

Second Baptist Church of Doylestown

Wed. Eve. Bible Study - 7/13/16

Letter To The Ephesians

Spiritual Intoxification

Scripture: Ephesians 5:1 - 21

Follow God's example, therefore, as dearly loved children ² and walk in the way of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God. ³ But among you there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality, or of any kind of impurity, or of greed, because these are improper for God's holy people. ⁴ Nor should there be obscenity, foolish talk or coarse joking, which are out of place, but rather thanksgiving. ⁵ For of this you can be sure: No immoral, impure or greedy person—such a person is an idolater—has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. ⁶ Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of such things God's wrath comes on those who are disobedient. ⁷ Therefore do not be partners with them. ⁸ For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light ⁹ (for the fruit of the light consists in all goodness, righteousness and truth) ¹⁰ and find out what pleases the Lord. ¹¹ Have nothing to do with the fruitless deeds of darkness, but rather expose them. ¹² It is shameful even to mention what the disobedient do in secret. ¹³ But everything exposed by the light becomes visible—and everything that is illuminated becomes a light. ¹⁴ This is why it is said: "Wake up, sleeper, rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you." ¹⁵ Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, ¹⁶ making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil. ¹⁷ Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord's will is. ¹⁸ Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit, ¹⁹ speaking to one another with psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit. Sing and make music from your heart to the Lord, ²⁰ always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Instructions for Christian Households

²¹ Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ. ²² Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands as you do to the Lord. ²³ For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior. ²⁴ Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything. ²⁵ Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her ²⁶ to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, ²⁷ and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and

blameless.²⁸ In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself.²⁹ After all, no one ever hated their own body, but they feed and care for their body, just as Christ does the church—³⁰ for we are members of his body.³¹ “For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh.”^{[e]32} This is a profound mystery—but I am talking about Christ and the church.³³ However, each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband.

In Ephesians 5: 18 a contrast is made between the person who is under the influence of alcohol and the person who is under the controlling influence of the Holy Spirit. We as Christians are not to be drunk with the wine that comes from any earthly vineyard but with the new wine of the Kingdom which comes from the heavenly vineyard, from Him who is the True Vine (John 15: 1). There is a purpose in setting these two commands in contrast. It was a pagan belief that God dwelt in the blood of the grape, so that in drinking wine man was drinking God into himself. Drunkenness was therefore held to be a sacrament in which a man was supposed to be under the control of the god who filled him. Paul reminded the Christians at Ephesus of this pagan belief, and then he pointed them to the true way of being God-possessed. Concerning the Spirit-filled life, let us notice the following truths:

- **The Spirit-filled life is a command.** In Ephesians 5:18 there are two commands, both of which require obedience; they are not optional, they are imperative.
- **The Spirit-filled life is a command to every Christian.** The experience of the Holy Spirit's fulness is not for a select company of believers, but for every born again person. Notice the word "all" in Acts 2: 4 and 4: 31.
- **To be filled with the Spirit is more than being indwelt by the Spirit.** The Christians at Ephesus were "sealed" by the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 1: 13; 4:30), and thus they were indwelt by the Holy Spirit, as every Christian is (1 Corinthians 6:19), but we may be indwelt and not filled by Him; we may possess Him without His possessing us.
- **To be filled with the Spirit is not a matter of excess, but of sanity.** The word "excess" means "riot". The most spiritually sane people in the world are those who are filled with God's Spirit. The Lord Jesus is our example.
- **The Spirit-filled life is to be the normal experience of God's children.** Ephesians 5: 18 means "Go on being filled..." God's plan for every one of His children is that they may be filled with the Holy Spirit so that they may live lives that are glorifying to Him in all their personal (Ephesians 5: 15-21),

domestic (Ephesians 5: 22-33 and 6: 1-4), and business (Ephesians 6: 5-9) relationships.

- **Being filled with the Spirit is not our getting more of Him; it is His getting more of us.** The Holy Spirit is a Person, and to be filled with Him means to allow Him to take full possession of our personalities.
- **The Spirit-filled life is marked by certain definite and easily discernible characteristics.** Just as a drunken man can easily be recognised, so can a Spirit-filled Christian be recognised; the same characteristics are true of both. What are they? - look up those that are mentioned in Ephesians 5: 14-21, and then consider the following.

1. A Drunkard is Possessed by an Immense Sense of Well-being.

So is a Spirit-filled Christian! He is exhilarated, exuberant. The Greeks have a word for it - "Euphoria", which means "an immense sense of well-being". The first Christians were accused of being drunk (Acts 2: 15); the early disciples were noted for their intense joy - look up Acts 13:52.

2. A Drunkard is Recognized by his Face.

So is a Spirit-filled Christian! Many of our faces are shadowed instead of shining! There should be a radiance about us, as there was with Moses (Exodus 34: 29); with Stephen (Acts 6: 15); with the Lord Jesus (Luke 9: 29) - and look up Psalm 34: 5, and compare Psalm 40: 3 with Ephesians 5: 19-20.

3. A Drunkard has a Characteristic Savour about him.

So does a Christian! You can smell a drunkard! - now look at Ephesians 5: 2. Our Lord Jesus Christ was as holy incense before the Father and before the world; Christians, by being filled with His Spirit are to be, and may be, the same. The Spirit-filled life is God's provision for making our lives beautiful, graceful and gentle.

4. A Drunkard can be Detected by the Way he Walks.

So can a Spirit-filled Christian! Our walk is our manner of life, and according to Ephesians 5: 15 a drunkard's walk is careless, whereas the walk of the Spirit-filled man is very circumspect - that is, disciplined and consistent. The drunkard cannot walk straight, but the Spirit-filled Christian is enabled to live before God and the world in a way that is upright and honest in every respect.

5. A Drunkard is Betrayed by the Way he Speaks.

So is a Spirit-filled Christian! Many a drunkard has a stammering tongue, and often his speech is impure and foul. A Spirit-filled Christian will be very careful in the words he uses and in the matters of which he speaks, and, of course, a Spirit-filled Christian will be a testifying Christian - look up Acts 4: 20!

6. A Drunkard is not Responsible for his Actions.

Nor is a Christian! A drunkard does many foolish things because he cannot help it, and a Christian, if he is filled with the Holy Spirit, will produce from his life fruit which is supernatural (Galatians 5: 22-23), and works which are, humanly speaking, impossible - see what Peter said in Acts 3: 12.

7. A Drunkard is Known by the Company he Keeps.

So is a Spirit-filled Christian! A drunkard will make his way quickly to the bar; the Spirit-filled Christian will seek the fellowship of God's people - look up Acts 4: 23. How can we become Spirit-filled - possessed and controlled by the Holy Spirit? Think of the drunkard again. How does he become a drunkard? By drinking, and drinking and drinking again - and this drinking for us involves three things:

(1) **A Real Thirst** (Isaiah 44: 3; Matthew 5: 6; John 7: 37-39);

(2) **A Great Capacity** (Psalm 81: 10); and

(3) **A Simple Faith** (Luke 11:13; 1 John 5: 14-15).