

EPHESIANS: LIVING IN ALIGNMENT WITH OUR HIGH CALLING
Part II: Walking Worthy Of Our High Calling In Christ, Ephesians 4:1-6:20
E. Walking Worthy Of Our Calling By Relating Properly To The Holy Spirit
(Ephesians 5:18-21)

I. Introduction

- A. Having written extensively in Ephesians 1:1-3:21 about the high calling we believers in Christ have in our Lord, clarifying the great extent to which God's grace in Christ has been administered in our behalf, Paul applied that truth to the Christian walk in Ephesians 4:1-6:20.
- B. In Ephesians 5:18-21, Paul addressed a fifth realm of walking worthy of our calling, that of relating well to the Holy Spirit. This subject is very important in our era due to extensive problems that have been fueled by economic and social upheaval with COVID-19, so we view the passage for our insight and edification:

II. Walking Worthy Of Our Calling By Relating Properly To The Holy Spirit, Ephesians 5:18-21.

- A. Paul's command not to be drunk with wine in Ephesians 5:18a called for believers to **stop** practicing substance abuse, what often occurs in one's effort to escape an unhappy circumstance in life:
 - 1. The word rendered "drunk" is *methuskesthe*, the **present imperative** form of the verb *methusko*, "get drunk." (U. B. S. Grk. N. T., 1966, p. 675; *The Analyt. Grk. Lex.*, 1972, p. 261; Arndt & Gingrich, *A Grk.-Eng. Lex. of the N. T.*, 1967, p. 500), and "not" translates the negative particle *me*, so Paul was grammatically urging believers to **STOP getting themselves drunk** with wine! (Dana & Mantey, *A Man. Gram. of the Grk. N. T.*, 1955, p. 301-302)
 - 2. Such drunkenness was *asotia*, "debauchery, dissipation, profligacy," leaving one unable to manage his behavior, a waste of effort, time and money, *Ibid.*, Arndt & Gingrich, p. 119.
 - 3. Obviously, then as now, people resort to such an aberrant mental state not because it actually improves their circumstances, but to escape from the unhappiness of the reality they face in life.
- B. In striking contrast to getting oneself drunk to escape a negative, painful reality, Paul commanded believers to be "filled" with the Holy Spirit, and we explain, Ephesians 5:18b:
 - 1. "Be filled" translates *plerousthe*, the **present passive imperative** form of *pleroo*, "make full, fill" (*Ibid.*, U. B. S. Grk. N. T.; *Ibid.*, *The Analyt. Grk. Lex.*, p. 329; *Ibid.*, Arndt & Gingrich, p. 676-678).
 - 2. Thus, Paul was urging believers to permit themselves to be **constantly** (**present** tense) "filled" in the sense of "controlled" by the Holy Spirit's work in contrast to being controlled by wine! (*Bible Know. Com., N. T.*, p. 640; Lewis Sperry Chafer, *The Ephesian Letter*, 1935, p. 151) This state is produced by faith where a believer relies on the Holy Spirit to control his attitude and behavior as an **ongoing** activity, Gal. 5:16.
- C. Consequently, the believer is equipped to face even humanly unhappy circumstances in victory, Eph. 5:19-21:
 - 1. Being controlled by the Holy Spirit, believers can address one another in psalms, hymns and spiritual odes, singing and making melody to the Lord from the heart, Eph. 5:19 ESV. Thus, in place of sadness or fear in humanly difficult circumstances that is met with indulging in substance abuse, the Holy Spirit equips the believer to face humanly unhappy circumstances of this life with victorious joy and peace!
 - 2. Being controlled by the Holy Spirit, believers can always give thanks for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, Ephesians 5:20 ESV. Thus, in place of complaining about difficult circumstances in life, the Holy Spirit equips the believe to face those circumstances even in thanksgiving!
 - 3. Being controlled by the Holy Spirit, believers can submit to one another in reverence to Christ, Ephesians 5:21. In the Ephesians 5:22-6:9 context, Paul later clarified this submission applied to wives submitting to their husbands (Eph. 5:22), children submitting to their parents (Eph. 6:1) and slaves submitting to their masters (Eph. 6:5) in respect to Christ's will that each submit to his or her God-ordained overseer. Thus, in place of resorting to substance abuse to escape problems in marital, home or workplace relationships, the Holy Spirit equips us to face those relationships with spiritually victorious attitudes and behaviors.

Lesson: *God wants us believers to walk worthy of our high calling in Christ Jesus by not trying to escape humanly unhappy circumstances by indulging in substance abuse, but to rely on the Holy Spirit as a way of life so that He can control our outlook and behavior in causing us to live in joy and peace over sadness or fear, to express thanksgiving in place of complaining and to relate well to others in even difficult overseer or subordinate roles.*

Application: *May we walk worthy of our calling before God by not trying to escape hard circumstances through substance abuse, but always rely on the Holy Spirit for victory in functioning well in humanly difficult situations.*