

FBC POWELL, 10-6-19 AM NOTES  
"Hope, the Word of God, and the Holy Spirit"  
Ephesians 5:18-21  
# 3 in Series, "Hope in a Hopeless World"

**Romans 15:4 (NASB)** "For whatever was written in earlier times was written for our instruction, so that through perseverance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope."

Biblical hope is the joyful confidence and expectation that what God has promised in His Word, He will accomplish in His perfect timing.

**1 Peter 3:15 (NASB)** "But sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always *being* ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the **hope** that is in you..."

I. The Filling of the Hope-Giving Holy Spirit (v. 18)

The hope-filled Christian life requires supernatural power for it to operate as God intended.

A. The Contrast (v. 18a)

Our elders and deacons are committed to abstinence from all alcoholic beverages. We base that not on a clear command from Scripture, but on wisdom. We believe that abstinence is the wise choice for every Christian.

B. The Command (v. 18b)

In English, we think of the word "filled" in relation to a glass being filled with water or a tank being filled with gas. That isn't the idea of this Greek word translated "filled." It doesn't mean that we get more and more of the Holy Spirit until we are filled with Him. The Holy Spirit is not an influence that we can choose to have however much of Him we want to have. The Holy Spirit is not portioned out. The filling is not concerned with getting more or less of the Holy Spirit; it is about how much He has of us.

**Luke 5:26a (NASB)** "They were all struck with astonishment and *began* glorifying God; and they were filled with fear..."

**Luke 6:11a (NASB)** "But they themselves were filled with rage..."

"If we do not obey this command, we cannot obey any other—simply because we cannot do any of God's will apart from God's Spirit."  
—John MacArthur

II. The Function of the Filling of the Hope-Giving Holy Spirit (vv. 19-21)

A. The Function of Singing (v. 19)

**Zephaniah 3:17 (ESV)** "The Lord your God is in your midst, a mighty one who will save; he will rejoice over you with gladness; he will quiet you by his love; **he will exult over you with loud singing.**"

1. The Source of the Singing (v. 19)

**Amos 5:21-24 (NASB)** <sup>21</sup>"I hate, I reject your festivals, nor do I delight in your solemn assemblies. <sup>22</sup>Even though you offer up to Me burnt offerings and your grain offerings, I will not accept *them*; and I will not *even* look at the peace offerings of your fatlings. <sup>23</sup>Take away from Me the noise of your songs; I will not even listen to the sound of your harps. <sup>24</sup>But let justice roll down like waters And righteousness like an ever-flowing stream."

2. The Subject of the Singing (v. 19)

B. The Function of Thankfulness (v. 20)

**1 Thessalonians 5:18 (NASB)** “In everything give thanks; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.”

**Romans 8:28-29 (NASB)** <sup>28</sup> “And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to *His* purpose. <sup>29</sup> For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren.”

C. The Function of Submission (v. 21)

**Philippians 3:2-5 (NASB)** <sup>2</sup> “Beware of the dogs, beware of the evil workers, beware of the false circumcision; <sup>3</sup> for we are the *true* circumcision, who worship in the Spirit of God and glory in Christ Jesus and put no confidence in the flesh, <sup>4</sup> although I myself might have confidence even in the flesh. If anyone else has a mind to put confidence in the flesh, I far more: <sup>5</sup> circumcised the eighth day, of the nation of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; as to the Law, a Pharisee.”

## **Sermon 3: Hope, the Word of God, and the Holy Spirit**

### **Ephesians 5:18-21**

One of the reasons that the Lord gave us the inspired Scriptures is found in Romans 15:4: “For whatever was written in earlier times was written for our instruction, so that through perseverance and the encouragement of the Scriptures *we might have hope.*” Let me remind you of the meaning of *biblical hope*. Biblical hope is not a wish; biblical hope is not positive thinking. We previously found biblical hope defined this way: “Biblical hope is the joyful confidence and expectation that what God has promised in His Word, He will accomplish in His perfect timing.”

It is obvious that we live in a decaying culture where genuine hope is vanishing. One of the main reasons hope is vanishing is because most churches are not focusing on the systematic teaching of the Scriptures. The place where genuine hope is found is in the Scriptures (Romans 15:4). Because hope is grounded in the promises of God, found in the Word of God, our lives should be so full of hope that the world will come to us asking a reason for the hope that is in us. 1 Peter 3:15: “but sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always *being* ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the *hope* that is in you...” The world is searching for hope and can't find it because they are looking in all the wrong places. The Scriptures are not one of many places where true hope is found; the Scriptures are the *ONLY* place genuine hope is found!

Now we will to see that the Holy Spirit, the third person of the Trinity, desires to fill us with the Word of God, to make clear to us the will of God, and then empower us to do His will.

### **I. The Filling of the Hope Giving Holy Spirit (v. 18)**

Some time ago, Adrian Rogers gave an illustration that perfectly described my Christian life before I learned and appropriated the truth that we are going to look at in this message. I want to share that illustration with you. Imagine a man who had lived as a subsistence farmer in an isolated place back in the woods. He had never owned or driven a car. One of his sons grew up and got a good job in the city and to show his love and appreciation for his father, he bought him

a car and had the dealership to deliver it to his father's home. The father was in the field and when he came home, there was this shiny new car in the yard. He looked at its paint job and the beautiful leather upholstery, but he didn't know that under the hood is an engine. The old farmer was so proud of this new car, but the problem with this beautiful car is that he had to push it everywhere he went. Sometimes when it was going downhill, he could jump in and coast, but his excitement was dimmed by the realization that at the bottom of the hill, he was going to have to push it up the next hill. While he was proud of his beautiful car and grateful for the sacrifice that enabled him to have it, sometimes ashamedly he almost wishes that he didn't have it. Rather than being a blessing to him, it was a burden. Rather than carrying him, he had to push it in his own strength everywhere he went. One day a friend who had lived in the city came by to look at the car. He said to the old farmer, "I want to show you something. This is called an ignition key. Put it right there and turn it." When he turned the ignition key, suddenly he heard the *vroom, vroom* of a powerful engine! The farmer cried out, "What is that?" The friend explained that it is an engine. He showed him how to move the gear shift to "D" and then press the gas pedal. The car surged forward with power. The farmer said, "This is wonderful; this is glorious! Why didn't someone tell me about this before?"

Someone who is to be pitied more than this farmer is the Christian who has never comprehended the filling of the Holy Spirit and has lost hope in ever living the victorious life talked about in the Scriptures. I was in that situation the first seventeen or eighteen years of my Christian life. I was genuinely saved and deeply grateful for my salvation and the fact that my sins were forgiven. I never seriously doubted that. However, living the Christian life was something that I had to push in my own power, and I was losing hope that it would ever get better. I was never taught about the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit who makes obedience joyously possible. The fact is that apart from the enabling, the filling of the Holy Spirit, we are left to pushing the Christian life in our own power and that is an impossible task that always ends in failure and frustration. When I was taught about the Holy Spirit and His filling, I thought, "That's it!" The empowering Holy Spirit was what I had been seeking but didn't understand this glorious truth.

The hope filled Christian life requires supernatural power for it to operate as God intended. Think with me about this for a few minutes. It is not natural to love your enemies and pray for those who spitefully use you. It is not natural to count it all joy when you encounter various trials. It is not possible in human strength for a person who is naturally quiet, reserved, and shy to share the Gospel as a way of life. It is not natural to give even when it seems you do not have enough for your own needs. It is not natural to have peace in the midst of life's storms. I could go on and on with examples, but to summarize, the Christian life is a supernatural life that requires supernatural power. The Holy Spirit who indwells every believer gives that power to every Christian who in faith asks Him to fill their life. The filling of the Holy Spirit is what makes the hope filled Christian life possible!

Let's look at the filling of the Spirit. The passage we will focus on first is Ephesians 5:18.

### **A. The Contrast (v. 18a)**

As it is today, alcohol was a problem in New Testament times. There seems to be a longing in the human heart to escape the pains and disappointments of life and to find happiness and the ability to live above the problems that we face. This longing opens the door for Satan's counterfeit for being filled with Spirit – being drunk with wine. Alcohol offers a temporary escape from the trials, pain, disappointments, and pressures of life. As with all the Devil's substitutes, the things that we turn to for help are worse than the problem itself. Being filled

with the Spirit is not a means of avoiding problems and heartaches and to find happiness. The filling of the Spirit enables us to use the trials to make us more like Christ and to show a pain filled world that we can have joy in the midst of the worst that the world, the flesh, and the Devil can throw at us.

In Ephesus there was another way alcohol (wine) was used. One of the prominent recipients of false worship and idolatry in Ephesus was the worship of the god of wine – Dionysius. As a part of that worship they would get drunk with wine and work themselves up into a state of alcohol induced ecstasy. Every one of the original readers of this letter would have picked up on this contrast Paul was giving. He is saying “Don’t fall for the Devil’s substitute for being filled with the Spirit. We worship the one true God and not Dionysius. We don’t need an alcohol induced state of emotional ecstasy. We don’t need to be drunk with wine to escape trials and hard times. We don’t need to become drunk to cope. Through the Holy Spirit’s filling we face problems head on and don’t hide from them or try to numb our mind to them. We allow God to conform us to the image of Christ through the trials. We have something better than temporal happiness; we have “Spirit produced joy.” As we examine this contrast, let’s look at some word meanings. The word “drunk” was translated in Wycliffe’s English translation (over 200 years before the KJV) as “filled”. That is a legitimate translation. That makes the contrast even more evident. “Do not be filled with wine but be filled with the Holy Spirit.” What does the word “dissipation” mean? It literally means reckless destructive living. Being drunk with wine (by implication, every alcoholic beverage) is wasting away one’s life and sometimes destroying their life.

This is the reason our elders and deacons are committed to abstinence from all alcoholic beverages. We base that not on a clear command from Scripture but on wisdom. I believe that abstinence is the wise choice for every Christian.

## **B. The Command (v. 18b)**

Let’s examine the grammar of verse 18b. First, it is an imperative. That means that it is a command. God is not suggesting that if you want to maybe move your Christian life up to the next level, to be extraordinary, you may want to consider being filled with the Spirit. This is a command for every Christian. In one sense, there are two kinds of Christians – those filled with the Holy Spirit and those living in disobedience to God. This is just as much a command as “do not get drunk with wine.” In fact, as bad as drunkenness is, more harm has come to the church by people who are not filled with the Spirit than by those who are drunk.

Ephesians 5:18b is in the present tense. That means that it is an ongoing action. Unlike our salvation that is secure and unchanging, the filling of the Spirit is not a onetime occurrence that takes us all the way through life. In reality, we can be filled today and not be filled tomorrow. Verse 18b literally says, “but be being filled with the Holy Spirit.”

Ephesians 5:18b is plural. A plural “you” is understood from the context. In other words, this command is for every Christian, not just a select group of super saints.

Let’s dig even deeper into this command to be filled with the Holy Spirit. In English, we think of the word “filled” in relation to a glass being filled with water or a tank being filled with gas. That really isn’t the idea of this Greek word translated “filled”. It doesn’t mean that we get more and more of the Holy Spirit until we are filled with Him. The Holy Spirit is not an influence that we can choose to have however much of Him we want to have. The Holy Spirit is not portioned out. The filling is not concerned with getting more or less of the Holy Spirit; it is about how much the Holy Spirit has of us.

To be “filled” primarily means to be under the total control of someone or some thing. Let me give you an example where this same word is used elsewhere in the New Testament. Luke 5:26a: “They were all struck with astonishment and *began* glorifying God; and they were filled with fear...” To be filled with fear means that we are controlled by fear. It controls the way we think, the way we talk, how we relate to others, and what we do throughout the day. Luke 6:11a: “But they themselves were filled with rage...” When one is filled with rage, they are dominated and controlled by rage. That rage controls how they talk, how they walk, how they relate to others and circumstances in their life. In addition to being dominated and controlled by the Holy Spirit, being filled also carries the idea of being empowered by the Spirit. In secular writings the same word for “filled” in Ephesians 5:18 was used of the wind filling the sails of a ship to empower it to its destination. Here is the point: We do not have the ability to obey God unless we are dominated by, controlled by, and carried along by the Holy Spirit. John MacArthur said, “If we do not obey this command, we cannot obey any other – simply because we cannot do any of God’s will apart from God’s Spirit” [John MacArthur, *The MacArthur New Testament Commentary – Ephesians*, page 248]

## **II. The Function of the Filling of the Hope Giving Holy Spirit (vv. 19-21)**

What is the evidence that we are filled with the hope giving Holy Spirit? In other words, how do we know we are filled with the Holy Spirit? There are three functions that the Holy Spirit enables in our lives when He fills a life.

### **A. The Function of Singing (v. 19)**

When the Holy Spirit fills our lives, He produces a song in our heart. One of the things that distinguishes Christianity from the world’s religions is our singing. Other religions chant and moan, but they do not joyfully sing in a way that is described in this passage. It shouldn’t surprise us that those who are filled with God’s Spirit sing. Here is why – God Himself sings! Zephaniah 3:17 (ESV): “The Lord your God is in your midst, a mighty one who will save; he will rejoice over you with gladness; he will quiet you by his love; *he will exult over you with loud singing.*” A Christian who is filled with the Spirit can’t help but sing! From verse 19, let’s see more details about the singing that evidences the fullness of the Spirit in individuals and in a church.

#### **1. The Source of the Singing (v. 19)**

The source of the singing is “with your heart”. If the Holy Spirit fills us, our heart song will be pleasing to God because it is a genuine expression of worship. On the other hand, a song that is technically perfect, but not delivered from a “Spirit filled heart” may be given accolades by man, but God calls it “noise”. Let me show you an example of that in the Old Testament. Amos was a prophet from Judah that was called of God to confront the people of Israel’s Northern Kingdom. They were going through the motions in their worship, and God let them know how He felt about that. Amos 5:21-24:

I hate, I reject your festivals, nor do I delight in your solemn assemblies. Even though you offer up to Me burnt offerings and your grain offerings, I will not accept *them*; And I will not *even* look at the peace offerings of your fatlings. Take away from Me the noise of your songs; I will not even listen to the sound of your harps. But let justice roll down like waters and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.

We tend to magnify human talent and charisma; God values a heart that is overflowing with the joy that the Holy Spirit produces when He fills our lives. A person who does not have a song in their heart cannot sing with their heart to the Lord. You can't work it up. Someone said, "How sad to see a church of empty people trying to overflow" [Adrian Rogers]

## **2. The Subject of the Singing (v. 19)**

To whom is our singing addressed? It is "to the Lord." Holy Spirit produced singing is with the heart, to the Lord. We sing for an audience of One!

### **B. The Function of Thankfulness (v. 20)**

When we respond to the Lord with thankfulness, we are confessing that He is sovereign. We can give Him thanks in any circumstance – I mean any circumstance! 1 Thessalonians 5:18: "in everything give thanks; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus." Where is the logic in that? Romans 8:28-29: "And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to *His* purpose. For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined *to become* conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren"

### **C. The Function of Submission (v. 21)**

The best explanation I can give you of this verse is Philippians 2:3-5: "Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves; do not *merely* look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others. Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus." When we are in submission to the Lord, we will have the Lord's "others focus" in every category of life.

## **Conclusion**

In a world where there is little hope, we are sent with a message that magnifies hope! The Power for that hope comes from being filled with the Holy Spirit.

**NASB** (New American Standard Bible)

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