10:10)
For a stagnant - shrunken - withered type of life = it is not worth it!

Transition: You must yield to him – now the second requirement for being Spirit-filled

Second: Depend Upon Him Daily

1. Three things we can depend upon when it comes to the Spirit

- A. The Holy Spirit lives within us - whether we feel Him or not
- B. The Holy Spirit has brought the life of Christ to us
- C. The Holy Spirit is willing to produce the life of Christ through us
 - 1). Regardless of what situation I find myself facing
 - a). Whether I need patience and gentleness with someone I'm dealing with
 - b). Whether I need Christ's peace in a storm that has come into my life
Or His power in a temptation that I'm facing

2. Look at how Paul put this

TURN: Ga 2:20 (ESV) I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

- A. That is life in God's power isn't it!
Christ lives in me – and through the Spirit Christ is living his life through me!
- B. It's what Hudson Taylor called the “Exchanged life”
 - 1). We live in absolute dependence upon him to provide whatever we need
 - a). We exchange our anxiety for his peace – our anger for his kindness
Our hatred for his love – our impatience for his patience

Transition: That sounds good. How?

3. We become beneficiaries of this by faith

- A. By depending upon Him to do that on a moment-by-moment basis
 - 1). I enter my day trusting the Spirit to live the life of Christ through me
 - a). As I interact with co-workers, friend, family, neighbors
 - b). As I face trouble, trial, success or failure
 - 2). When I need peace - love – gentleness – patience I trust the Spirit to live that out through me
- B. So the way it works
 - 1). **First step: *I am yielded to him – that flips the switch on***
 - 2). **Leads too: *As I depend upon him by faith that power flows into my life***
- C. **Application:** When we face trouble, trial, temptation, we turn to the Lord in faith

"Lord I can't handle this situation in my own strength but you never expected me to. I thank you right now that you are in me and are willing to live your life through me. I pray that through the Spirit you will live out your victory over sin... your love towards others...your patience and kindness...your peace in times of trouble...I depend upon you

- 1). Then we step into that situation AND DO the actions of love – patience kindness
Expecting him to meet us there with the power to live out Christlikeness

D. Isn't that what Paul said in Gal. 2:20

Ga 2:20 (ESV) I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

- 1). Again – this will only happen in those who are Spirit-filled
If you're in control he can't be – you will live your life in your own power
 - a). There's only one steering wheel – not like driver ed

Transition: To encourage you what this is like – what will happen

A. Listen up you who are weary of trying so hard but failing so much

IV. THE PICTURE OF BEING FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT: DIVINE ASSISTANCE

1. Greek word for “Filled” – used for sail boat with its sails filled with the wind

A. That is what happens when we submit to the Spirit – we sense divine assistance

- 1). We are propelled forward by his strength – no longer limited by ours
- 2). Those sins that defeated us now begin to lie at our feet
- 3). Those Christlike characteristics – fruit – we watch them be produced when we need them

Ps 1:1–2 (NIV) Blessed is the one who does not walk in step with the wicked or stand in the way that sinners take or sit in the company of mockers, ⁽²⁾ but whose delight is in the law of the LORD, and who meditates on his law day and night.

- a). That is a spirit-filled person – avoiding sin – yielded to the Scriptures the Spirit authored
- b). Now watch what naturally happens

Ps 1:3 (NIV) That person is like a tree planted by streams of water, ***which yields its fruit in season*** and whose leaf does not wither— whatever they do prospers.

- 1a). Whatever fruit is needed – love, joy, peace, gentleness, patience etc.
It will be produced – it will be there! The Spirit will do it
- 2a). The exchanged life

C. God will begin to use us – because we are walking in the same power Jesus walked in

Luke 4:14 (NLT) Then ***Jesus*** returned to Galilee, ***filled with the Holy Spirit's power...***

- 1). We start to soar in Christ – we lose that chronic spiritual fatigue
Christianity does start to live up to the hype – all that is promised

Point: That sounds good to me – the way I want to live

A. We need to quit living in our own power – quit trying to fill those sails with your own breath

- 1). You get worn out filling a balloon – so knock it off

B. Submit and depend and you'll be amazed at what he can do

- 1). This is the cure for chronic spiritual disease – you need an infusion of divine power
- 2). We see that in the next verses

Eph 5:19 (NLT) singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs among yourselves, and making music to the Lord in your hearts.

- a). Heart filled with joy and song – the “Eyre” chased out

LET'S PRAY