

Displaying Christ/being filled by the Spirit Part 2

Introduction

The Bible instructs believers to walk by the spirit Gal 5:16

¹⁶ But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. Galatians 5:16 (ESV)

Every believer has the indwelling Spirit, and so walking by the Spirit would imply submitting to the Spirit's control and responding to His commands in Scripture in an ongoing basis.

Gal 5:22-23 provides a description of what it looks like for someone who is walking according to the Spirit.

²² But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³ gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. ²⁴ And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. ²⁵ If we live by the Spirit, let us also keep in step with the Spirit. Galatians 5:22–25 (ESV)

In contrast to the person who is fleshly we see Christ-like character characterising someone that is walking by the spirit.

It involves that person denying the desires of the flesh and walking in submission to the Holy Spirit.

But is this what Paul meant when he wrote to the church in Ephesians and instructed them to be filled by the Spirit in Eph 5:18

Is **walking by** the spirit and **being filled** by the spirit essentially the same thing?

Is **being filled** by the spirit simply something **you pray** and then God does it in response to your prayers.

If you are filled by the spirit will you then be **speaking in tongues**?

Is **being filled by the spirit something that is addressed** to a believer singular or does Paul intend it **to refer to the church corporately or both?**

God commands you to walk by the Spirit be filled by the spirit.

Disobedience to these commands means your disobeying God.

You and I need to be careful to understand as best we can, Gods commands given to us.

I share all this as introduction to our 2nd part of the lockdown sermon on displaying Christ.

Jesus calls you and I to watch our lives, to watch our conduct carefully.

Background

Paul wrote the letter of Ephesians from prison (his lock down)

He has time to reflect on how church is to operate, undistracted from all the chaos of day to day ministry.

And in the letter to the Ephesians he describes the inner workings of how the church should work, he even describes something of Gods overarching grand scheme of things.

His plan, to unite and bring in subjection all things in Christ so that the Church would blaze forth the fullness of God's character not only to the world but even to the angelic beings in heaven(Eph1:9-10, 3:10)

In light God plan to unite all things in Christ through the Gospel, Paul exhorts believers live lives that reflect submission to Jesus.

- Paul urged believers to walk in a manner worthy of their calling in 4:1
- Believers should **not walk like** unbelievers (Gentiles) 4:17
- They should be imitators of God, walking in love and thanksgiving 5:1
- They should walk as children of light 5:8
- They should watch their walk Spirit 5:15

Paul provided 3 contrasts vs 16-18 that should characterize the walk of believers.

1. Not as unwise but as wise, = competent living= not like the unbeliever but lives that reflect Christ character
2. not being foolish but understanding the will of God, (comprehending His will) = They understand Gods grand scheme of things to unite all things in Christ.
3. not being drunk but being filled buy the HS (Christ filled church)

Being filled by the Spirit is what critical to walk in a wise manner, in a Christ like manner.

This morning were looking at the third “not being drunk but being filled by the spirit”

Passage read Eph 5:15-21

Proposition

Last week we looked at

4 Ways to watch your walk so that you display Jesus in the church.

1. Contemplate your walk
2. Competent living
3. Comprehend His will
4. Christ’s filled church

So now were looking at the 4th Point. Christ’s filled church

I will give you 4 questions this morning to help you understand what it means to be a **Christ filled Church.**

Or another way to say it would be

4 questions to help you understand what it means to be filled by the Holy Spirit. I will explain vs 18 and then ask and answer these 4 questions which will also help explain vs 19-21

1. Why should the church be filled?
2. What is the content that the church is to be filled with?
3. Who is doing the filling work?
4. What does it look like?

The Christ filled church

¹⁸ *And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit,* ¹⁹ *addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with your heart,* ²⁰ *giving thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the*

Explanation

¹⁸ ***And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery,***

This is the third contrast Paul makes which explain what it means to watch carefully how you walk.

He commands the believers not to get drunk with wine.

The book of proverbs describes the effects of drunkenness.

- People are **led astray** Pr 20:21
- People get hurt, see strange things and behave in strange manners. Pr 23:31-33

The church of Corinth had the problem of some people, coming to the Lords table while being drunk. 1 Cor 11:21. But was this the case in Ephesus? (There is no indication that it was)

- Drunkenness is associated with unbeliever's behaviour 1 Cor 5:11

Some background information is helpful here.

The pagan cult celebrations to **the idol Dionysius**, the god of wine involved orgies that included heavy intoxication. The idea was that Dionysius would enter and fill the worshipper's body so that they would comply with the idols will. This often led to sexual **immoral debauchery** (depravity, immodesty, lustful behaviour, reckless abandonment of principle, indulgence, licentiousness)

We do not know if this was the situation that Paul was referring to.

However it's best to understand that Paul is making a general principled statement where in the close context he was contrasting the lives of believers with unbelievers, the children of light with those in darkness (vs 8-11)

The unbeliever's lifestyle(walk) is not to **be imitated**.

Paul was making a strong antithesis between the **lifestyle of the unbeliever and that of the believer**.

We similar contrast being made by Paul in other texts.

⁶ So then let us not sleep, as others do, but let us keep awake and be sober. ⁷ For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk, are drunk at night. ⁸ But since we belong to the day, let us be sober, having put on the breastplate of faith and love, and for a helmet the hope of salvation. 1 Thessalonians 5:6–8 (ESV)

¹² The night is far gone; the day is at hand. So then let us cast off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light. ¹³ Let us walk properly as in the daytime, not in orgies and drunkenness, not in sexual immorality and sensuality, not in quarreling and jealousy. Romans 13:12–13 (ESV)

This kind of behaviour causes divisions between people.

This kind of behaviour means that you are mastered by something else than Christ.

This kind of behaviour is destructive and is not the acceptable lifestyle of the believer.

Drunkenness depicts the way of darkness.

Drunkenness that leads to sexual excess and reckless deeds.

This would be walking unwisely and foolishly

The command to not be drunk serves as a foil to illuminate the next command.

but be filled with the Spirit,

The Grammar here is very enlightening.

1stly the term “But” implies a strong contrast. Your life **should definitely** not look like those **who are getting drunk**.

2ndly we note that Paul was not addressing an individual singular, but the plural, all you saints at Ephesus (the church) every one of you.

3rdly it’s a command that should be obeyed in an ongoing basis.

4thly those being filled are the receivers of the filling, they do not fill themselves. They are filled.

You are commanded to do something which you cannot do, so your respond simply by submission and yielding yourself to God.

5thly the grammar indicates that the Holy spirit is not the content that the believer is to be filled with. Rather He is the instrument or means by which the filling is accomplished.

Illustration

If I was to fill a glass by means of a jug with water.

1. The jug would represent the HS
2. The hand holding the jug would be the filler
3. The water would represent the content.
4. The glass would represent the believer
5. The filler would be filling the glass in an ongoing manner and the glass would be submitting to being filled.

We notice that the one doing **the filling** is not mentioned here **nor is the content** mentioned.

So, we are left with a few questions

1. Why should the church (believers’ plural) be filled?
2. What is the content that the church is being filled with?
3. Who is doing the filling?
4. What would that look like?

Let's look at each of these questions?

1. Why should you the church be filled?

- Because: this would be the **walk of the wise** vs5:15
- Because this would be **making the most** of your time vs5:16
- Because this would **show a comprehension or an understanding** of **Gods will** vs 5:17
- Because this would be **walking as children of light** 5:8
- Because this would be **imitating God** and would be a life which **reflects his love** and would be a life **reflecting thankfulness** 5:1-3
- Because this would **not be how the Gentiles walk** 4:17
- Because this would be **a walk worthy of your** calling 4:1
- Because it would line up with Pauls overarching theme or the book is to reveal how God goes about his plan to bring about a **cosmological reconciliation in Christ 1:9-10**

*⁹ making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ ¹⁰ as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite **all things** in him, things in heaven and things on earth. Ephesians 1:9–10 (ESV)*

God's plan is to restore **harmony to the universe** in Christ.

Things in heaven refers to the **beings in the spiritual realm**. **The rulers, authorities, cosmic powers and dominions, spiritual forces** of evil in the heavenly places Ephesians 1:20–22, 6:12

Things on earth refer to **the human realm**.

Man's relations to God

Man's relationship with one another (Jews and Gentiles)

Gods Plan is to **bring unity(harmony/submitting)** all things in Christ.

To bring everything (both realms, both spheres) in submission to Christ.

He did it through the gospel.

Through the gospel:

- Satan and his demons were defeated 1:20-22
- chosen unbelievers are made alive by God together with Christ through salvation.2:4-5
- Jews and Gentiles are united into one new body called the church.

Eph 1-3 reveals how in Christ through the gospel God brings all things together into unity in Christ.

This provides the Biblical basis for the exhortation for believers to be united in Christ in unity. 4-6

As believers walk in a manner worthy of their calling, not like unbelievers, imitating God in love and thankfulness, as children of the light and watching their walk carefully, this is being united with Christ, being in subjection to Christ.

This kind of life displays the fullness of Christ in every facet.

So walking in yielded-ness to His filling work means that you are in submission to Jesus and in harmony with God overarching plan for the universe.

Illustrated

The best way I can illustrate it is the labeling you see in Coca cola.

When you see the label with the term's coca cola, you identify it as a cooldrink produced by the Coca-Cola company.

And meeting and employer of Coca-Cola you would assume that they work in conformity and in submission to the company and have a part to play in bringing about the united purposes of that company.

IN the same way believers are to behave like Christians, In submission to His lordship which lines up with the purposes of God.

2. What is the content that the church is to be filled with?

The church is described by Paul:

- as being under the headship of Christ
- being the body of Christ.
- The **fullness of Him** who fills all in all.

*²² And he put all things under his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church, ²³ which is his body, **the fullness of him who fills all in all.** Ephesians 1:22–23 (ESV)*

Paul also describes how the church is being built into a **dwelling place for God** by his Spirit.

*¹⁹ So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, ²⁰ built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, ²¹ in whom the whole structure, being joined together, **grows into a holy temple in the Lord.** ²² In him you also are being **built together into a dwelling place for God** by the Spirit. Ephesians 2:19–22 (ESV)*

Paul prays for believers is that they be strengthened in their inner being through His spirit and that they would comprehend His love and that they **be filled with all the fullness of God.**

*... **that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.** Eph 3:19 (ESV)*

The content one can deduce that fills the Church by means of the Holy Spirit is the fullness of God/ fullness of Christ. What does that look like? We will answer that with the 4th question. But first.

3. Who is doing the filling?

Eph 1:22 tells us that it is **Christ who fills all in all in his Body.**

*²² And he put all things under his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church, ²³ which is his body, **the fullness of him who fills all in all.** Ephesians 1:22–23 (ESV)*

Having defeated Satan and His demons on the cross we read this about Christ

*¹⁰ He who descended is the one who also ascended far above all the heavens, **that he might fill all things.**) ¹¹ And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, ¹² to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, ¹³ until we all attain to the **unity of the faith** and of **the knowledge** of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, Ephesians 4:10–13 (ESV)*

Having defeated Satan on the cross, He is in the position of authority **to fill all things and he does it by gifting the church with apostles, prophets, evangelists,** pastors and teachers to equip the saints for service.

The saints build up the church **to unite doctrinally** and to maturity **to the fullness of Christ**

So, a church that is **filled will be mature, will be Christ like,** will be fully comprehend the doctrines of faith and the deeper truths of Christ.

We conclude therefore that the one doing **the filling is in fact Jesus Christ,** the filler of His church.

He is the Hand that holds the Jug (Hs) filling the church with the fullness of Himself.

4. What would that look like?

¹⁹ addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with your heart, ²⁰ giving thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the

What does it look like when a church is filled with the fulness of God by means of the Holy Spirit?

The grammar provides us with words which are called participles (action words ending in “ing”) which explains to you what it means to be filled through the instrument of the Holy Spirit.

Or simpler what does it look like **when you have a church filled with the fulness** of God?

- A church in which Jesus is the filler.
- A church in which the Holy Spirit is the instrument or the means of filling.
- A Church that is displaying the fullness of God (Christ)

The answer: they would be:

- a. Speaking
- b. Singing and praising
- c. Giving thanks
- d. Be subjecting to one another

Lets expound on that because Paul did.

- It's a church characterised by speaking(addressing with words, express in speech) psalms (sacred songs praising God) , hymns(musical compositions, religious songs of praise) and spiritual songs(which are songs sung with or without instruments that are caused by the HS and are especially true in mature Christian lives)

Basically, it would be a church that in and through its **worship of God addresses and encourages other believers through what is sung.**

Note that they express to one another (speaking), which means that using the psalms and hymns and song, as a form of teaching and corporately addressing one another.

It is what we read about in Col 3:16

*¹⁶ Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, **teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom**, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God. Colossians 3:16 (ESV)*

It's a church that is serious about its lyrics, serious about the doctrines taught in the songs, as they corporately exalt Christ through Scripturally based songs and hymns.

God's word is **taken seriously in the worship** of God.

This will characterise a **Church filled with the fullness** of God.

Not songs **that have great melody**, but which are empty in biblical content.

- It's a church characterised by believers singing and making melodies **in their heart** (they are **rejoicing in their hearts**) (The worshippers don't just worship God outwardly, but also inwardly. In their inner beings they submit and exalt God)
- It's a church **characterized by many expressions of thankfulness** or appreciation for what God has done. Note that this is **an ongoing reality**. They thank God while calling upon the name of Christ. They thank God because of the reputation and character of Christ. Because of who Jesus is and what he did.
- It's a church which is characterised **by submission** (to place yourself under, to be willing to submit to others, **voluntary yielding to one another in love**) in reverence to Christ. Considering others more important than yourself.

This is what it looks like when the fullness of Christ fills the church.

Application

You and I are commanded to watch our walks, our conduct carefully.

You and I are commanded to be filled by means of the Spirit.

You obey this by yielding to Christ ongoing work of filling his church. This passage does not teach that being filled by the spirit, will be seen in the fact that people speak in tongues.

What you see is:

- **Worship permeated with Gods word** which is an outward manifestation of people who inwardly are worshipping Him.
- Lives ,words and actions which reflect people worshipping God from within their hearts.
- Continues thankfulness and appreciation for Christ and what He had doen
- People **voluntary yielding to one another in love** a reverential awe of Christ.

Rather you will see those things already mentioned.

You and I should ask this question?

If I am to be watching carefully my walk, then part of that has to do with my church involvement.

Is it a church filled by the spirit?

Am I filled by the spirit?

Do I participate in worship?

Do I inwardly (my thinking, attitude and emotions live in worshipping and exalting Christ)

Does my life and that of the church display ongoing thankfulness?

Do I display a yielding in love towards others in the church, towards those in authority?

If not, come to Jesus, and acknowledge your sin and the sin of the church.

Make the decision to repent and ask God in Christ to fill you, to fill His church with his fullness, and walk in yielded-ness to Him

Always watching your walk carefully.

In conclusion

In the end of the day, the church is all about displaying Jesus

That what it means to be filled by the Spirit of God.

We answered the questions

4 questions this morning helping you to understand what it means to be filled by the Holy Spirit.

1. Why should the church be filled? Because that's how a Christian walk
2. What is the content that the church is to be filled with? Fullness of God
3. Who is doing the filling work? Jesus
4. What does it look like? Worship inwardly and outwardly, ongoing gratefulness, and lovingly yielding to one another in awe of Jesus.

And we thus conclude the 4th point of last Sunday's sermon.

4 Ways to watch your walk so that you display Jesus in the church.

1. Contemplate your walk
2. Competent living
3. Comprehend His will
4. Christ's filled church