

## **Be filled with the Spirit Ephesians 5:15-21**

### **Do not get drunk (18)**

Drunkenness means allowing alcohol to dominate us. Paul is probably referring here to the Dionysian festivals which celebrated the consumption of alcohol. The same principle applies to any substance abuse—

- ✦ Drugs
- ✦ Food
- ✦ Nicotine
- ✦ Caffeine

By contrast, we are to be dominated by the Spirit (18)

- ✦ Spirit = *pneuma* (wind, breath, spirit)
- ✦ Literally ‘be filled in spirit’
- ✦ Could mean the human spirit ie be spiritually complete, be fervent, be effervescent, be full to overflowing
- ✦ Probably means the Holy Spirit ie be filled with the Holy Spirit of God
- ✦ We need the power of the Spirit to live a holy life

### **1. The verb is an imperative (a command)**

- ✦ It is not an option
- ✦ Surprisingly, it is up to us, not God
- ✦ If it were only up to God it would happen automatically
- ✦ This is a command to be obeyed

### **2. The verb is plural**

- ✦ It is addressed to all, not just leaders etc
- ✦ There are no exceptions
- ✦ It is not enough to sit back and leave it to others

### **3. The verb is present continuous tense**

- ✦ An ongoing experience
- ✦ The apostles and evangelists of the early church were regularly described as being ‘full of/filled with the Spirit’
- ✦ Acts 4:8; 4:31; 6:3; 6:5; 7:55; 11:24; 13:9-11; 13:52

### **4. The verb is passive**

- ✦ The Spirit comes ‘from above.’ He is ‘in’ us for salvation; he comes ‘upon’ us for service (Lk 24:49; Act 1:8)
- ✦ Although it is up to us to claim the fullness, we cannot do it unless God pours out his Spirit
- ✦ So we receive the Spirit by faith (Act 2:38; Luke 11:13)

## **Making melody (19)**

When the Spirit is at work, people usually respond—

- ❖ With psalms (eg of David)
- ❖ With hymns (eg Christian songs)
- ❖ With spiritual songs (eg Spirit-inspired songs—1 Cor 14:14,15)

Music has commonly been a part of revival.

### **To one another**

- ❖ To encourage one another

### **To the Lord**

- ❖ To worship the Lord

### **Giving thanks (20)**

- ❖ Giving thanks
- ❖ Always
- ❖ For all things
- ❖ In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ
- ❖ Thanksgiving is a sign of the Spirit's fullness
- ❖ Also an antidote to sin (4)

### **Holy yearning**

Our hearts burn with a holy yearning to be filled with the Holy Spirit. Let's reach out to God today!

Read: Ephesians 5:15-20

1. What are some of the qualities of foolish people? (15). These verses might help—  
Proverbs 10:18; 12:15, 16; 14:3, 16; 15:5; 17:12; 17:21; 17:28; 18:2, 7; 20:3; 23:9; 24:7; 26:4, 5; 26:11, 12; 27:22; 28:26; 29:11.
2. What are some of the qualities of wise people? (15). See James 3:13-17. Which particular quality stands out here most for *you*?
3. We are to understand the will of the Lord (17). How does Paul summarise God's will? (1 Thessalonians 4:3)
4. A faithful church member named M T Void has been wanting to be filled with the Spirit for a long time. He longs for the Holy Spirit of come upon him. But he doesn't feel there is anything he himself should do about it. 'When God wants me to be filled with the Spirit, he will do it,' he says. 'It is entirely up to him.' According to verse 18, how valid is this position? What should M T Void do?
5. According to Acts 2:4; 9:17 (with 1 Cor 14:18); 10:44-48; 19:6 what was the commonly recognised initial manifestation of being filled with the Spirit?
6. In each of the following passages, the phrase 'full of (or filled with) the Holy Spirit' is used in reference to the ongoing fullness of the Spirit. What evidences of the Spirit's presence are mentioned? Acts 4:8, 31; 6:3, 5; 7:55; 11:24; 13:9-11; 13:52.
7. To whom are the songs of verse 19 addressed?

8. Give examples of contemporary songs which are addressed (a) to one another and (b) to the Lord. (19) How well do we fulfil verse 19?

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