

**Ephesians:**  
**Blessed Beyond Belief to Build up the Body**  

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**Lesson 12: Walk in Wisdom**  
**Ephesians 5:15-21 Be Controlled by the Spirit**

Small Group Questions

**Outline**

- I. Circular letter to those who are “in Christ” 1:1-2
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      - 2) Positive Command: Speak truthfully (in 4:15 Paul has said, “in love”)
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      - 1) Negative Command: “let no unwholesome word come out of your mouths”
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    - b. Reason: Christians are Changed People 5:8a-8b
      - 1) Past: Were darkness 5:8a
      - 2) Present: Are light in the Lord 5:8b
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    - c. Children
  - 3. Wise work 6:5-9
- VIII. Stand firm 6:10-20
- IX. Conclusion 6:21-24

## Review

1:1–3:21 Positional Unity of the Church

1:1-23 God's (life insurance) plan and benefits

1:1-2 A circular letter to those "in Christ"

Paul writes to those "in Christ—that they might experience God's grace and peace.

1:3-14 Believers have: **Every spiritual blessing—to the praise of His glory**

*The plan, provision and protection of Salvation*

God is blessed, because He has blessed those "in Christ" with every spiritual blessing

"God has enriched believers with every spiritual benefit for their spiritual well-being."<sup>1</sup>

*A reminder of the great things God has done for the individual believer*

**WOW**—it is all about God

All we have in salvation is for His praise and glory.

1:15-23 Prayer for insight to truly know God

**The prayer for those who have everything**—know God better

*Prayer for personal insight to their relationship with God for the purpose of deeper experiential appreciation of their riches benefits*

To realizing the hope, riches and power on their behalf—which is evidenced by Christ current exalted position

Paul prays that believer's know God personally and intimately—so that they would realize the hope of their calling (past), the riches of His inheritance in the saints (value) (future) and the extent of His power on their behalf (present)—which is evidenced by the power to raise and seat Christ and to subject all things to Him and to give Him to the Church as sufficient head (make Him head of the Church).

Why did He do this?

"In chapters 2 and 3 Paul explains the execution of the eternal plan by showing how God makes sinners into saints and builds them into the church, the body of Christ. In 2:1-10 Paul states how sinners, who deserve nothing but God's wrath, become trophies of his grace."<sup>2</sup>

2:1–3:21 Steps towards fulfilling God's plan

2:1-10 God's plan (1:3-14) applied to individuals

Man's condition 2:1-3

Apart from God man is hopeless because they are dead in trespasses and sin

Condition apart from God (2:1-3)

—though dead in trespasses and sin resulting from

—nature/life—walk according to the values of the world

—devil—are controlled by the ruler of the world

—and actions of the will (enjoyment of sin)

"But God" (God's provision) 2:4-10

Man's condition, apart from God is hopeless because they are dead in trespasses and sin

as a result of their walking according to the values of the world, are controlled by the ruler of the world, and by actions in keeping with their desires.

But God

Who is rich in mercy (character), motivated by His great love (cause)

Applied His power to make believers alive, raised, and seated with Christ, so that they would be a revelation of God's grace

Based on His grace provided a gift

<sup>1</sup> Harold W. Hoehner, *Ephesians: An Exegetical Commentary*, (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 2002) p. 301.

<sup>2</sup> Harold W. Hoehner, *Ephesians: An Exegetical Commentary*, (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 2002) p. 305.

- a relationship with Him—no longer separated (dead) but unified (alive) as an expression of the surpassing rich of His grace
- Obtained through faith
  - not works
  - For the purpose of doing good works
    - to reveal God’s grace through actions
- Character—Who is rich in mercy
- Motivated—By His great love
- Based on—His grace
- Provided a gift
- Obtained—through faith
- Purpose—to do good works, which reveal God’s grace in action
- 2:11–3:13 God’s plan applied corporately
- 2:11-22 Our new position corporately
  - Now have been brought near to God and have been made into a new man—entity
- 2:11-12 Formerly
  - Those who were hopeless
    - Separated from God’s promises and Messiah—given to Israel
- 2:13-22 Now have been brought near to God
  - And have been made into a new man—entity
- 3:1-13
  - The mystery of the Church is revealed after Christ
  - Paul explains his role as administrator and dispenser of the mystery to the Gentiles
  - The church is not natural—unity in spite of diversity is difficult
  - To show the wisdom of God—even to the cosmic powers
- 3:14-21 Prayer and Praise
  - 3:14-19 Prayer for the Ephesians to know and experience Christ’s love and experience maturity filled by God
    - The impossibly big prayer for intimacy and to be total consumed with God
  - 3:20-21 Doxology: Praise to God for His superabounding
- 4:1–6:9 The Proper Conduct of the Church
- 4:1-16 Call to a mature unity
  - 4:1-6 Walk in Unity (Call for Unity)
    - Unity—the unifying or overarching theme of the whole section
  - 4:1 Therefore walk in a manner worthy!!!!
    - How can we not desire to walk in a manor worthy of our calling when we have been planned for, provided for, protected by, prayed for, sacrificed for, saved by, seated with, loved, liberated, lifted, unified, to the fullest with every spiritual blessing, with the surpassing greatness of His power, the fullness of Him who fills all in all, the riches of His great love, the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness, unfathomable riches, manifold wisdom, surpassing knowledge, who is able to do abundantly more than we could even ask or think??????

**WOW**

- 4:7-24 Ministry and Maturity
- 4:7-16 The enablement for Unity and Maturity
  - The goal of the church is to grow up—together
  - by practicing the truth in love
  - by everyone doing their part
    - Ephesians 4:7-10 Power
    - Ephesians 4:11-13 God’s plan (giving gifted individuals to equip the church for: works of service and to build up the body)
  - Our mission: Unity and maturity
- When this happens the body **will** grow in love—the unity and maturity that are the Aim—will be reached

Stephen Motyer, *Ephesians: Free to be One*, Baker Bible Guides, Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1994, 1996, p. 172

- 4:17-24 The new Christian **Mind** Our thinking must be different
  - Principle of separation—purity
  - The changed life
- 4:25-32 The new Christian **speech** Our talking must be different
  - (This is a critical section for our church: it's OK to have critical thinking but not to have a critical spirit.)

Gossip, complaining, anger, malice.....)		
Next two may be one		
5:1-6	The new Christian <b>motivation</b>	Our impulses must be different
5:7-14	The new Christian <b>lifestyle</b>	Our fellowship must be different
5:15-21	The new Christian <b>worship</b>	Our time must be different

4:17-24 Walk in Holiness—Remove and Replace

Put off the old self            Lay aside former lifestyle

Put on the new self            Be renewed in your mind

The unity and maturity of the church can only be developed and maintained if individuals grow through the influence of the Word and fellow believers.

The goal of the individuals within the church (to grow up) requires—don't think and live like the pagans

Put aside corruption, impurity and deceitful desires

Be renewed—starting with your thinking which will then lead to your actions

Put on the new self which positionally has been created in righteousness and holiness of truth

Both points—the corporate and individual are mutually supporting.

As individuals grow they will serve as a response to God

As the church ministers to itself, individuals will grow through the influence of the Word and their fellow believers.

This section serves as the overarching principle for the rest of the ethical section—the remainder focuses on what it looks like to put aside old and put on new.

**Good section in which to discuss Spiritual Formation**

Goal: God's Glory

Process: Transformation of the Whole Being—starting with the mind

Obstacles: Trust (self)—Sin, Stress, Satan, Suffering

Habits: Working with the Holy Spirit

Explain contrast between “old self” and “new self”

“lay aside” ⇔ “Put on” ⇒ SF is about removal and replacement

Can't just focus on “remove” –the don'ts

Nor just about “adding” – the do's

“spirit of your mind”—“spirit” here is similar to “mind” or “heart” as the controlling center. So the mind/heart must be renewed.

4:25-32 The New Christian speech

Walk in holiness by speaking the truth and demonstrate love not anger

Speak truthfully and with edifying words

Don't let anger lead you to sin, instead

Be kind

Forgive

In Ephesians 4:15 Paul exhorts us to “speak the truth in love”

4:25-32 will give concrete instruction as to what this does and does not look like.

5:1-14 Walk in love and light

5:1-6 Walk in Love

5:7-14 Walk in Light

With a continuing emphasis on truth, Paul calls the community of believers not only to replace falsehood with truth and anger with kindness and forgiveness but also to walk in love.

This is done through imitating God.

We are to be imitators of God by walking in love and walking in light in stark contrast to the dark immorality of the world around us.

But not only are we to abstain from immorality we are to show the contrast by exposing immorality to light and influence.

5: 13 could best be translated

“All things exposed/convinced by the light are enlightened,  
For everything being enlightened takes on the quality of light.”

In character we are to be like light in darkness. Our character must influence others and our purpose must drive our passion.

We must be willing to be different but not isolated. This requires being isolated but not secluded but influencing.

Not isolation but insulation for influence.

The church should not be a fortress but a force in society.

“The gospel flows best through the establishing of significant relationships that are authentic and healthy. When relationships become stagnant and the community of Christ closes itself to the outside world, the result is an institution rather than a movement.” McManus<sup>3</sup>

**Lesson Plan**

- What do I want to teach?
- Why do I want to teach it?
- What do I expect them to do with it?

**Active Learning**

**Intro question:**

Who would you prefer to have as a friend—a person of integrity or authenticity?

**Activity**

Small Groups?

**Biblical Illustration**

**Ephesians 5:15-21 Key concepts**

Problem	Evil society	Don't yield to evil—walk wise, not in isolation—but influence it
Solution	Be filled with the Spirit	Yield to the Spirit—not passive, but resulting in focus on others
Result	Proper relationships	Yield to each other—not selfishness, but humbly

**Application/Practice**

**Review**

**Introduction**

Generally speaking our service involves how we interact with each other. The kind of deference we give each other, the value we place on each other, and the willingness to put others first.

**Structure**

Walk⇒drives the ethical instruction of 4:1—5:21 This is the 5<sup>th</sup> of 5 sections that start with “walk”

περιπατέω and have the inferential οὖν

- 4:1** walk in a manner worthy of the calling—unity
- 4:17** walk no longer just as the Gentiles also walk—holiness
- 5:2** walk in love
- 5:8** walk as children of Light
- 5:15** walk, not as unwise men but as wise

**5:15—6:9 Walk in Wisdom**

This whole section is tied together by the “therefore . . . walk as wise” in 5:15, which serves as the basis for the many imperatives of this section. Being wise in their conduct and relationship is depended on being filled by the Holy Spirit.

<sup>3</sup> Erwin Raphael McManus, *An Unstoppable Force* (Loveland, CO: Group 2001) p. 15.

Walking wisely and walking means of the Spirit are basically synonymous.

### 5:15-21 Walk Wisely and Worship Together

“This verses form the basis of believers’ conduct before their families and employers or employees. This section is structured around three contrasts expressed by μή and ἀλλά (vv. 15, 17, 18), indicating both negative and positive admonitions to walk wisely.”<sup>4</sup>

#### Outline

- I. The Filling of the Spirit            Ephesians 5:15-18
  - A. Command — Imperative
  - B. Corporate — Plural
  - C. Cause — Passive
  - D. Continual — Present
  - E. Clarification — Definition - Yielding Control

#### Illustration and Application

- II. Result—Product of doing God’s will and being filled with the Spirit
  - A. Speak — Fellowship                    Ephesians 5:19a
  - B. Sing — Worship - Corporately       Ephesians 5:19b
  - C. Satisfied —Thanksgiving - to God    Ephesians 5:20
  - D. Submit —Submission to one another   Ephesians 5:21

#### Application and Practice

#### Song

#### Alternative Outline

Problem	Evil society	Don’t yield to evil—walk wise, not in isolation—but influence it
Solution	Be filled with the Spirit	Yield to the Spirit—not passive, but resulting in focus on others
Result	Proper relationships	Yield to each other—not selfishness, but humbly

#### Exposition    Ephesians 5:15-21

We now switch from the metaphor of light and darkness to “wise” and “unwise.”

#### 1. *The Filling of the Spirit Ephesians 5:15-18*

⇒ Understanding the will of God—Context: the practice or character of the believer

First I want you to notice the context. The second part of Ephesians, chapters 4-6, is the practical section, the prescriptive section. Having given the theological basis, Paul now tells the Ephesians what to do.

Remember: God never tells you what to do before He tells you what He has done for you. In this section Paul deals with the believer’s need for unity, maturity, and relationships . . . all in the context of holiness/godliness in relationships—the church.

So in verses 15-17 he starts by says,

**Ephesians 5:15** Therefore be careful how you walk, not as unwise men but as wise, (NASB95)

The call to live wisely is not a call for theoretical knowledge. It is a call for moral discernment and a practical skill in making decisions. The emphasis once again is on the mind and on careful attention to keep life on target, the target being that which pleases Christ and fits his purposes.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Hoehner p. 689.

<sup>5</sup> Snodgrass, Klyne. “Christians Living on Target (5:15 - 21)” In *NIV Application Commentary, New Testament: Ephesians*. By Klyne Snodgrass, 288. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, © 1996.

**Ephesians 5:15-17** Therefore be careful how you walk, not as unwise men but as wise, 16 making the most of your time, because the days are evil. 17 So then do not be foolish, **but understand what the will of the Lord is.** (NASB95)

Context—last section we asked the question—how different should we be?, with the challenge to be different in character (light and darkness)—this reminds us that we can not isolate ourselves, we are not to be intimidated by evil, but we must take every opportunity to make an impact, in an immoral environment live a life pleasing to God.

Understand what the will of the Lord is. That unsolvable mystery? Not at all. We see what the will of the Lord is in the next verse. Notice verse 18.

⇒ Compare and Contrast

**Ephesians 5:18** And do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation (**debauchery, wild living, incongruent**), but (**instead**) be filled with the Spirit, (NASB95)

The will of the Lord is to be filled with the Spirit. This is clear. The will of the Lord is clear—be filled with the Spirit.

What we have is both a comparison and a contrast through the use of a concrete illustration.

As wine or alcohol controls the one who is drunk—outside influence dictating behavior, so also the Spirit should be in control—outside influence motivating behavior for the believer. All of you, I am sure have seen someone who was drunk. They can't think straight, walk straight, do anything straight because they are no longer in control of themselves, they are controlled by the alcohol. So also we as believers are to be filled with the Spirit so that we do what He wants.

But there is also an interesting contrast. You would expect Paul to contrast drunkenness with abstinence. But instead he goes further, more positively.

In contrast to wine, which makes the drunk behave irrationally, the Spirit makes us behave rationally. Not the absence of control, but the presence of proper control. The drunkard is transformed by the alcohol often into an irrational, immoral person. The Spirit on the other hand transforms us into the image of Christ.

Dissipation/debauchery could be translated “a wild and undisciplined life” or “one lacking understanding and control.” For the believer this is incongruent with who they are and with a life pleasing to the Lord. Instead of incongruent, we should have integrity.

“Integrity is the context from which courage is formed. Integrity, like wholeness, is a by-product of our spiritual integration. *Integrity* {English word} comes from the root word *integer*, which means to be complete, indivisible—in other words, to be a whole. If a plane lacks integrity, it disintegrates. If its engine lacks integrity, you cannot finish the flight. If its captain and crew lack integrity, you cannot fully expect to reach the intended destination.”<sup>6</sup>

“In recent times in our culture we have put an increasing value on authenticity and a decreasing focus on integrity. This is strongly influenced by a disdain for the pretentious and a longing for anything that is real. In principle I wholeheartedly embrace the shift, except where authenticity is romanticized. When calling for authenticity, we need to take seriously the brokenness and sinfulness of the human heart. If to be authentic means to be who we really are or to express what we really feel, then in most cases I'm going to vote for hypocrisy. Our prisons are filled with men and women who acted on their feelings and impulses. If authenticity is about being true to yourself, these individuals should be our models of inspiration. . . .

. . . Our claim that we are committed to being authentic can actually be a façade for self-indulgence. If we're not careful, *authentic* can be the new word for *arrogance*. As long as you're true to yourself—say what you mean—just get it out—how can anyone fault you in any way? This perspective frees us from any concern for the feelings of others. I've seen more situations than I care to where a person, just committed to being honest and real, lambasted everyone around him, leaving

<sup>6</sup> Erwin Raphael McManus, *Uprising: A Revolution of the Soul*, (Nashville: Nelson, 2003) p. 66.

team members wounded and hurting. His only ethical compass was if it felt right to him to do it. Authenticity can establish a self-righteousness that justifies abuse. Is it really OK to do something because you want to, to say something because you feel it?

If we are committed to being the genuine article, we'd first better look closely at what we're made of. Authenticity without integrity is lethal. To be authentic when our hearts are dark and corrosive is equivalent to opening Pandora's box. . . .

. . . Beyond this there is another obstacle to being truly authentic. To be authentic means literally that we are not false or copies, that we reflect the original, that we are genuine in regard to the intent of the creator. When something is authenticated, you are able to establish it as a genuine production of the originator. The beauty of the work is a reflection of the artist's imagination. While a copy can duplicate the image, it lacks the value of an original. Only a work created by the hand of the artist qualifies as the real thing. No replica will do."<sup>7</sup>

"The divine transformation that God seeks to bring is nothing less and nothing more than making us truly human. What it means to be human has become so foreign to us, and God's original intent so lost to us, that we experience it as a new way to be human. It is an actuality, a return to the authentic. God literally turns us inside out. . . . How we live becomes a genuine expression of what we care about. We are no longer guided by laws, but by values.

While religion works to restrain our actions from the outside in, God always works from the inside out. Only this kind of change lasts. Its sustaining power comes not only from the Spirit of God, but from your desire to become the person God dreams of. Your motivation is not what others think of you, nor even the consequence of your actions if you choose another way, but your longing to have the image of God revealed in you. You simply want to be a different person.

It is in this state that we become people of integrity. It's more than "what you see is what you get." Integrity is not just about who you are, but who you seek to become. When we have integrity, we don't need to pretend. We are well aware of our weaknesses and shortcomings. Integrity is not about being flawless, but being 'falseless.' When you watch a person of integrity, you can know exactly what's inside him or her. That individual is transparent. You can see inside the heart and witness the light emanating from within."<sup>8</sup>

The difference between "authentic" and "authentic integrity" is what is growing inside.

Because all that God creates has integrity—not only integrity with itself, but in balance with the rest of His creation and proper relationship to Him.

We were created and designed to be one with Him. When we are one with God, we find both wholeness and integrity. Integrity is born out of relationship with God and flows into our relationships with others. Integrity is the personification of truth. When we build our lives on truth, and live by what which we know to be true, we begin to live from the inside out."<sup>9</sup>

But the contrast in Ephesians 5:18 is between a life that is incongruent, without integrity and a life "filled by the Spirit."

While we need to involve our whole self, including our emotions, in the worship of our God, it is not a wild uncontrolled ecstasy. Galatians 5 states that one of the fruits of the Spirit is "self-control"—a transformation from our weaknesses to His strength.

But how does that happen?

⇒ Defined: Filled with the Spirit

Let's try to define what Paul meant by "be filled with the Spirit."

<sup>7</sup> Erwin Raphael McManus, *Uprising: A Revolution of the Soul*, (Nashville: Nelson, 2003) pp.67-68.

<sup>8</sup> Erwin Raphael McManus, *Uprising: A Revolution of the Soul*, (Nashville: Nelson, 2003) p.69.

<sup>9</sup> Erwin Raphael McManus, *Uprising: A Revolution of the Soul*, (Nashville: Nelson, 2003) p. 71.

If [Acts 5:3](#) describes Ananias by saying Satan filled his heart, clearly Satan has dominated his impulses; any countervailing tendencies have been rooted out. The Scriptures also speak specifically of people being full of the Spirit: Jesus after his baptism ([Luke 4:1](#)), Stephen ([Acts 6:5; 7:55](#)), Barnabas ([11:24](#)). The seven chosen to serve Hellenistic widows were to be full of the Spirit and wisdom ([6:3](#)). Surely the intent is that the persons chosen should be characterized by wisdom and live in tune with God's Spirit. Paul's point, then, is that the Holy Spirit is the controlling influence motivating and directing the lives of believers.

"Fullness," as we have seen, is an important theme in Ephesians. Note the following:

[1:23](#): Christ is the fullness of God who fills all things.

[3:19](#): Christians are to know the love of Christ in order to be filled into all the fullness of God.

[4:10](#): Christ ascended in order to fill all things.

[4:13](#): Christians are to attain to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.

"Fullness" expresses unity with the triune God and the completion that God's salvation brings. The call to be filled with the Spirit is a call to live in that unity and to enjoy the wholeness of life with God. Christians must allow themselves to be the place where the presence and the power of God are evident. We are filled both by and with the Spirit.

The message of [5:18](#) is close to the goal of Paul's prayers in [1:17](#) and [3:16](#), that the Spirit will inform and empower his readers. Attention is here placed on the believers' responsibility to be receptive to the Spirit. While human beings do not manipulate the movement of God's Spirit, human responsibility is involved. Furthermore, Fee is correct to emphasize the communal focus of this text: The whole church is instructed to be filled with the Spirit.

And Paul emphasizes that Christians are to be *continually* filled with God's Spirit (this is the force of the Greek verb). They are to be controlled not by wine or by anything else, but by the Spirit. We have choice in the matter, for the Spirit's transforming work in us is not done apart from human involvement.<sup>10</sup>

#### A. *Command — Imperative*

First, the verb, "be filled" is in the imperative mood, it is a command. It is a command not a choice. As believers we are given many choices. But when the Lord gives a command, we must do it or be disobedient. This is not a suggestion, "It might be good for you if you sometime decided to be filled by the Spirit." No, it is a command, "Be Filled!"

Notice also that because it is a command, it is not some type of mysterious 'second blessing.' It is to be a normal part of the believer's relationship with God. Not some exceptional manifestation but an everyday process.

#### B. *Corporate — Plural*

Second, the verb, "be filled" is plural. Paul is addressing the church, the corporate body, not simply individuals. Of course for the corporate body to be filled, each individual must be filled and in chapter 4 Paul dealt with maintaining unity through the spiritual gifts.

**Being filled** is for all believers, not just the more spiritual. All believers, regardless of spiritual maturity or length of time in Christ can and must be filled. Spirit filled believers then transform a building into a church.

#### C. *Cause — Passive*

Third, the verb "be filled" is in the passive voice. An active verb means I do the action, a passive verb means I have the action done to me. In other words, being filled is something I can't do on my own. But it can't be done without me. I am commanded to **allow** the Spirit to fill me. The Holy Spirit is the *Agent* or cause of being filled. That requires *yielding*. Without the Holy Spirit there is "no way you or I could curtail and control the power of the fleshly side of our lives."<sup>11</sup> We must yield control to the Holy Spirit.

That means we cannot manufacture the filling. We cannot create our own experience of filling; the Holy Spirit must do it.

#### D. *Continual — Present*

<sup>10</sup> Snodgrass, Klyne. "Christians Living on Target (5:15 - 21)" In *NIV Application Commentary, New Testament: Ephesians*. By Klyne Snodgrass, 289-290. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, © 1996.

<sup>11</sup> Charles Swindoll, (*Flying close to the Flame*, Nashville: Thomas Nelson,) p. 62.

Four, the verb, “be filled” is in the present tense. The aspect of the present tense which best fits the context is the continual aspect. “Being kept filled” or “Go on being filled.” Being filled with the Spirit is not a one-time-and-it’s-done-scenario. It is a constant, continual process of growth in the Christian life.

**We must constantly yield our control to the Spirit to be continually filled and thereby transformed.**

E. *Clarification — Definition - Yielding Control*

Yielding—doing the will of God

How do we combine these four elements into a definition that will help us get acquainted with the Spirit, and be transformed by Him?

The command to be filled with the Holy Spirit is one of four commands given to the believer in his relationship to the Holy Spirit.<sup>12</sup> So this is only a partial definition of our relationship to the Spirit.

The filling is accomplished by a **yieldedness** of the believer to the will of God, through which the Holy Spirit **controls** the believer and is the divine resource which *empowers* the believer for sanctification which also results in service.

*Let me illustrate through Object lesson* for Clarification (Pitcher and Class)

When a believer is filled he is not getting more of the Spirit but is giving himself up. In other words the Spirit is getting more of Him. (*Fill then empty the glass*) At salvation you as a believer are indwelt by the Holy Spirit, and are given **all** the divine resources of the Holy Spirit to empower you to transformation. (*Fill the glass completely*)

But we must keep yielding control of every aspect of our lives to him. (*Empty the glass*) When we are empty—when we remove our control—then He is able to control. We don’t need more of Him but less of us. Not getting more of Him, but more of His control by us controlling less.

The preposition “with”—be filled **with** the Holy Spirit, could probably better be translated “by.” Be filled **by** the Spirit. So, voluntarily put yourself under the Spirit’s influence.

I like the analogy of an onion. At salvation, God in His mercy does not slice the onion down the middle and reveal all our sin at one time—that would be overwhelming. Instead, as we mature, He gently peels back layer by layer, revealing our sin and behavior that needs transformation. The only way we can make progress in this transformation is through yielding our control—being filled by the Spirit.

Who has control over your finances . . . you or the Holy Spirit?

Who has control over your job . . . you or the Holy Spirit?

Who has control over your family . . . you or the Holy Spirit?

Do you want more intimacy with God?

Do you want the abundant life Jesus promised?

Do you want more joy?

What is the source of power in your life?

Before we look at the results of the Spirit-filled life, let me show you a parallel passage. How do we yield control to the Holy Spirit?

**Colossians 3:15-17** Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body; and be thankful. 16 Let the **word of Christ richly dwell within you**, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God. 17 Whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to God the Father. (NASB95)

<sup>12</sup> The other three can be found in Galatians 5:16; Ephesians 4:30; and 1 Thessalonians 5:19-20

**Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly**—*be filled with the Spirit*. The main way we learn to yield control of our lives to the Spirit is to let the Word of God dwell in us—richly. To let it have ample room. To let the Holy Spirit through the Word of God permeate every aspect, every part of our lives. Not keeping any area of our lives from His control and transforming power. Let Him have every crack and crevice, thought and motive, relationship and dream.

There is no step-by-step; A + B = C formula for being filled.

It requires **Total Dependence, Total Surrender**—then the Spirit can take over.

## II. **Result—Product of doing God’s will and being filled with the Spirit**

What is the result of the Spirit’s control? What should some of the byproducts of filling be? Look at **Ephesians 5:19-21** speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord; 20 always giving thanks for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father; 21 and be subject to one another in the fear of Christ. (NASB95)

Four results of being Spirit filled—four participles which describe the condition of those who are continually being filled. (*They draw imperative force in the dependence on the imperative, be filled. They coordinate not subordinate.*)

Notice that all four will be related to praise, back where we started; our need to be dynamic in our worship and relationship with God.

Let’s quickly look at each one.

### A. **Speak — Fellowship** Ephesians 5:19a

Paul says in verse 19, “Speak to one another.” This is a key part of our fellowship with one another. Time together speaking. When we are Spirit-filled we begin to relate to each other as family. We communicate with each other. We encourage each other by making that speech praise not criticism.

### B. **Sing — Worship - Corporately** Ephesians 5:19b

We speak to each other **with psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs. Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord.** Different types of singing with the same purpose to worship and celebrate the Lord. We are to sing and make music (probably a reference to musical instruments)—in our hearts. When we are yielding to the Spirit the joy of our salvation is evident by our constantly having an inner melody of praise in our heart—ready to be audibly given.

Remember David.

**2 Samuel 6:5** Meanwhile, David and all the house of Israel were celebrating before the LORD with all kinds of instruments made of fir wood, and with lyres, harps, tambourines, castanets and cymbals. (NASB95)

They were worshiping with all their might or whole heartedly. That is the result of our being filled by the Spirit—whole hearted worship. JOY that cannot be contained. It spontaneously bubbles into praise which we are to do with one another.

#### ***Worship is about God***

Our worship of God involves our focus on who He is (Attributes and Character) and what He has done (thanksgiving). Our goal as individual and as a church is to bring God glory.

**2 Thessalonians 1:11-12** To this end also we pray for you always, that our God will count you worthy of your calling, and fulfill every desire for goodness and the work of faith with power, 12 so that the name of our Lord Jesus will be glorified in you, and you in Him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ. (NASB95)

God wants all people and all creation to focus on Him (Psalm 8, 19).

So when we come to worship, we come to focus on God—not our preferences and music

#### ***Worship is also about others***

There is relatively little in Acts and the Epistles about corporate worship. (There is corrective instruction as in 1 Corinthians 10-14). In the book of Revelation we are given a glimpse of glory in the worship of God. But there are two passages in the New Testament that reveal that our corporate worship is not only focused on God but other centered.

**Ephesians 5:19-20** speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord; 20 always giving thanks for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father; (NASB95)

**Colossians 3:15-16** Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body; and be thankful. 16 Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God. (NASB95)

Worship is always about God, but these verses show us that worship is also about encouraging and exhorting others to see God.

Which brings me to the key point of this last section—we need to see our corporate worship in terms of what we bring not what we get.

We come together to draw attention and honor to God.

We come together to remind ourselves and others of the glory and goodness of God.

**Our authentic participation requires our thoughtful preparation.**

C. **Satisfied**—*Thanksgiving - to God* Ephesians 5:20

But not only adoration—worshipping the *source*, but thanksgiving, worship or praise for the product. Being filled by the Spirit makes us thankful people. We begin to see how great our God is and all that He does for us. We are satisfied by His kindness and continually, **always give thanks . . . for everything**. That means we are thankful even in the difficult times. We are grateful, not complaining, not hard to please.

D. **Submit**—*Submission to one another* Ephesians 5:21

And finally, verse 21 which is grammatically related to verses 18-20, though thematically related to verse 22 and following—reveals that being Spirit-filled we are not concerned about control but service. We humbly submit to one another out of reverence to Christ. We submit and maintain unity with each other for the glory of Christ’s Name Sake.

**Philippians 2:1-4** Therefore if there is any encouragement in Christ, if there is any consolation of love, if there is any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and compassion, 2 make my joy complete by being of the same mind, maintaining the same love, united in spirit, intent on one purpose. 3 Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves; 4 do not *merely* look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others. (NASB95)

Our contact with the Spirit, our yielding to the control of the Holy Spirit should produce joy which is evident in our worship. It should produce thanksgiving which is evident in our dynamic relationship with God. And it should produce submission which will be evident in serving one another and in the unity of the body.

For us the term “fear” is usually negative, and the biblical writers knew this negative use. But by and large they used it in a positive sense, for which there is no satisfactory English equivalent. Words like “reverence” or “respect” are too weak to capture the nuance intended. The positive sense of the fear of Christ points to his power and holiness and to the recognition that he is Lord and coming Judge. Such fear is the ground of both praise and obedience. We ought not forget that the one who is feared is the same one who “loved us and gave himself for us” in 5:2.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>13</sup> Snodgrass, Klyne. “Christians Living on Target (5:15 - 21)” In *NIV Application Commentary, New Testament: Ephesians*. By Klyne Snodgrass, 293. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, © 1996.

***Practice***

Do we start off each day, consciously turning control of our lives over to the Spirit? Do we so want to do God's will and to bring glory to His name that we are willing to yield to His Spirit? **Total**

**Dependence—Total Surrender.**

Do we say to God?

Take my life and let it be consecrated, given completely to You.

Take my hands, my tongue, my will, my possession, my all—to serve You. To belong to You.  
To be transformed by You. To be empowered to live for You.

Enable me to refrain from evil, to withstand temptation, to discern what path you want me to walk.

Equip me to speak and sing with enthusiasm in proclamation of You and Your goodness. Allow thanksgiving to flow from my life to Your praise and glory. Make me humble, seeking unity not control.

Fill me with Your Spirit—I yield control to You.

**Song?**