

Be Filled With the Spirit - 2

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AM Service

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Text: [Ephesians 5:17-21](#)

Introduction

Samuel Chadwick, a 19th Century minister once said, *“The gift of the Spirit is the crowning mercy of God in Christ Jesus. It was for this all the rest was. The Incarnation and Crucifixion, the Resurrection and Ascension were all preparatory to Pentecost. Without the gift of the Holy Spirit all the rest would be useless. The great thing in Christianity is the gift of the Spirit. The essential, vital, central element in the life of the soul and the work of the Church is the Person of the Spirit.”* (Joyful News, 1911).

I think we could all agree in **the importance of the doctrine and ministry of the Holy Spirit** in the life of every true born again believers. We could all agree how essential that **we should be well instructed** in the doctrine of the Holy Spirit and His ministry. Yet as important as this doctrine is, it is **sadly neglected** or **avoided** even among true believers.

Thomas Goodwin wrote, *“There is a general omission in the saints of God, in their not giving the Holy Spirit that glory that is due to His Person and for His great work of salvation in us, insomuch that we have in our hearts almost forgotten this Third Person.”*

The Holy Spirit is **not a doctrine to be avoided**. He is the third person of the Trinity **without whom we cannot live the Christian life**. And it grieves the Holy Spirit when we ignore and avoid Him and His important ministry.

Many Christians are confused about what the filling of the Holy Spirit is. What does it mean to be filled with the Spirit? How to be filled with the Spirit? What happens when a person is filled with the Spirit? These are the big questions we will try to answer in the coming weeks. Two Sundays ago, we begin to consider this great subject **“Being Filled with the Spirit”** To guide us through this study, I suggested four headings, namely, the **Command**; the **Comparison**; the **Consequences**; and the **Cumbrances** (Hindrances).

I - The Command

[Ephesians 5:17](#) Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is. 18: [And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit;](#)

This Spirit-filling is **not optional**. It is **not a suggestion**. It is a command and it is **a command to be obeyed**.

1. It is Principal Command

It is an extremely important command.

*“If you and I are going to experience the fullness of the Christian life, then we must learn how to be filled with the Holy Spirit. **It isn’t enough just to be saved.** That will get you to Heaven, but unless you are filled with the Spirit, you will have a rough road here below. Christianity is **far more than a bunch of “don’ts”**, there are a whole lot of “do’s” to keep you busy too. In fact, if you will spend your time doing the do’s, you won’t have time to do the don’ts.”* - Alan Cairns

2. It is Passive Command

Ephesians 5:18 *And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit;*

The word “be filled” is in passive voice. It means the subject receives the action. We as believers are being acted upon. God is implied as **the source of the filling**. We are the recipients of the action. We as believers do not fill ourselves, **God does the filling when we ask Him to fill us** or control us.

3. It is Plural Command

Ephesians 5:18 *And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit;*

This command of being filled with the Spirit applies to every believer in Christ. It is **not reserved for a few special super spiritual Christians**. Every Christian without exception can be filled with the Spirit.

4. It is Perpetual Command

Ephesians 5:18 *And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit;*

The words “**be filled**” here is in the present tense. It refers to continuous action. “**Be filled**” means “**be continually filled,**” “**keep on being filled,**” “**be filled again and again and again**”.

D. L. Moody said, *“A great many think because they have been filled once, they are going to be filled all the time after. But O, my friends, we are leaky vessels, and have to be kept right under the fountain all the time in order to keep full.”*

II - The Comparison (Illustration)

Ephesians 5:18 *And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit;*

Paul by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit compares being filled with the Holy Spirit to what? **Drunkness!** Why? **How does drunkness illustrate being filled with the Spirit?** Before we answer this question, I want us to understand that Paul in this verse is **not giving us a lecture on drunkness**. What Paul was doing was making a contrast between drunkness and being filled with the Spirit. But let me just say something about drunkness. We all know, whether you drink or not that there is **no constructive or productive qualities** about drunkness. The word “**excess**” in the original is “**asotia**”, which means **debauchery or dissipation or dissolution**.

So you could read this verse this way, [Ephesians 5:18](#) like this, “*And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; which leads to debauchery.*” **Drunkenness leads to destructive consequences.** Drunkenness is destructive. It ruins lives. It brings so much **pain** and **sufferings** in a long term.

According to the 2015 **National Survey on Drug Use and Health** (NSDUH), 15.1 million adults ages 18 and older had **Alcohol Use Disorder** (AUD). This includes 9.8 million men and 5.3 million women. About 6.7 percent of adults who had AUD in the past year received treatment.

In 2015, of the 78,529 liver disease deaths among individuals ages 12 and older, 47.0 percent involved alcohol. Among males, 49,695 liver disease deaths occurred and 49.5 percent involved alcohol. Among females, 28,834 liver disease deaths occurred and 43.5 percent involved alcohol.

Among all cirrhosis deaths in 2013, 47.9 percent were alcohol related. The proportion of alcohol-related cirrhosis was highest (76.5 percent) among deaths of persons ages 25–34, followed by deaths of persons ages 35–44, at 70.0 percent.

Drinking alcohol increases the risk of cancers of the mouth, esophagus, pharynx, larynx, liver, and breast.

Globally, alcohol misuse was the fifth leading risk factor for premature death and disability in 2010.

An estimated **88,000 people die** from alcohol-related causes **annually**, making alcohol the **third leading preventable cause of death in the United States**. In 2010, alcohol misuse cost the United States **\$249.0 billion**.

1,825 college students between the ages of 18 and 24 die from alcohol-related unintentional injuries, including motor-vehicle crashes. 696,000 students between the ages of 18 and 24 are assaulted by another student who has been drinking. 97,000 students between the ages of 18 and 24 report experiencing alcohol-related sexual assault or date rape.

No wonder the Bible gives us stern and severe warning about wine and strong drink!

[Proverbs 23:29](#) Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath contentions? who hath babbling? who hath wounds without cause? who hath redness of eyes? [30](#): They that tarry long at the wine; they that go to seek mixed wine. [31](#): **Look not thou upon the wine** when it is red, when it giveth his colour in the cup, when it moveth itself aright. [32](#): At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder. [33](#): Thine eyes shall behold strange women, and thine heart shall utter perverse things. [34](#): Yea, thou shalt be as he that lieth down in the midst of the sea, or as he that lieth upon the top of a mast. [35](#): They have stricken me, shalt thou say, and I was not sick; they have beaten me, and I felt it not: when shall I awake? I will seek it yet again.

With love I say, **don't play with fire!** Stay away from it as far as you can.

But **the main thrust** of [verse 18](#) is the positive command “[Be filled with the Spirit.](#)” Now, why did Paul use drunkenness to illustrate being filled with the Spirit?

1. Because of its familiarity

Paul was addressing people who were **familiar with the image of drunkenness**. Remember at Pentecost, the Holy Spirit of promise came and filled and empowered the disciples. When the believers at Pentecost were filled with the Spirit, the crowd accused them of being drunk with new wine.

[Acts 2:12](#) And they were all amazed, and were in doubt, saying one to another, What meaneth this? [13](#): Others mocking said, **These men are full of new wine.** [14](#): But Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice, and said unto them, Ye men of Judaea, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and hearken to my words: [15](#): **For these are not drunken,** as ye suppose, seeing it is but the third hour of the day.

These men and women at Pentecost were **accustomed to the sight of drunkenness** and here Paul in his letter to the Ephesians utilized that image. His readers were familiar with what happens when a person is drunk. Drunkenness was **part of their culture** and a **huge problem** of their day. You know what there’s **nothing is new under the sun**; drunkenness is also a huge problem in our society today.

2. Because of its similarity

The basic idea **Paul wants to convey in this comparison is that of control**. What happens when a person is drunk? When a person is drunk **they don’t act themselves anymore**. People who are drunk have no control over themselves. They have no control over their **body**. They easily lose their balance and have slow reactions to situations. They have no control over their **mind**. They have trouble understanding or remembering things, even recent events. They are confused not knowing where they are and what they are doing. They have no control over their **tongue**. Ask a drunken person and you can get all kinds of answers. You have no idea what is going to come out of his mouth. They have no control over their **emotions**. They become highly emotional - aggressive, withdraw or overly affectionate. They become fearful or anxious or paranoid or angry or silly because they no control over their emotions.

So the basic concept that Paul is trying to convey in this comparison is that of control. Paul is essential saying, “*do not be controlled by the alcoholic spirits, and instead be controlled by the Holy Spirit.*”

Understand that to be controlled by the Spirit **does not mean that you are out of control**, where you bark like a dog, laugh uncontrollably, or pass out and fall over backwards. **Nowhere does the Bible command losing control**. The point is not “lose control with alcohol” nor “lose control with the Holy Spirit.” That is not what the Bible teaches.

Furthermore, the word “**fill**” has nothing to do with contents or quantity, as in an empty glass that needs to be filled with water. No, the verb “**filled**” means “**controlled by.**” It conveys the sense

of domination or total influence. It is used by the Gospel writers to indicate that people were dominated by a certain emotion.

In [Luke 5:26](#), after Jesus rebuked the Pharisees and healed the paralytic, the people were astonished and “filled with fear.” In [Luke 6:11](#), when Jesus restored a man's hand on the Sabbath, the scribes and Pharisees “were filled with madness.” In [John 16:6](#), when our Lord told the disciples that He would soon be leaving them, He told of their reaction: “sorrow hath filled your heart.”

Every one of these verse conveys an emotion that fills these people that they were controlled by it. They are no longer in control, the emotion is. Similarly, when a person is truly filled with the Holy Spirit he is no longer the one controlling his body. **He goes where the Spirit wants him to go** and he doesn't go to places where He convicts him not to go. When a person is truly filled with the Holy Spirit he is no longer the one controlling his mind. **His mind is centered on the things of God.** When a person is truly filled with the Holy Spirit he is no longer the one controlling his speech. **He is speaking the things the Spirit of God provokes him to say or not say.**

How can I be filled with the Spirit?

[Ephesians 5:17](#) Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is. 18: And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit; 19: Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord; 20: Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ; 21: Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God.

Here we are told what happens when a person is filled with the Spirit. We will look at this positive consequences next week.

[Ephesians 5](#) has a parallel passage and it's found in [Colossians 3:16-25](#) .

[Colossians 3:16](#) Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. 17: And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him. 18: Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord. 19: Husbands, love your wives, and be not bitter against them.

The Ephesians passage states that right relationships occur only when we as believers are filled with the Spirit while the Colossians passage states that right relationships occur only when we let the word of Christ richly dwell in us.

Let the word of Christ dwell in you

Being filled with the Spirit then is simply **letting the Word of Christ to permeate and to control every part of your being.** To be filled with the Spirit is to be filled with Word of God. The two are synonymous. This once again highlights **the importance of having a steady and constant diet of the Word of God.** When we are filled with the Word of Christ, the Spirit takes that truth and uses it to guide and direct us.

Closing Thoughts

Who is in control of your life? What fills a person controls a person. God wants His children to be filled with His Spirit not wine nor alcohol nor any strong drink nor something else. There are many things with which one may become intoxicated - money, pleasure, entertainment, sports, power, popularity, house, cars, toys, etc. Some of these are **not necessarily sinful but they are poor substitutes!**

[Ephesians 5:18](#) And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit;

This is the way to walk as wise men and women in a world filled with darkness. **Child of God, do not be controlled by anything on the outside.** Be controlled by the Person who dwells in you. Be filled with the Holy Spirit. Be controlled, captivated, motivated, and activated by the Holy Spirit.

“As we yield to the Holy Spirit of God Who resides in our spirit, as we surrender to Him, as we allow Him to control us, we experience the fullness of all that He has given us in Christ Jesus.” - Wayne Barber

Oh **how we robbed ourselves** of all that **fullness God offers us** when you and I fail to be surrender to His Spirit's control. How many things has God promised to give you in His word; **joy, peace, confidence, and victory**, and you are living without them, why? Could it be because you **refuse to submit and surrender** to His Spirit's control? Understand that joy, peace, confidence, and victory; **these all come from the Holy Spirit.** These are all ministries of the Holy Spirit. The degree of our surrender determines the degree of our realization of the fullness that God offers.

Are you heavy hearted?

[John 14:16](#) And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; [17:](#) Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. [18:](#) I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you.

Are you battling fear?

[2 Timothy 1:7](#) For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.

Are you struggling with temptation?

[Galatians 5:22](#) But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, [23:](#) Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.

Are you struggling to believe the gospel?

[John 6:63](#) It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.

Are you struggling with the assurance of salvation? Are you really saved? Romans 8 The Spirit bears witness

Romans 8:16 The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God:

Luke 11:13 If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?

AMEN!