

Our series is Living according to the Holy Spirit and our sermon is Keep on being filled with the Spirit

Let's start by reading God's Word! Listen to the very words that come from the lips of God to us this morning...

*"15 So be careful how you live. Don't live like fools, but like those who are wise. 16 Make the most of every opportunity in these evil days. 17 Don't act thoughtlessly, but understand what the Lord wants you to do. 18 Don't be drunk with wine, because that will ruin your life. Instead, be filled with the Holy Spirit, (**just to be clear the idea here is not a one time thing but the ongoing control of the Holy Spirit in our lives, so a more accurate translation would be, "keep on being filled with the Holy Spirit"**) 19 singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs among yourselves, and making music to the Lord in your hearts. 20 And give thanks for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ." Eph. 5:15-20*

Pray

First of all this passage is not about whether you can or whether you should drink wine or not...

- I know in our midst we'll have different opinions about that issue & I challenge you to remain true to your convictions
- I also challenge you to not judge others who in their freedom don't hold to your conviction one way or the other
- however, this and other passages make clear that **"drunkenness"** is sin
- and as we'll see, sin any sin, stands in the way of our being filled by the Spirit

Someone once told me that Paul makes this comparison to say that being filled w/Spirit is like being drunk -meaning that when the Spirit fills you, he takes control, and you lose control - just like when you're drunk -let's be clear from the beginning, that argument is foolishness, you won't find it anywhere in Scripture

The point Paul makes by making this comparison is not to tell us that being filled w/Spirit is like being drunk -he's saying the very opposite - the Spirit's control has to do with who calls the shots in your life -it's still your life, you still have to live it - the only difference is who guides how you live it? -as he's said in the passage our days are evil, and as a result some people turn to drunkenness to deal with it -he could use other examples of how people try to cope with life and struggles in ways that don't help in the end -his point is this, in order to be filled with the Holy Spirit, live according to him, or being surrendered to him -you can't be controlled by something or someone else

That's why he starts the passage by telling us to be careful how we live

- don't live like fools - someone who is drunk eventually and generally acts like a fool - makes poor decisions
- someone who is filled with the Spirit, allows the Spirit to lead them to making wise decisions
- the person who is drunk acts thoughtlessly without care for consequences for them and others
- the person who is filled with the Spirit makes the most of every opportunity in light of love for God & love for others
- they grow in understanding of what God wants them to do and then with the Spirit's strength they obey
- the person who is drunk misses the point that if drunkenness remains the status quo - it will ruin their life
 - job / relationships / plans / in the end it costs everything
- people filled by the Holy Spirit have their eyes on God and the things of God
 - that's why they sing psalms and hymns together and they give thanks to God for everything
 - whether you're a singer or not - in the Holy Spirit you have a joy/peace/strength beyond your circumstances
 - because you realize everything you have comes from God & everything you are, you are in Jesus Christ

God's point, can't have it both ways, you can't give control of your life to the Holy Spirit and to something else as well -whether that's something like wine / love of money / fame / your looks / impurity / even good things -if they take the place of God in your life, they become idols (don't miss that, good things can become idols) -only one thing can have the ruling place in your heart.

And so Paul says, you choose to keep on giving that place to the Holy Spirit...

- and that something you and I must keep on doing sometimes multiple times a day for the rest of our lives
- the good news is, as you grow, as H.S. has that place more and more the more natural it will be
- more about that in a second.

All this raises a question...

- what's the difference between having the Spirit and being filled by the Spirit?**

What the scriptures teach about the indwelling of the Spirit / his coming to live within us...

First, The Holy Spirit is a gift given to all true believers in Jesus without exception, and no conditions are placed upon this gift except faith in Christ

in John 14:16 *Jesus said "and I will ask the Father and he will give you another helper, to be with you forever."*

(John 7:37-39). *"37 On the last and greatest day of the festival, Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, "Let anyone who is thirsty come to me and drink. 38 Whoever believes in me, as Scripture has said, rivers of living water will flow from within them." 39 By this he meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were later to receive. Up to that time the Spirit had not been given, since Jesus had not yet been glorified."*

Second, The Holy Spirit is given at the moment of salvation

(Ephesians 1:13 *"And you also were included in Christ when you heard the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation. **When you believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit,**"*).

Galatians 3:2 *"I would like to learn just one thing from you: Did you receive the Spirit by the works of the law, or by believing what you heard?"*

-both passages emphasize same truth, the receiving, sealing and indwelling of the Spirit takes place at the time of believing.

Third, The Holy Spirit indwells believers permanently.

21 Now it is God who makes both us and you stand firm in Christ. He anointed us, 22 set his seal of ownership on us, and put his Spirit in our hearts as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come. 2 Corinthians 1:21-22

30 And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Ephesians 4:30

The Holy Spirit comes to live in to dwell in us and is giving to believers as verification/proof that God owns us and that in the future we'll be glorified in Christ

That's the indwelling or the Spirit of God coming to live in us.

- he's given to all true believers without exception or condition through faith in Christ
- he's given to us at the moment of salvation
- and he indwells believers permanently

But then Ephesians 5:18 our passage this morning, tells us as people who already have the Spirit...

- to be filled or to keep on being filled with the Holy Spirit
- so what does it mean to keep on being filled with the Holy Spirit?

Simply put, even though we have the Spirit within us...

- when we allow ourselves to be controlled by something other than the Spirit it leads to destruction (small/big)
- When we allow this to happen, we don't experience fullness of the Spirit's and His power working in and through us.

To be filled w/the Spirit is the willing surrender for Him to rule every part of our lives. Emotionally, phys.,spir.

- then His power can be exerted through us so that what we do is fruitful to God.
- why Galatians tells us not to live out the desires of the flesh but to allow the Holy Spirit to bear his fruit in us
- God's love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control Gal. 5:22

Don't miss this, Paul uses drunkenness to show us how sin hinders the filling of the holy Spirit

- but all sin hinders the filling of the Holy Spirit, because obedience is how the filling of the Spirit is maintained.
- Only our trust, surrender and obedience to God allow the Spirit's freedom to work within us.
- that means just because you pray that the Spirit will fill you doesn't make it happen
- it definitely will not happen if there's sin in your life that you're unrepentant of or unwilling to give over to God
- that doesn't mean the Spirit stops working in us, he is in us, however...
- rather than work through us to bear his fruit for his purposes which glorify God

- he has to spend his time working to convict us to get us to surrender so we can be used
- do you see the difference? Better yet, can you see how that happens in your life?

Note: Because we are still putting our flesh to death, it is still active, and sometimes we still sin...

- and when we sin it's impossible to be filled with Spirit in that moment - it's either the Spirit or Sin controlling
- Satan will try to lie to you and say you can keep on sinning and still be led by the Spirit, it's a lie
- but God knowing that we will sin tell us to the moment we sin do what? confess our sin, and repent - turn from it
- When we do that we renew our commitment to being Spirit-filled & Spirit-led - we give control back to the Spirit
- the problem is that Satan is our accuser, when we sin he wants us to dwell in it (like pigs in the mud)
- because the more we're caught up in it, the harder it is to let go of it / the easier it is to justify it
- but Jesus looks at us and says, if your right hand causes you to sin do what?
 - again, Jesus knows we can't be controlled by the Spirit and sin at the same time
 - so he says take sin seriously, do whatever it takes to get rid of it - the filling of the Spirit depends on it
 - and that's why we're told to keep on being filled by the Holy Spirit, because it's not a one time thing
 - this is our reality this side of heaven - God has come to live in us by His Spirit through the work of Christ
 - but his ongoing filling of our hearts, minds and spirit depend on our letting him have full control
 - one decision at a time.

Last thing I want to say is this, we have a say in whether the spirit controls, we don't have a say in how he does it...

- the Holy Spirit is God and he moves as he pleases and as he knows is best
- he is the one who fills we are the recipients, the vessels he wants and will work through
- it's why like I said last week, he turns one alcoholic away from alcohol in a moment and...
- the question is are we surrendered so we're ready to be filled and keep on being filled or...
 - are we choosing to be filled with things that are not allowing the Holy Spirit to fill us more?

Let's just be honest with our own hearts for a second...

- most of us who are here this morning really want to live according to the Holy Spirit, I really believe that...
- but the only way to do that is to be controlled by Him, but he will not share the throne of your heart
- so be honest with Christ in your heart, what are you allowing to control your heart, your life???
- is it a habit? Is it several habits? Is it something you love? Is it fear? Is it someone?
- is it something that on it's own it's not bad, but you've allowed it to become sin by giving it idol privileges?
- again, because of sin we all fall into the trap of letting ourselves be controlled by these things sometimes
- but don't let that be an excuse to stay in that place - God wants to fill you and bear his fruit in and through you.
- confess your sin, and surrender to him, allow the Holy Spirit first place in each area in each decision
- that might require leaving something, someone, doing something radical to not allow a sinful habit to hold you
- it will require honesty, with yourself, and the bible tells with other believers

Let me close by saying what you've heard me say so many times before....

- we were not made to walk this road alone
- we need each other, even in this, especially in this
- the holy spirit doesn't just come to fill individuals, he wants to fill his body, the church
- that requires humility and trust, it requires choosing to believe he knows best, and it requires obeying

What do you need to do this morning?

- I'm going to give you a few moments of silence to think about this....

Pray