

The Ultimate Imperative
Call and Conduct of the Church
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Bible Text: Ephesians 5:18
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Turn if you would in your Bibles this morning to Ephesians chapter five and we are going to be looking at one verse in our study of the book of Ephesians today, verse 18.

If there is a key verse in my mind to living out the book of Ephesians it is the very verse that we are looking at today. There is a negative command. “Don’t get drunk.” And there is a positive command. “Be filled with the Spirit.” And that second command, that second imperative is the key. And I will develop that more in my introduction today. But it is the key in living out the Christian life.

All the imperatives, all the commands—and I will say this again in my introduction today—cannot be obeyed unless we are filled, led, controlled, directed by the Holy Spirit. So this truly is a key verse today and one that we can rejoice in because God will enable us to do what he has commanded us to do in the book of Ephesians. We can live out this worthy walk, live a life that pleases him. How? Through the work of his Spirit, not naturally. I can’t crank it out naturally. Sometimes I try. And it just doesn’t work, but supernaturally, being indwelt, led, controlled, directed by God’s Holy Spirit.

Let’s stand as we read God’s Word.

We are only going to be looking at verse 18 today, but I am going to pick up with verse 15 to set the context again and read through verse 21 please.

“Therefore be careful how you walk...”¹

That word walk—or live if you have an NIV—used five times in chapters four and five.

... be careful how you walk, not as unwise men but as wise, making the most of your time, because the days are evil. So then do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. And do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit...²

¹ Ephesians 5:15.

² Ephesians 5:15-18.

Here are the results.

...speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord; always giving thanks for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father; and be subject to one another in the fear of Christ.³

You can be seated.

Today we come to one of the most important texts in the entire Bible in how to live the Christian life, how to walk the worthy walk. In fact, the second command given in Ephesians 5:18 is a crucial command, one that enables us to live—as I said earlier—supernaturally, to live out all the imperatives that we have studied up to this point in the book of Ephesians.

Now the command I am talking about is to be filled with the Holy Spirit. For the filling of the Holy Spirit is the key, the means, the fuel to live in a way that pleases our great God.

Let me illustrate this truth by using the analogy of a high performance car in looking at the book of Ephesians, something I did briefly in chapter three. In chapter one through chapter three verse 13, in review of the book of Ephesians, Paul gives a wonderful description of our inheritance and our position in Christ. Paul also describes for us the power we have, God's resurrection power. In this analogy we can call this part of Ephesians the engine, the power plant, the motor of our high performance car, the doctrinal section.

Moving on to chapter three verse 14 to chapter three verse 21 Paul describes the ignition switch of the car. As we have studied in this section it doesn't do any good to have a high performance engine if you don't turn it on. And the key in turning on the ignition is to be empowered by the fullness of God.

We learn in Ephesians 3:19 and 20:

.... and to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled up to all the fullness of God. Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us...⁴

So we must turn on the ignition switch with the key if we are going to talk on spiritual power.

Now, next in our illustration we moved to the road map. The engine is running, but we need to know where to go. And chapter four verse one through chapter six verse nine tells

³ Ephesians 5:19-21.

⁴ Ephesians 3:19-20.

us the route we are to drive, how we are to walk, how we then should live. Paul tells us that we are to be in a path that is consistent with our calling, the worthy walk. And the road we are to travel is unique involving humility, unity, love, light and wisdom.

Now there are road blocks along the way on this path, on this road that we are travelling. And that is why in Ephesians 6:10 through 24 Paul communicates the fact that since we are going to run into Satan we have to put on the whole armor of God. We are going to have these road blocks and we are going to have to pray a lot. We are going to have to pray always for Paul will say in Ephesians 6:10:

Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles [the darts] of the devil.⁵

Verse 18. “Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints.”⁶

Now putting on the whole armor of God and praying enables us to drive our high powered car on the path, on the road we have to go without getting into a wreck and overcoming all the roadblocks we face along the way. Yet, there is something vital that we have left out that makes our high powered car work. What is it?

Well, the answer is fuel. You have to put something into the tank to make the vehicle go. And that is where the filling of the Holy Spirit comes in. For the filling of the Spirit is the believer’s gasoline, the fuel. This is what makes our car go. This is what makes our vehicle run.

It wouldn’t do a bit of good to have everything else right in Ephesians if you don’t put in any gas. This is the energy, the power to live out the worthy walk. And unless we are energized by the Holy Spirit we can never walk in humility, in unity, in uniqueness, in love, in light and wisdom.

In other words, without this second imperative in Ephesians 5:18 we would never be able to obey any of the other commands or imperatives to live, to walk the way we are to walk.

In light of that I have titled our message today, “The Ultimate Imperative.” And in our text today we see two imperatives, a negative command and a positive command. The negative command is to not be drunk with wine and the positive command is to be filled with the Spirit, what we are calling the ultimate imperative.

Gordon Fee calls this positive imperative to be filled with the Spirit, I quote, “The key to all others and is the ultimate imperative in the Pauline corpus,” end quote—Paul’s writings or Paul’s letters—and, thus, our title for today.

⁵ Ephesians 6:10-11.

⁶ Ephesians 6:18.

Now under this title we will look at two things in Ephesians 5:18, number one the command to not get drunk in verse 18a and number two the contrast to this command, the command to be filled in the Holy Spirit in verse 18b.

With those two points in mind let's look at our first one, the command. Look at Ephesians 5:18a please with me.

“And do not get drunk with wine for that is dissipation.”⁷

Now before Paul commands us to be filled with the Spirit and gives the characteristics of the Spirit filled life that follow, he first gives a clear negative command and that command is: Do not get drunk with wine. For, you see, getting drunk with wine not only is a hindrance to, but a counterfeit of being filled with the Spirit. For control is the issue.

Will you be under the control of alcohol with its results which in some pagan religions was supposed to increase your religious experience, your perception of God, knowing God, being under the control of alcohol in some of the religions of paganism? Or will you be under the control of the Holy Spirit with its wonderful fruit that follow or fruits that follow. And, contextually we have studied in the last two weeks the contrast between light and darkness, not being foolish and walking in wisdom by redeeming the time.

And Paul's point contextually is getting drunk is a mark of darkness and foolishness. Whereas, being filled with the Spirit is a source of a believer being able to walk in light and to walk in wisdom.

Now let me try to break this command down by unpacking it for you. And, first of all, to get drunk is a sin. No question, period. And drunkenness can be defined as any point in which alcohol takes over any part of your faculties. And whenever you yield the control of your faculties in any sense to alcohol that becomes drunkenness.

Now the word drunk literally means to be intoxicated. Wycliffe translates it to be filled. Vincent in his word studies says, and I quote, “A curious use of the word occurs in Homer where he is describing the stretching of a bull's hide which in order to make it more elastic is soaked with fat.”

Now the word soaked is the Greek word translated drunk in our text. Kenneth Weis develops this thought in his word studies and concludes that the word drunk refers to a condition of a person in which he is soaked with wine, soaked with alcohol.

For, you see, there were several different kinds of wine back then. But basically wine when it was not juice was naturally fermented. And no one added alcohol to its base and it was basically diluted by water two to three times giving it an alcohol base of less than three percent, below the 3.2 percent that today is generally considered necessary to

⁷ Ephesians 5:18.

classify a beverage as alcoholic. There was still alcohol in it. It is a fact. But very little alcohol in the wine.

So one would literally have to sit long at the wine to get drunk, to consume large amounts to get drunk which is the exact meaning of addicted to wine in 1 Timothy 3:3 and Titus 1:7 which literally means at or beside wine which the idea literally is of sitting beside the wine cup for an extended period of time.

Now drunkenness is clearly forbidden in Scripture. It is a pattern that is evident in people who do not know Christ.

For example, Romans 13:13 says, "Let us behave properly as in the day, not in carousing and drunkenness, not in sexual promiscuity and sensuality, not in strife and jealousy."⁸

And in Galatians 5:19-21 drunkenness is a deed of the flesh and if it is the practice of an individual it shows that they are not saved.

Can a Christian get drunk? Yes. If that is the practice of their life, they are not a Christian.

Galatians 5:19-21.

Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are: immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, envying, drunkenness... of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.⁹

One who practices these sins is not a Christian.

In 1 Corinthians 6:10 it says that drunkards will not inherit the kingdom of God.

Verse nine.

Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards... shall inherit the kingdom of God.¹⁰

In 1 Peter 4:3-4 Peter says, "For the time already past is sufficient for you to have carried out the desire of the Gentiles."¹¹

⁸ Romans 13:13.

⁹ Galatians 5:19-21.

¹⁰ 1 Corinthians 6:9-10.

¹¹ 1 Peter 4:3.

Now, that was a phrase that was used to talk about people that don't know God. The Gentile were outside of the covenant of God in the Jew's mind. So this talking about acting like unsaved people.

“... having pursued a course of sensuality, lusts, drunkenness, carousing, drinking parties and abominable idolatries.”¹²

This is the course of some unsaved people, what they pursue. You don't pursue those things. That is what they pursue.

Verse four. “In all this, they are surprised [the unsaved people] that you do not run with them into the same excesses of dissipation, and they malign you [for it].”¹³

They malign you because you don't hang with them because you don't party with them.

Now all of that kind of living is in the past for a believer. Can a believer yield to the sin of drunkenness? Yes. Their practice? Not a believer. That is the past tense of our life. We were delivered from those things.

And then in 1 Thessalonians 5:6-7 it says:

So then let us not sleep as others do, but let us be alert and sober. For those who sleep do their sleeping at night, and those who get drunk get drunk at night.¹⁴

Now the point here is that in Christ we have entered into the day and there is no place for drunkenness. Drunkenness is clearly forbidden in Scripture. It is not the practice of Christians.

Yet with that clear command I must say for integrity's sake what is forbidden in our text and throughout Scripture is not the use of mild diluted wine, but the abuse of it. It is not use, but abuse. Drunkenness is clearly sin. Consumption of wine was not.

Yet—and I want to make this clear, crystal clear—the dangers of abuse of alcohol are very real. And it causes numerous problems in our society and because can start with the first drink. And there are clear warnings in Scripture about consumption of alcohol. Let me give you a few.

Proverbs chapter 20 verse one. “Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging: and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise.”¹⁵

Proverbs 23:29-33.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ 1 Peter 4:4.

¹⁴ 1 Thessalonians 5:6-7.

¹⁵ Proverbs 20:1.

Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath contentions? who hath babbling? who hath wounds without cause? who hath redness of eyes? They that tarry long at the wine; they that go to seek mixed wine. Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his colour in the cup, when it moveth itself aright. At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder. Thine eyes shall behold strange women, and thine heart shall utter perverse things.¹⁶

What a true statement. Could it be any more vivid and clear than that, the consequences of participating in what Proverbs 23 is talking about.

Isaiah 5:11 says, “Woe to those who rise early in the morning that they may pursue strong drink.”¹⁷ Woe unto that individual.

Hosea 4:11 says, “Harlotry, wine and new wine take away [what?] the understanding.”¹⁸

In Romans 14 Paul talks about principles of Christian liberty and in Romans 14:13 he says in the context of Christian liberty, “Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge this rather, that no man put a stumblingblock or an occasion to fall in his brother’s way.”¹⁹

Don’t put a stumbling block in your brother’s way.

Now further on in this text and this context in verse 21 he says, “It is good not to eat meat,” meat that has been offered to idols, “or to drink wine, or to do anything by which your brother [does what?] stumbles [or falls].”²⁰

Now the warnings are numerous and an elder is not to be addicted to wine in 1 Timothy 3:3 and Titus 1:7. And I... again to be honest today I can’t make wine into grape juice all the time. I don’t think that the Scripture is saying that an elder can’t be addicted to grape juice. I don’t think drinking a lot of grape juice is really a problem do you? Drinking wine is, though.

An older woman who... those older women who were and are to teach and be examples to younger women in Titus 2:3 are told not to be enslaved by much wine.

Now, again, wine is not forbidden. I know some of you want me to forbid it today. I can’t do that. It is not in the Bible. But I will give warnings. Remember, it was wine that was primarily diluted—if you will study the kind of wines—primarily diluted by water that did not have the high powered percentage of alcohol that some of ours do today. And

¹⁶ Proverbs 23:29-33.

¹⁷ Isaiah 5:11.

¹⁸ Hosea 4:11.

¹⁹ Romans 14:13.

²⁰ Romans 14:21.

clearly in Bible times God's people drank a diluted natural wine. In fact, it was a part of bringing drink offerings to the temple in the drink offering in Leviticus 23:13.

Paul would tell Timothy in 1 Timothy 5:23, "Drink no longer water, but use a little wine for your stomach's sake and often infirmities."²¹ οἶνος (oy'-nos) is the Greek word right there. The medicinal value was communicated to Timothy.

Now with all that in mind about wine, the sin of drunkenness and the warnings about alcohol, I can not say it is a sin to drink a glass of wine. But for Beth and I we have determined to abstain from drinking any alcoholic beverage. And the reasons for that are, number one, we see a preoccupation with alcohol that we don't want to be associated with in our culture and the heartache and the deaths that are caused by it.

I know a statistic several years ago, 25,000 people a year die from drunk drivers, 25,000 a year in the US. And the greater the abuse in a society, the less I want to be associated with it and the temptation in my own life for abuse.

Quite frankly, I have enough problems that I have to do deal with and most of you do, too.

Number two, we have decided to limit our liberty for the sake of weaker brethren. We don't want to be a stumbling block to Christians or a bad testimony to the world. I don't want people to misunderstand what I am all about as far as all about Christ. I don't want to abuse my Christian liberty at the expense of hurting another brother or sister that is weaker in the faith.

Number three, we want to be examples to our children. I really want that. I have not always been an example that I should be to my son and daughter. But I grew up in a non Christian home. I grew up in a non Christian home that at times had alcoholic beverages in the refrigerator. And I am ashamed to say this and I even hesitate to say it, but as a non Christian in that environment I got drunk for the first time at the age of 14.

So I want to be an example to my children of not drinking in the hope that they will never drink. With all the abuses and heartaches that are out there that follow. I have been in those homes. We have seen it very close to us of what alcohol can do. And yes I have liberty, but do you know what? I am not going to take it. All things are lawful for me, but all things are not necessary Paul said. All things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any in 1 Corinthians 6:12.

Number four, drinking wine is not necessary for me to enjoy life as the alcohol industry advertises.

You know, in what they communicate it is all about having a good time.

²¹ 1 Timothy 5:23.

Do you know how I have a good time? Preaching. I am glad you come on Sunday because I have someone to preach to. I enjoy that. And if you are not here I will preach to my wife. And she hardly listens so sometimes I preach to the dog and she is deaf.

But what does the alcohol industry do today? Oh, man. If you are in you have got to be drinking, man. You have... to have fun, to be real in life you have got to be drinking and partying.

Well, I wish that they would show the end of that. I wish that they would show the end of that and the heartache and the grief and the sorrow that follows, the immorality that follows that kind of lifestyle.

The bottom line for me, for my wife, is it is not necessary for me to drink to have joy or to live. So we abstain from something that potentially could bring addiction and I don't want to be a stumbling block so I don't need it. I don't want anything to control me but the Holy Spirit. I don't want drugs to control me. I don't want food to control me. I don't want alcohol to control me. I don't want you to control me. I want the Holy Spirit to control me, bottom line, bottom line.

And with so many warnings about its abuse, I don't need another temptation. Is it sin? No. But is it unwise in our culture? I think it can be for a lot of people.

One last quick thing here in verse 18a. Now you know why I am only covering a verse. Drunkenness leads to debauchery or dissipation, depending on which translation you have, meaning it leads to a life of destruction and misery, an abandoned debauched life, a shameless, reckless life of excess. That is what it means, what drunkenness does.

And the Christian must ask himself if it is wise for him to have any part of something that has such a great potential for destruction and sin. So the clear negative command is: don't get drunk with wine.

Now our second point today is a clear contrast. Look back at verse 18 please where we will see our second point, the contrast, Ephesians 5:18.

“And do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but...”²² in contrast, this divine contrast, “be filled with the Spirit.”²³

Now the contrast here goes to the issue of control a key word. I will mention it several times.

Will you be controlled by wine which leads to debauchery or dissipation or will you be controlled by the Spirit which leads to joy and thankfulness and mutual submission and all the things that follow here in Ephesians five and the beginning of chapter six.

²² Ephesians 5:18.

²³ Ibid.

What do you want to be controlled by?

At this point we are going to look at the meaning of this filling. And I will close in application then to the means of this filling.

First of all, the meaning. Now the verb “be filled” is a present passive imperative in the Greek and can be literally rendered “be being kept filled, be being kept filled.” It is a command, it is an imperative, that includes the idea of conscious continuation. Be constantly, moment by moment controlled by the Spirit to be filled with the Spirit continually. The infilling is to be continual. And being filled with the Holy Spirit is not an option for believers, but a mandate. For no Christian can fulfill God’s will for his life apart from being filled with the Spirit. And if we do not obey this command we cannot obey any other outside of cranking it out in the flesh, legalism, simply because we cannot do any of God’s will apart from God’s Spirit.

This is a vital, practical command for believers to obey if they want to walk that worthy walk.

Now the word filled literally has to do with, again, control. It has to do with the Holy Spirit’s control over a believer. So the continuous aspect of being filled involves day by day moment by moment submission to the Spirit’s control. And the passive aspect of this command—remember, it is a present passive imperative—indicates that it is not something we do, but that we allow to be done in us.

The filling is entirely the work of the Spirit himself, but he works only through our willing submission. The Spirit is in control, not us. In fact, the idea of this Greek Word is that the Spirit carries us, moves us along, he permeates us and is under total control. We are under his total control if we are filled.

The Christian is filled with the Holy Spirit. He can be compared to a glove, a glove. And until it is filled by a hand, a glove is powerless and useless. It is designed to do work, but it can do no work by itself, right? A glove sitting there by itself can’t do anything without putting a hand into it. And a Christian can accomplish no more without being filled with the Holy Spirit than a glove can accomplish without being filled with a hand.

So to be filled by the Holy Spirit is to be under the Spirit’s direction, permeation and control. And the disciples were filled with the Holy Spirit in Acts two. And as the Spirit came in fullness on Pentecost they were filled again in Acts 4:31. At least Peter and John and it appears that the other were with them.

For it says in that text, “And when they had prayed... they were all filled with the Holy Spirit.”²⁴

²⁴ Acts 4:31.

The ground shook. Filled with the Holy Spirit and they spoke the Word of God with boldness which is a result of being filled with the Holy Spirit. Boldness. It is a holy boldness.

Now my point is it is not a one time thing, but it should be—as the verb communicates—continual. And when we yield to the flesh we are not under the Spirit’s control. But as we confess our sin and yield to the Spirit we are filled again.

Now I have given you the meaning. Let me quickly give you some thoughts about what it doesn’t mean before I close with the means. And I do this for there is so much confusion about the ministry of the Holy Spirit. Two great extremes today.

On one hand the pendulum swings way, people will not talk about the ministry of the Holy Spirit which is a tragedy because he has communicated so clearly in the New Testament his work among believers. We can’t live without him being under control of our lives as far as living for the Lord and glorifying him. But the second extreme is those that all they ever talk about is the Holy Spirit. And that is wrong.

Why? Jesus would say in John 16:14, “He,” talking about the Spirit, “shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you.”²⁵

See, the Holy Spirit doesn’t want to be in the spotlight. The Holy Spirit’s part in the godhead, working together in the godhead is to lift up Christ, put the spotlight on him. And who does Christ lift up? He came down to do the will of his Father. That is how it works in the godhead, in the trinity. In the God who is one, but they: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. And that is how it works in the godhead.

But there is so much confusion. Because of that I bring up these things.

Number one, being filled with the Spirit is not the same as possessing or being indwelt by the Holy Spirit because he indwells every believer at the moment of conversion, at the moment of salvation.

Jesus would communicate in John 7:38-39, “He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.”²⁶

What was the rivers of living water? Verse 39. “But this He spoke of the Spirit, whom those who believed in Him were to receive.”²⁷ But what?” “The Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.”²⁸

Now, when would he be glorified? Well, in Acts chapter one he would ascend to the Father 40 days after his resurrection. Ten days later on Pentecost—pente meaning 50—

²⁵ John 16:14.

²⁶ John 7:38.

²⁷ John 7:39.

²⁸ Ibid.

the day of Pentecost, 50 days later, the Spirit would come in fullness. And there is a transitional part in the book of Acts. Jews in Acts two and we have Acts 10 and the disciples of John. In Acts 19 we have the Gentiles.

But after that particular period of time what would happen? A person would believe and they would receive the Holy Spirit. In fact, Jesus would say in John 14:16, “And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever.”²⁹

He is not going to come upon you and leave you. He is going to abide forever. The word “comforter” has to do with the word paraclete, the one called alongside. Jesus was saying in that upper room discourse, “Guys, I am going to leave you, but do you know what? The Spirit is going to come. He is never going to leave you.”

In fact in Ephesians 4:30 we have already learned that we are not to grieve the Holy Spirit because we are sealed by the Spirit until the day of redemption, right?

Romans 8:8-9.

But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, [which is synonymous with the spirit of God in verse eight] he is none of his.³⁰

If you don't have the Holy Spirit you are not a Christian. You are not a Christian is the issue.

1 Corinthians 6:19-20. And there are those today that communicate that this work is for the spiritually elite. Well, I want to tell you that when Paul writes to the Corinthian Church there was a big problem. And a lot of them were very fleshly in the way that they lived.

Paul would say in 1 Corinthians 3:3, “For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?”³¹ That is the fruit of fleshliness, fleshliness.

So Paul writes to them in 1 Corinthians 6:19-20. He says:

What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.³²

²⁹ John 14:16.

³⁰ Romans 8:8-9.

³¹ 1 Corinthians 3:3.

³² 1 Corinthians 6:19-20.

Don't you realize you have the Holy Spirit dwelling in you? Don't be defiled in your body in that way, contextually with immorality.

Ephesians 1:13-14, we have already studied this text. "In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise."³³

So when we become Christians we receive the Holy Spirit and all the Holy Spirit we will ever receive, but we are not filled until he gets all of us. We get all of him at salvation. We are not filled until he gets all of us and we are yielded to him.

Number two, the filling of the Spirit is not the same as the baptism of the Spirit. The Baptism of the Spirit takes place at salvation as we are immersed, placed into the body of Christ.

Notice what Paul says to these Corinthian believers again. "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit."³⁴

What is the reality there? We were placed into someone and someone was placed into us. We were placed into the body of Christ. And the Holy Spirit was placed into us. Were we all baptized, writing to believers. We were all baptized into one Spirit.

So there is one baptism, Spirit baptism at salvation, but many fillings that follow.

Number three, the filling of the Holy Spirit does not result here in this text in speaking with tongues or sign gifts or of some second work of grace. The result of being filled are given here and they are the fruit of the Spirit, joy, thanksgiving, mutual submission. And this is the command. This is a vital text in the New Testament that gives us the command to be filled with the Holy Spirit. You would think as some communicate today that the evidence of being filled with the Spirit is tongues that certainly would be in this text where we have the command. But nothing like that follows at all in this text, a key section on the filling of the Spirit.

Finally, the filling of the Spirit is not the same as being sealed with the Spirit for that is an accomplished fact, again, that takes place at salvation as we have heard from Ephesians 1:13 and 14. The seal of security that is there, that he was the down payment, the Spirit, I am speaking of him, that we would be redeemed one day. We are sealed with the Holy Spirit, the down payment, Ephesians 1:14.

The key now is that we don't grieve or quench him, the Holy Spirit by our sin, what we learn in Ephesians 4:30. Don't grieve the Holy Spirit. You are sealed until the day of redemption.

³³ Ephesians 1:13.

³⁴ 1 Corinthians 12:13.

1 Thessalonians 5:19, “Quench not the Spirit.”³⁵

The word “quench” means to extinguish, to suppress, to stifle his holy influence on our lives. We do that when we are willful and rebellious. We stifle him. We don’t put him out of our lives. We put him out of control, you see? We pour the water of our rebellion on the fire of his holiness and indwelling us.

So we are already sealed by the Spirit and that is why nowhere are believers commanded or exhorted to be indwelt, baptized or sealed by the Holy Spirit. The only command, the only command is to be filled with the Holy Spirit. Why isn’t there a command to be baptized in the Spirit? Because every believer has been baptized. Why is there no command to receive the Holy Spirit? Because every believer has the Holy Spirit. Why is there no command to be sealed with the Holy Spirit? Because there is no command to be sealed because every believer is sealed with the Holy Spirit.

Now that is very important in the day and age that we live in because we hear a lot of teaching otherwise.

With that in mind we come to the application section, the wrap up of our message today which will be the means to being filled with the Spirit. And please understand this. God commands nothing for which he does not provide the means to obey. And God commands something of us we do not need to pray for it because it is obviously his will and intent for us to do it.

Let me illustrate. You are a parent today and you go home and you have small children at home and you say to one of your sons or your son, “Son, I would like for you to take out the trash. Take out the garbage, would you, please?”

The son responds, “Well, dad, I will pray about it. Dad, if I feel like it later I will do it.”

That is not a proper response. The proper response by an imperative or a command that is hopefully said graciously please by your father is to obey the command. You yield to the command. You don’t have to pray about it. You yield to it. You submit to it, right? Doesn’t that make sense?

So we must yield to the Spirit to be filled with the Spirit. And to be filled with the Spirit involves confession of sin, surrender of our wills and lives and then walking in the Spirit. For when we confess and forsake sin which grieves and quenches him and yield to him dying to selfishness where we have died to self. I love that ministry in the young people. The title of that, die to self. The Lord then fills us with his Spirit.

Let me put it another way. As we yield our lives to the Word of God and fill our lives with the Word, the Holy Spirit takes control. Rather than being filled with ourselves and our will and what we want, our lives are filled with the Word which is synonymous with being filled with the Spirit.

³⁵ 1 Thessalonians 5:19.

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.”³⁶

Now we have an imperative there and the imperative in Colossians three is the exact same imperative as we have here in Ephesians five.

You say, “How, Ray, can you come to that conclusion?”

Because the same results follow. As you follow the result which we will be studying over the next few weeks in Ephesians five and going into chapter six, the results are what? Well, singing melody in our heart to the Lord, giving thanks, Ephesians 5:20, submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God. Spirit filled wives submit to their husbands. Spirit filled husbands love their wives. All those things follow the filling of the Holy Spirit.

The command in Colossians 3:16, the command? Fill your life with the Word. The same things follow: making melody in your heart to the Lord, giving thanks unto the Lord. Spirit filled wives submit to their husbands. Spirit filled husbands love their wives. Spirit filled children obey their parents. Same results. Why? It is the same thing. To be filled with the Spirit is to be filled with the Word of Christ and to be filled with the Word of God. The truth here is to be filled with God’s Spirit is to be filled with his Word.

As we are filled with God’s Word it controls our thinking and actions and we thereby come more and more under the Spirit’s control because who authored the Word? The Spirit, the Holy Spirit right?

As Charles Spurgeon said, “The Christian’s blood should be biblene, bleeding Scripture whenever he may be pricked or cut.”

So we must fill our lives with the Word of God. That is the means.

Beloved, the bottom line of our section today is we have two clear, vital commands. The negative: don’t get drunk. Don’t be under the influence or the control of alcohol.

Number two, a positive command. Be filled with the Spirit. Be under the control, the influence of the Spirit. May we obey those commands today.

Let’s pray.

We thank you, Father, that you have given us clear truth in your Word. You have given us your Spirit who indwells us, we that know Christ. We thank you that you fill us with your Spirit as we yield to you and fill our lives with your Word. Father, truly that is our desire to you, to walk in the Spirit so that we don’t fulfill the desires of the flesh. Lord,

³⁶ Colossians 3:16.

may we submit to this key truth, may we pour this fuel into our lives, the fuel of obedience and the fuel and the power of your Spirit working within us. For it is not by our might or by our power, but by your Spirit that anything is accomplished. Oh, Lord, we have operated in the energy of the flesh and it is so frustrating. We want to operate in the realm of the Spirit, supernaturally. And, Father, I would pray for those today that do not have the Spirit indwelling in them, unbelievers, those without Christ, those who have not been saved. I pray that you would open their eyes and their hearts today to the work of your Word and your Spirit that, Lord, those who are here without Christ will see their sin and their need of a Savior and turn to him today to receive him as Lord and Savior. Lord, do a work in our lives today. May we not be the...