

## CONTINUATION OF “WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE FILLED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT?”

**Charles Swindoll:** I don't know of a more important verse in the New Testament for the Christian than Ephesians 5:18—honest, no exaggeration. This verse tells the believer how to live an authentic, empowered life.

- ❖ **Ephesians 5:18**, And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but **be filled with the Spirit...**

**Be filled** (pleroo) means literally “to be filled to the brim”. The more common figurative meaning of filled in the NT is **to be controlled by that which "fills" one's heart and mind**. [adapted from PreceptAustin]

- ❖ **Luke 6:11**, “But they were **filled with fury** and discussed with one another what they might do to Jesus.”
- ❖ **Acts 5:17-18**, But the high priest rose up, and all who were with him (that is, the party of the Sadducees), and **filled with jealousy** they arrested the apostles and put them in the public prison.

Whenever the word “**filled**” is used it is to point out that an individual is fully controlled by something, leading him to certain action.

**What does it mean to be filled with the Holy Spirit?** To live totally under the control Holy Spirit. Our thoughts, words, and actions are dominated and directed by the Holy Spirit.

Take time to be holy, be calm in thy soul,  
**Each thought and each motive beneath His control.**  
**Thus led by His Spirit to fountains of love,**  
Thou soon shalt be fitted for service above.

I mentioned earlier, although the passive voice speaks that you cannot fill yourself with the Holy Spirit, it is the Holy Spirit who fills you with Himself, **the commands shows that you must actively seek to be filled with the Holy Spirit.**

YOU CANNOT BE FILLED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT  
IF YOU DO NOT **ACTIVELY SEEK** TO BE FILLED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT.  
DO YOU NOW SEE WHY WE LACK SPIRIT-FILLED BELIEVERS IN THE  
CHURCH?

**Martyn Lloyd Jones:** Therefore it is put to us in the form of a command or an exhortation, 'Go on being filled and controlled by the Spirit.' In other words, **we must get rid of all notions of passivity here; you do not just wait for this to happen. It is in your power and mine to determine whether we are filled with the Spirit or not.** Is that clear?

## **HOW DOES BEING FILLED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT LOOK LIKE IN PRACTICAL WAYS?**

**Note:** Significance of "Participles" to understand "being filled with the Holy Spirit" according to Ephesians 5:18-21.

**Comment:** There is no inspiration [encouragement from God's Word] without perspiration [digging into the meaning of the text].

In his book *Discourse Grammar of the Greek New Testament*, Steven Runge writes about the use of participles, including the kind we have in Ephesians 5:18ff. Participles that follow the main verb ... **elaborate the action of the main verb, often providing more specific explanation of what is meant by the main action. In most cases, they practically spell out what the main actions looks like.**

- ❖ **Matthew 4:23**, "And **he [Jesus] went [main verb]** throughout all Galilee, **teaching [participle, what His going around looked like]** in their synagogues and **proclaiming [participle, what His going around looked like]** the gospel of the kingdom and **healing [participle, what His going around looked like]** every disease and every affliction among the people."
- ❖ **Matthew 28:19-20**, "Go therefore and **make disciples [main verb, active imperative command]** of all nations, **baptizing them [participle, how the command (main verb) is put into action]** in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, **teaching them [verb**

**participle, how the command (main verb) is put into action]** to observe all that I have commanded you.

- ❖ **Ephesians 5:18-21**, “And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but **be filled** with the Spirit [**main verb, active imperative command**], **addressing one another** [**participle, how the command (main verb) is put into action**] in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, **singing and making** melody to the Lord with your heart [**participle, how the command (main verb) is put into action**], **giving thanks** always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ [**participle, how the command (main verb) is put into action**], **submitting to one another** out of reverence for Christ.” [**participle, how the command (main verb) is put into action**]

**Timothy G. Gombis (professor of New Testament):** The participles in 5:19–21 are not best read as participles of result, **we propose here that they be understood as PARTICIPLES OF MEANS; that is, they indicate the means by which the church carries out the command in 5:18...** On this scenario, the way in which the church carries out its identity as the dwelling place of God in Christ by the Spirit is ‘**by speaking** (λαλοῦντες) to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, **by singing** (ᾄδοντες) and **by making melody** (ψάλλοντες) in your hearts to the Lord, **by giving thanks** (εὐχαριστοῦντες) always for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ and to God the Father, **by submitting** (ὑποτασσόμενοι) to one another in the fear of Christ’. This interpretation satisfies the question of how the filling of the Spirit in Ephesians 5:18 takes place... . **The five participles do not lead to the filling by the Spirit, rather they indicate the means by which the command is carried out.**

### **3. SPIRIT-FILLED BELIEVERS ARE CLOSELY KNIT TO ONE ANOTHER AS GOD’S COMMUNITY**

**The whole sentence is in plural form: TO** the entire church [not to an individual Christian] and **IN** the context of the church [not an isolated experience]

- ❖ **Ephesians 5:18-21**
- ❖ , And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but **be filled with the Spirit, ADDRESSING ONE ANOTHER** [**context: church**] in psalms and

hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with your heart, giving thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, **SUBMITTING TO ONE ANOTHER** [context: church] out of reverence for Christ.

**Sam Storms (pastor and author):** The exhortation [Eph. 5:18-21] has primarily to do with **community life**, i.e., **the need for God's people to be so collectively full of God's presence that their worship is transformed, their relationships are transformed, and their lives as a totality are transformed.**

**Timothy G. Gombis (professor of New Testament):** The command in 5:18 is often interpreted with reference to the private piety of individual Christians...In 5:1–17, where Paul underscores the character of the Christian communities as 'light' vis-à-vis 'darkness', **the commands are given as plural imperatives. They are to be careful to behave in a way that is 'fitting among saints'** (v. 3). The context immediately after the command in 5:18 also has a **corporate thrust** to it, being dominated by the manner in which Christians are to **relate to 'one another'** (vv. 19– 21). The command in 5:18, then, has in view **the corporate community of the church**, rather than the private conduct of individual Christians.

### **Comments:**

- ⇒ Spirit-filled believers are closely knit to one another. There is no Spirit-filled life without being closely knit to one another as God's church.
- ⇒ Spirit-filled life is not just to be experienced in isolation. Those who think so are in utter deception.
- ⇒ The very reason God commanded us to live a Spirit-filled life is so that we would live as a community God intended us to be. Spirit-filled believers manifest commitment, love, and service to the local church.
- ⇒ Spirit-filled believers are self-denying believers. They deny being self-centered and pursue living a community-centered life. Just as fire and water cannot coexist, so also Spirit-filled life and self-centered life cannot exist together.

❖ **Acts 4:31-32**, And when they had prayed, the place in which they were gathered together was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and continued to speak the word of God with boldness. **Now the full number of those who believed were of one heart and soul**, and no one said that any of the things that belonged to him was his own, but they had everything in common.

**Observe:** Spirit-filled believers don't live an individualistic and isolated life. They are individuals who live together with one heart and soul despite their weaknesses and differences.

**TO BE CONTINUED....**

**Questions to discuss in breakout rooms:**

1. What does it mean to be filled with the Spirit?
2. How are you manifesting a Spirit-filled life by being closely knit to God's community?