

(Ephesians) Be Filled With the Spirit

by Brian Brodersen

The sermon emphasizes the importance of not being drunk with wine, but rather being filled with the Spirit, which leads to a productive and glorifying life.

Duration: 58:59

Scripture: Ephesians 5:15

Topics: "Holy Spirit", "Christian Living"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher focuses on the importance of living a different lifestyle as believers compared to unbelievers. He emphasizes the need to understand and follow the will of the Lord, rather than being influenced by worldly desires. The preacher also highlights the negative consequences of drunkenness and the disapproval of God towards those who are habitually drunk. He encourages believers to spend time with the Lord and be filled with the Holy Spirit, which will be evident in their countenance and actions. Additionally, the preacher mentions the importance of speaking to one another in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, and making melody in our hearts to the Lord.

Transcript

Let's open our Bibles to Ephesians 5. So we pick up in our study through this letter of Paul to the church in Ephesus. Gonna pick up tonight in verse 18, Ephesians 5, 18. Let's pray for God's blessing on the word.

Lord, we pray now that you would come and give us an ear to hear what your spirit would say to us tonight. And Lord, we do pray for mercy and Lord, that revival that we were just singing about, Lord, how desperately we need that in our lives, how desperately your church needs you, Lord, to visit us in a fresh way. And so, Lord, we just ask you to work in us to that end.

Bless the study of your word. Lord, now we pray in Jesus name. Amen.

Let's back up to verse 15. Where Paul said, see then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time because the days are evil. Therefore, do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is and do not be drunk with wine in which is dissipation.

So here is, in a sense, sort of the climactic close to this segment where the apostle has been exhorting Christians regarding their lifestyle as contrast to the lifestyle of the people that are not believers. And he's basically been showing how our lives are to be drastically different than the lives of unbelievers. And now

he sort of caps everything off with this final.

Word of exhortation here regarding drunkenness, and then from this point he moves more into a positive sort of a mode where he's talking to us more positively about the life of the spirit. But before we transition into the life of the spirit, we've got to address this subject that he brings up here in verse 18, not being drunk with wine. Now he's dealt with all kinds of different sin.

He's warned us about the kinds of sins that occur among us as we would be bitter toward each other or unkind, unloving those sorts of things. He's talked to us about sexual immorality and he's warned us about sexual immorality. He's talked to us about just a lack of wisdom in our lives, not living entirely for the glory of God, but wasting time and things like that.

And now he comes to this issue of not being drunk with wine. Now, these, of course, were things that people were battling with back in the first century, just like people are battling with all these things today. And as we see over and over again, when we study the scriptures, the scriptures are incredibly relevant to every generation because man never really changes.

Essentially, man is the same with the same problems from generation to generation. And so drunkenness was a problem back in apostolic times. Drunkenness is a problem among us today.

And so we have the exhortation not to be drunk with wine in which is dissipation. Now, this word dissipation means. Wasteful living and notice that in connection with the previous verses, we looked at the previous verses in depth last time, but remember, Paul, there is really admonishing us to.

Walk circumspectly, not foolishly redeeming the time, buying up every moment, not wasting a moment of time, and now he says, do not be drunk with wine in which is dissipation. Drunkenness leads to a wasted life. In every possible area, you know, it's interesting as you look at the entire context here, I was thinking about this as I was looking at the chapter, how in everything that Paul's talking about here, even the things that he goes on to talk about, we see how drunkenness has been a factor, a devastating factor and a stumbling block for many people into other types of sin.

We talked a bit about sexual sin last week. Think about how many people have fallen into sexual sin because of the influence of alcohol. How many people lost their virginity while being drunk? Think of the wasted.

Time. The opposite of redeeming the time that occurs when someone's under the influence of alcohol, people have wasted their entire lives, and as we carry on in the teaching here, we're going to get into the whole subject of marriage, the whole subject of the family. We're going to address issues pertaining to business and so forth.

And think of the impact, the negative impact that alcohol has had in those areas as well. Marriages have been destroyed because of drunkenness. Families have been devastated because of drunkenness.

Businesses have gone down the tubes because of drunkenness. We see the devastating effect of alcohol on the lives of people all around us. So Paul speaking to Christians, he says, do not be drunk with wine.

This is a commandment. This isn't a suggestion, something that's optional. Something that you sort of take or leave, depending on your perspective on it.

It's a straightforward command. Do not be drunk with wine. Why? Because wine leads to waste and God is not into waste.

God wants us to be productive. God wants to see blessing in our lives. Now, there are a number of passages that address the subject of drunkenness, and I think it would be good to look at them for just a moment.

Jesus in Luke's Gospel, Chapter 21. He said, But take heed to yourselves, lest your hearts be weighed down with carousing drunkenness and the cares of this life. And that day come upon you unexpectedly.

He's talking about the day of the wrath of God. He's talking about really the day the Lord delivers his people, which begins the process of judgment on the earth. Paul, in writing to the Corinthians, he said, Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived.

Neither fornicators nor idolaters nor adulterers or homosexuals, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God. And then writing to the Galatians, he said, Now, the works of the flesh are evident, which are adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambition, dissensions, heresies, envy, murder, drunkenness, revelries and the like, of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. And then in the Old Testament, we have several texts that.

Address the issue, wine is a mocker, strong drink is a brawler, and whoever is led astray by it is not wise. Proverbs chapter 20, verse one, then Proverbs chapter 23 says, Who has woe, who has sorrow, who has contentions, who has complaints, who has wounds without cause, who has redness of eyes, those who linger long at wine, those who go in search of mixed wine, do not look on the wine when it is red, when it sparkles in the cup, when it swirls around smoothly at the last. It bites like a serpent and stings like a viper.

Your eyes will see strange things and your heart will utter perverse things. Yes, you will be like one who lies down in the midst of the sea or like one who lies at the top of a mass saying they have struck me, but I was not hurt. They have beaten me, but I did not feel it.

When shall I awake that I may seek another drink? What a description, such an accurate description, but in all of these showing the foolishness of drunkenness, but also showing the disapproval of God, of the drunken state and the fact that those who are habitually drunk are going to be those who are not going to have part. Ultimately, in the kingdom of God. Now, we don't want to spend a whole lot of time on this, but.

I do think that. Because it's here, we need to take it into consideration and it strikes me again, as I sort of said a few moments ago, it strikes me that all of these things. Are.

Written to believers, this epistle was not addressed to the world at large, Paul's not talking about the drunkards out there in the bars or out of the clubs or wherever he's addressing Christian people, recognizing that there's temptation and recognizing that at times we ourselves can go astray and he wants to make sure that we understand what God requires of us. People ask the question, as a Christian. Can I drink alcoholic beverages? I think the answer to that, the technical answer, if you will, would be yes.

The prohibition is against drunkenness. The problem is it varies from person to person just how much alcohol it takes for a person to get drunk. I do not think that any Christian needs to drink alcohol.

I'm not one of those that is condemning toward those that do, but I just personally don't see the wisdom in it or the value in it. There's too much negative about it to even dabble in it. Now, you might say, well, I don't have a problem with it.

You know, I'm not tempted to get drunk. Good, but. Are you maybe influencing someone else that doesn't have that same kind of willpower that you do or that same kind of strength that you do in regard to that? Maybe you're setting a bad example for a younger person.

Who's going to say at some point, well, you know, my dad drinks, so I guess I could probably participate in it myself. And I think when it comes to this particular issue, we really have to be looking out for the other person. We have to be making sure that we're not going to stumble anybody.

And again, quite honestly, I just don't see with all the negative things that result from the abuse of alcohol in the culture and in the world. I don't see why we as Christians would want to be associated with that sort of thing. It's just not a good association because of all of the evil that's connected with it.

And so we have liberty. Paul talked about liberty, he talked about being free to do many things, but he also said that he never wanted his liberty to become a stumbling block to anyone else. And he never would exercise his liberty to the point where he himself might be brought back into bondage.

And so can a Christian drink alcohol? Yes. Should a Christian drink alcohol? Probably not. There isn't any value in it.

Does it help you redeem the time? Does it advance your knowledge of the Lord, do you increase in spirituality through the influence of alcohol? I don't think so. Martin Lloyd-Jones, a great Bible commentator, but prior to going into the ministry.

A very capable physician. He wrote concerning alcohol and he said this, he said, alcohol is a depressant. It depresses, first and foremost, the highest centers of all in the brain.

They are the very first to be influenced and affected by alcohol. They control everything that gives a man self-control, wisdom, understanding, discrimination, judgment, balance, the power to assess everything. In other words, everything that makes a man behave at his very best and highest is affected by alcohol.

We want to be behaving at our very best and highest as God's people. We don't want to come under the influence of something that's going to detract from. That likeness to Christ in our life, and that is exactly what happens when a person comes under the influence of alcohol, under the influence of alcohol, the naturally timid can become belligerent and pugnacious, those naturally hardened can become sentimental and tearful.

Those normally congenial and friendly can become morose and surly, alcohol alters the personality, and that's not something that we as Christian people ought to be. Pursuing. We ought to be pursuing after the things that are going to.

Bring us more and more into intimacy with the Lord and more and more into likeness to him, so. The apostle says, do not be drunk with wine. In which is dissipation, but rather be filled with the spirit.

Now, Paul here indicates that there is a similarity between being drunk and being filled with the spirit. Now, some people have totally misinterpreted this statement of Paul, and they've tried to draw parallels that

don't exist, because remember, drunkenness leads to dissipation. Drunkenness leads to debauchery, drunk drunkenness leads to a wasteful lifestyle.

There's only one similarity between drunkenness and the spirit, and that's why Paul connects them together. The similarity is that you're under the influence of something when you're drunk, you're under the influence of alcohol. But isn't it interesting how alcohol is even referred to as spirits? You ever notice that and the influence of alcohol on people makes you wonder whether or not there isn't some spirit involved.

People under the influence of alcohol can appear to be demon possessed at times, but. But. What Paul is saying is that rather than being under the influence of alcohol that leads to a wasteful life.

Rather, we are to be under the influence of the spirit, which leads to a productive life, which leads to a life that glorifies God. And that's the similarity right there. That's the only similarity.

It's being under the influence. It's. Now, that's what we want to talk about tonight, we want to talk about being under the influence of the spirit.

But before we move on to that, let's just. Make a couple of more comments concerning alcohol and what we call today alcoholism. We're living in a time when there are many myths that are influencing the culture.

And one of the modern myths that is influencing many in our culture is the myth of the disease of alcoholism. And it's permeated the culture so extensively that we even hear people in the church talking about it. We hear it being talked about from pulpits, the disease of alcoholism.

We hear Christians talking about the disease that they have, the disease of alcoholism. This is a modern myth that puts alcohol in a category that the Bible does not put it in at all. The Bible categorizes alcoholism as sin.

And we need to be careful not to get swept up in the influence of humanistic ideas that have permeated our culture. We need to say what the Bible says about these kinds of things. Now, you might have heard this before, but I think it's worth repeating because it really shows the absurdity of the idea that alcoholism is a disease.

If alcoholism is a disease, it is the only disease that can be contracted by an act of the will. It's the only disease that requires a license to propagate. It's the only disease that's bottled and sold.

It's the only disease that requires outlets to spread, produces revenue for the government, provokes crime, is habit forming. Spread by advertising, the only disease that we are fined for contracting, the only disease that brings death on the highways. The only disease without germ or viral causes and for which there is no.

Medical remedy. It's the only disease that bars a patient from the kingdom of God. That right there should show you that biblically speaking, alcoholism or drunkenness is the biblical term.

Alcoholism is the modern term which has been put forth to give it that sort of a disease sound. But drunkenness is the biblical term. And again, we notice that the scriptures say that drunkards shall not inherit the kingdom of God.

God does not keep people out of his kingdom because they have diseases. People have cancer. Does that bar them from the kingdom of God? No, people have tuberculosis.

Does that keep them out of the kingdom of God? Of course not. There are a variety of diseases, lung disease and heart disease and all different kinds of diseases. But we can't find anything in scripture that would indicate that a person who has a legitimate physical disease is going to be kept out of the kingdom.

But we're told specifically that drunkards will not inherit the kingdom of God. So we can either let the modern. Mindset influence us, we can fall prey to that, be duped by it, deceived by it, or we can stand firm on what the scriptures say.

Well, people will argue and say, oh, but there's scientific proof. Well, there's about as much scientific proof for that as there is for evolution. And if you've studied the subject of evolution, you find that there isn't really any scientific proof for that, but it's believed all over the world.

And if you don't believe it, you're seen to be an idiot. And, you know, to some extent, it's the same with this whole issue of alcohol. If you talk about it as sin, people think, oh, you're.

You know, you're just so out of touch. Poor, ignorant Christians. Well, if you embrace it as a disease, what you'll find out is it's an incurable disease.

There is no remedy for it, even among those who hold it forth as a disease. There's no remedy for it. And there have been many people who have been told that, been taught that, have believed that, have held to that, have suffered the consequences of what they thought was a disease of alcoholism.

And then guess what happened? They came to Christ. And they were set free. And.

They were delivered something the medical community could never do for them, all they could do was diagnose them as a disease, but not do anything to help them, really. I could put them through programs and different kinds of things. But so there have been many who have initially had that idea, but then have come to Christ, experienced the power of God, the deliverance of God, gone into the scripture and seen what the scripture said and gone back and thought it through and said, boy, was I duped.

I thought I had a disease. And in actuality, it was just sin having a stranglehold in my life. I have seen many people, numbers of people, large numbers of people.

Experience great deliverance through the grace of God from the addiction to alcohol, the effects of alcohol. God has set them free, and that's what Jesus came to do, and that's what he does. And it's a matter of.

Submitting to him. It's not, you know, signing up for the 12 steps, it's really that one step of surrender to the Lord and he brings deliverance. The 12 steps have made great inroads into the church as well.

And anyone who talks against the 12 steps is seen as some sort of a modern heretic. And you'll hear how, you know, those founders of a were Christians and the whole program was based upon their faith in Christ, and the 12 steps were developed out of their deep belief in the Bible, that's mythology as well. You go back and study the history.

That's not the way it was. We have. For years, been.

Advocating a one step program. That one step is to receive Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior. And to follow up in discipleship with him, and if you do that, you know, the success rate is tremendous.

And here's another great aspect of it, it's free and they diagnose you with the disease of alcoholism, they want to put you in the detox center right away and that'll cost you a good 50 grand. So there is something in it for them. But the Lord.

Well, he just sets us free. He delivers us, so. I don't want to spend all of our time on that because that's not the most important point here.

The second. Point is the most important and be filled with the spirit. So, in contrast, not being drunk with wine, that leads to a wasteful life, but rather being filled with the spirit.

Now, here's the interesting thing. The exhortation to be filled with the spirit is more literally translated and be being filled with the spirit continually. Being filled with the spirit is an ongoing experience of the fullness of God that we are called to pursue in our lives as Christian people.

Being filled with the spirit is not just a one time event, but sometimes we speak of it and think of it as a one time occurrence. Someone might say, well, I was filled with the spirit back in the 70s. Great, have you been filled with the spirit since the 70s? If you haven't, I think you're overdue.

You need a fresh filling, be being filled continually with the spirit. That's what the apostle says. Now, remember the connection he's talking about all the different kinds of things that the unbelievers are involved in and that Christians were previously involved in because the majority of Christians were formerly unbelievers, unless you were brought up in a Christian home and made a commitment to Christ at a very young age.

You fall into that category of having once been outside and been involved in all of these different kinds of things and all the sexual immorality and all the wasted living and the drunkenness and all of that. But now Paul is saying this is what we're to be doing as Christians were to be being filled with the spirit continually. Pursuing after God, pursuing after the things of God.

And, you know, in our last study, we talked about the need for revival. We talked about redeeming the time. And, you know, I had an interesting little flash today as I picked up one of my Bibles to look at a translation and it was sort of a funny thing.

But. As I picked it up, it's a thick, hardback new English translation of the Bible, and as I flipped it open to the New Testament, I just noticed as I was looking, I just noticed how thin it was. I just noticed how there weren't a whole lot of pages there.

And as I noticed that, the funniest thing struck me. I thought, you know, contained in that little space right there. Is the most important information in the world, in the pages of the New Testament, a relatively small document in comparison to other documents, but yet it contains the words of eternal life.

And I just thought of how we spend so much time and energy just seeking to obtain knowledge about all of these kinds of things that aren't really vital or essential. In light of eternity. And you think of how much we know about.

Unimportant things, trivial things. And how little we know about the most important things, but it's just a very small document in comparison, but this is the thing that all we need to just be immersing ourselves in. You know, we might know who starred in this movie or that movie or in what year a certain political event occurred or who won the World Series or the playoffs or the championship for some sort of a sport.

At, you know, a particular time or, you know, we might even know what the stock market is doing presently and all of that's fine to know. But do we know our Bible as well as we know those kinds of things? God's given us one book and God help us to get to know it, because that's how we fulfill the injunction to be filled with the spirit. We are filled with the spirit by coming into daily communion and contact with the Lord.

Just being with Jesus results in being filled with the spirit. Now, when it comes to the subject of being filled with the spirit in the scriptures, you have these initial feelings that people experience in the early days of the outpouring of the spirit of God upon the church. And you had times when the apostles would come and they would lay hands on people and pray for them and they would be filled with the spirit.

Other times somebody would be speaking and the spirit would come upon them. And and those kinds of things still do occur. And there is a time and a place when we might sense that we're lacking in the realm of the spirit and we might go to some friends or even to the elders of the church and say, would you lay hands on me and pray that God would impart a fresh dose of the spirit to me? There are times when in the course of a message being given that God might work in an extraordinary way and someone might be filled with the spirit.

Many people might be filled with the spirit at that point. But I think by and large, the filling with the spirit comes to us personally as we seek the Lord, as we spend time with the Lord. And what we end up doing is making a mistake in thinking that I'm going to get filled with the spirit by running down and getting prayed for and then, you know, going back out and just continuing to be involved in everything that I'm doing, not really pursuing the things of the spirit or anything.

I'm just going to go down to the church and get that recharging and then I'm back out about my business and going strong. But it doesn't happen that way, does it? We come and we we know we need something, so we get prayer to be filled and then we leave and we might even feel like, OK, I'm filled up and then we get out the next day, we find we're right back flat on our faces. But the problem is, we're not personally spending time with the Lord.

We're not seeking God ourselves. And that's where the filling, I believe, really takes place. So when Paul says be being continually filled with the spirit, I think the way to accomplish that is by frequently setting aside time to be with the Lord Jesus Christ through his word in times of worship, in times of prayer.

And as we just spend time with the Lord. His fullness overflows onto us and fills us up. So are you being filled with the spirit continually? If you're not.

There's nothing real mystical about it. There's not some great feat that you've got to perform in order to attain it. It's a matter of just getting away with the Lord and saying, Lord, I want more of you fill me up with yourself.

And the more we're with the Lord. We can count on that ongoing filling occurring in our lives and as we're filled with the spirit, then what happens is we start experiencing that power of the spirit working in us and through us. The question often arises, what is the purpose of the filling of the spirit? The purpose of the filling of the spirit is really to be a witness for the Lord.

The purpose of the filling of the spirit is to be able to serve God. In his strength and through the gifts that he makes available, so really all of our activity, if it's going to be. Meaningful activity, if it's going to be activity that's real productive, is dependent upon my being filled with the spirit.

Have you ever been busy about the Lord's business, but felt like you weren't accomplishing anything? Feel like you're not getting anywhere, you're not really doing anything, you're you're doing a lot of things, but nothing seems to be really getting accomplished and you're getting weary and you're tired out. It could be it's because you're trying to do it in your own strength. And you haven't stopped and taken that time to be filled once again with the spirit.

But that's what Paul says, and so at this point, he sort of finishes with all of the negative, negative in the sense that things that were not to be doing. And now he comes right to the positive and he says, but be continually filled with the spirit. And now he's going to go on and he's going to talk about critical things.

He's going to talk about our relationships with one another, particularly the family relationships, the relationship between the husband and the wife, the wife and the husband, the relationship between the parents and the children, the children and the parents, the relationships that we deal with on a daily basis with our employment situations and so forth. And what he's basically saying to us is that in order to be all that we're supposed to be in these various contexts, we've got to be filled with the spirit. So he gives us this word of exhortation to begin this segment where he starts to really call us to dynamic Christian living.

He shows us that we need the empowering of the spirit to do it. So be being filled continually with the Holy Spirit. Are you struggling with your.

Role as a wife. Well, there's some instruction for you, but underlying the instruction is the presumption that you're filled with the spirit. Are you struggling, fulfilling your role as a husband? Maybe you're not being the husband that you know that you ought to be.

Well, there's plenty of great instruction for you, but underlying that instruction is the necessity of being filled with the spirit so you can put into practice by the power of God, the instruction that's given. Are you struggling as a parent, maybe? Maybe you're not really sure how to deal with the problems that have arisen in the home with your children. There's some basic instruction for us in the scripture, but again, there's that underlying.

Presumption that you're filled with the spirit. It. And so we have the basic principles.

But then that empowering of the spirit to carry out specifically how those principles will work into our own situations, maybe you're battling with things on your job. You don't know how to relate to your superiors or maybe as a boss, you don't know how you ought to be dealing with the people that are working under you. There's great instruction for us right here in this epistle, but again, it all presupposes that verse 18 is a reality in our lives.

We're being filled with the spirit of God. Oh, it's so important. The ministry of the Holy Spirit, we can never underestimate the importance of the spirit's ministry.

A couple of weeks ago, a young man was talking to me and he he was he was a bit upset at something I said, and so he was. He was criticizing something that I had said even prior to what he was upset about, and he said that I said on one occasion that a person who's teaching the Bible and so forth doesn't need to worry about studying or preparation or anything like that. They should just depend entirely on the Holy Spirit and nothing else.

That's all that's necessary. And I said to him, I'm sure that I've never said that because I don't believe that I would have never said that. You might have thought I said it.

You misinterpreted what I said, but I can guarantee you that I did not say that. But I said, if I were to err. On one side or the other, I would prefer to err by teaching people to depend entirely on the Holy Spirit rather than emphasizing their dependency upon themselves.

This Holy Spirit is God. I'm not going to go too wrong if I'm depending entirely upon God. And even if I haven't done my part, I can still trust in the grace of God, the mercy of God.

Now, I wouldn't make that a habit, but. The point is this, that the ministry of the spirit is so vitally essential for us as God's people. And I don't know if we always remember that or realize it, but when we look through the New Testament, remember.

This is this is what we see, we see people who are being led by the spirit, they were filled with the spirit, they were influenced by the spirit. The book of the Acts of the Apostles. Could more appropriately be entitled The Book of the Acts of the Holy Spirit.

Because it's the Holy Spirit working through certain of the apostles and others that's recorded for us there. But what you find in the book of the Acts is you find these men who spent time with Jesus, as you know, they spent the three and a half years with him during his public ministry. They were educated, they had gone through their training, but then they still were not ready for the task before them.

And Jesus told him, he said, well, first he commissioned him going to the world, preach the gospel to every creature. But he said, but wait until you're endued with power from on high and then you'll be witnesses for me. You can go to Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria and to the uttermost parts of the earth.

Now, as you go through the book of Acts, you find again that these people are dependent entirely upon the spirit. They're being led by the spirit. The spirit is working mightily.

And the point that's being made throughout the book of Acts is that God never intended for us as Christian people to be self-sufficient or self-reliant. He intended that we be depending on the Holy Spirit. That's God's intention.

Jesus said to the apostles, I will not leave you as orphans, but I will come to you. And he was coming back in the person of the Holy Spirit. Many years ago when I was pastoring in Vista, I remember frustration as a pastor and I was frustrated over the fact that, you know, every time we had some ministry opportunity or something that we presented to the congregation, the same people, a fairly small number of people, were the ones that stepped forward and the vast majority of people never got involved.

And you could see, you know, as the services would end, a few people would always end up sticking around praying and fellowshiping. But the vast majority of people bolt out the door, get in their cars and go home to the football game or whatever it was, you know. And I remember being really frustrated by that and thinking, Lord, what's the matter with these people? And the Lord spoke to me and said, well, the problem is you've never really taught them how important it is, how necessary it is to be filled with the spirit and be depending on the spirit.

And so it came back to me. I was the problem because I had not communicated that to the congregation. And so at that point, the Lord put on my heart to teach a series on the person, the baptism, the gifts of the spirit for six weeks on a Sunday morning, which was an unusual sort of a topic for a Sunday morning for us.

But we did that. And the amazing thing was this every Sunday at the end of the service, we literally had hundreds of people come forward to ask to receive the fullness of the spirit. Many of them had never even realized that that was something that they.

Could experience. And after that six week period and literally hundreds of people being prayed for to receive the Holy Spirit, the complexion of the church changed forever. Never again did I have that frustration that there wasn't anybody that wanted to get involved.

The Lord just stirred up the church. People began to experience the gifts of the spirit, all kinds of new ministries developed, doors open for missions, all kinds of great things. I look back and I attribute all of that to.

The direct working of the spirit of God. And this is what I want to say to us tonight. If we are lacking in vision, we're lacking in power, we're lacking in desire.

We need a fresh filling of the spirit of God. And it's obtained by just reconnecting with Jesus once again. Just reconnecting, just coming back to him and saying, Lord.

I need a fresh outpouring of your spirit and I'm going to seek you until I get it. I'm going to pursue after you, Lord. I'm going to make my time with you a priority.

I'm not going to neglect it like I've been doing. I'm not going to put it aside because all those other more important things that I am involved in. But I'm going to just make a commitment to that.

And you know what? You're going to find this. You're going to find. That that cup will begin to overflow once again and the joy of the Lord will come back into your life.

And that sense of his presence with you will begin to be felt again. And as you go about your daily business, you're going to just know that God is with you and he's helping you. And there will be a certain ease reintroduced into your life.

That's what happens as a spirit comes alongside to help us. And so that's why Paul says. We're to be.

Filled with the spirit, we're to come under the influence, not of wine or any other kind of. Thing, but we're to come under the influence of the spirit of God, and, you know, they use that terminology when a person is drunk, don't they? They say, look at that guy's under the influence. Wouldn't it be great for people to look at you and say, look at that person, they're under the influence of the spirit of God.

When the people were under the influence of the spirit of God in the New Testament, it was something that was noticeable to others, wasn't it? Sometimes they misinterpreted what was going on, but it was noticeable. They could see it. Think of Moses when he went up to the mountain, you remember, and he was there those 40 days and 40 nights with the Lord.

He came back down the mountain and he didn't even realize it, but his face was glowing. The people saw it, Moses was under the influence, he had spent time with the Lord, he was with the Lord for 40 days and 40 nights, just him and the Lord. And when he stepped out from that experience on the mountain, it was there upon his face that he had been with God.

And, you know, when we are filled with the spirit, it'll be there on our countenance. We'll see it in ourselves, people will see it in us. And that's the way that we're to be living as Christians, full of the spirit of

God.

And now he describes some of the manifestations of that speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord. And what he's really describing here is a joy. There's going to be a joy that is restored to our lives, a joy that begins to well up within us, that causes us just as we go throughout our day to just sing in our hearts to the Lord.

Just a joyful noise, just coming up from the depths of our being, just rejoicing in what God has done. You know, it's interesting every time a revival has occurred in the history of the church, something else that has come along with it is new music. That's not just a phenomenon that we experienced in the late 60s because we happen to be in the rock and roll generation.

But as you go back and you study the history of revival, you find that every time there's been an outpouring of the spirit of God, there's been a fresh work in the area of. Rejoicing and praise and songs of worship. You find that in the early church.

There were various hymns that they sang, they would sing the psalms and then they would write many hymns. Some people look at certain segments of the New Testament and speculate that these were perhaps hymns that were developed by the early Christians. Maybe they were in the Reformation period.

There was a great renewal. In songs in the church, the 18th century revival, Charles Wesley wrote six thousand hymns and he was not the lone hymn writer of the 18th century revival in the Welsh revival in the early part of the 1900s. It was a revival that.

Had a very musical aspect to it. And then, of course, in what we experienced in the 60s and 70s, new songs of praise inspired by what God has done in people's lives and people just coming forth and sharing what God has given to them. And thank God we still see it happening today.

But that's what we would expect as we see the work of the spirit overflowing. So speaking to one another in songs and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord, giving thanks always for all things to God, the Father, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ and submitting to one another in the fear of God. So there's going to be a renewal of joy resulting in praise.

There's going to be a heart of thanksgiving instead of a murmuring and complaining about everything. Just full of thanks to God for all of his blessing, all of his goodness, and then just a mutual submission to one another in the fear of the Lord. We're just seeking to glorify God together.

So we're cooperating with one another, working with one another. These are all the things that are manifestations of a fresh work of the spirit in our midst. And so as we close tonight, each and every one of us, I think, could legitimately ask for a fresh filling of the spirit.

You might say, well, I was filled this morning. Well, great. Get filled again tonight.

And then again tomorrow morning and then tomorrow evening, just be being filled continually. Don't let it stop. Just be there in fellowship with the Lord, be seeking him, stay in his word.

Worship him, open your heart, just praise him, thank him. And the Lord will bless with his presence and his spirit will overflow upon us and overflow from us upon others. And we will experience that good thing.

From the Lord, let's pray, Lord, we thank you for the reality of the Holy Spirit's work in our lives as individual Christians and in our midst as a congregation of people and Lord, we do pray tonight that you would fill us up once again, Lord, we don't want to be under the influence of anything but you. We want to come under that mighty influence of your spirit.

So, Lord, if there's things in our lives that are quenching the spirit, things that are grieving the spirit. Things that are holding back the blessing that you want to bring. If some are filled with wine instead of with the spirit, Lord, show them.

But that's a waste and that you have something so much better. Lord, meet us right where we're at, each of us, we pray and fill us, Lord, continually with your spirit for your glory in Jesus name, amen. Let's stand together tonight if you'd like some prayer, maybe you'd like some prayer to be filled with the spirit once again in a fresh way.

There are men up front here that would love to pray with you. So as we close this evening, just make your way up and they'll pray with you and you can trust that God's going to meet you. But again, I just.

Emphasize this even more than that, it's just connecting daily with the Lord, be with Jesus, because when you're with him. The fullness of the spirit rests upon him and that will just overflow. To you and blessing, so be with the Lord, spend time with him, God bless.

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