

The Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Ephesians

by Oliver B. Greene

Copyright @ 1963

The Gospel Hour, Inc., Greenville, South Carolina

CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO -

ANOTHER COMMANDMENT TO BELIEVERS

Ephesians 5, verses 18-21

"And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit; Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord; giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ; submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God."

Again let me point out that verse 18 is not a suggestion. The HOLY SPIRIT did not say, "If it is convenient, be filled with the Spirit," or "If you think it best, be filled with the Spirit," or, "If your circumstances permit, be filled with the Spirit."

There is a negative and a positive:

1. (Negative): **"Be not drunk with wine."** Dear reader, do you believe it is a sin to be drunk with wine? Would you get drunk on wine? What would you think of a minister or a professed Christian who gets drunk on wine? Would you say they are living right?

2. (Positive): **"BUT BE FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT."** If it is wrong to be drunk with wine, it is also wrong NOT to be filled with the Spirit. Do not get drunk on wine - but be filled with the HOLY SPIRIT.

Beloved, this does not say, "Be baptized with the HOLY GHOST." The believer is already baptized into the Body of CHRIST by the HOLY SPIRIT (I Corinthians 12:12-13). This is altogether another truth. As I have stated several times in these messages, it is altogether possible to be born of the Spirit, indwelt by the Spirit, baptized into the Body of CHRIST by the Spirit, and still not be filled with the Spirit.

This is not a second work of grace . . . it is a full surrender of soul, mind and body - the body which is the temple of the HOLY GHOST. Paul said to the Romans, **"I beseech you... [to] present your bodies a living sacrifice... which is your reasonable service."** It is reasonable to yield soul, spirit and body. It is reasonable to be filled with the HOLY SPIRIT; and it is not right - it is sinful - NOT to be filled.

To be filled with the Spirit, we must be emptied of all the things named in the preceding verses of chapters four and five . . . the things of the flesh, the things of the natural man. If we are to be

a spiritual man, full grown to maturity, filled with the Spirit, we must first be emptied. You cannot fill a container with water until it is first emptied of everything else. If there are three grains of sand in a glass, you cannot fill that glass with water - it will be water and sand until the sand is removed. A believer cannot be filled with the HOLY SPIRIT until that believer permits the Lord JESUS to empty his heart of everything of the world, the flesh, and the devil.

When the heart is emptied, then the HOLY SPIRIT can and will fill that individual.

In verse 19 we have the evidence of the filling of the Spirit:

1. We speak to ourselves in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs. We sing, and make melody in our heart to the Lord. Please do not be offended or angry . . . please take this in the spirit in which I am giving it. A person who is filled with the Spirit does not have to advertise his filling of the Spirit to his fellowman. He does not go to church, and brag and boast concerning his holiness and his purity, his godliness and his spirituality. A person who is filled with the Spirit sings psalms, songs, and makes melody in the heart TO THE Lord. The HOLY SPIRIT is in the world to glorify JESUS . . . He is not in the world to glorify us, nor to glorify us before men. The person who is possessed by and filled entirely with the HOLY SPIRIT will make melody unto the Lord - not unto man! A spiritually minded person never advertises his holiness. His daily living advertises his righteousness of heart. People know by his daily practices of life.

2. A Spirit-filled person is a thankful person . . . always, for all things. He is thankful to GOD the Father in the name of JESUS, because it is in JESUS that the filling of the Spirit is possible. If JESUS had not been willing to do the Father's will, if He had not left the Father's bosom and surrendered Himself into the hands of wicked men who nailed Him to the Cross, if He had not died, we could not enjoy this precious salvation and the glorious filling of the HOLY SPIRIT.

A Spirit-filled person will be always thanking GOD for the Lord JESUS, and for the spiritual joy, peace, blessings, assurance and security that we have through the shed Blood and the grace of GOD in the Lord JESUS. A Spirit-filled life is a life that makes melody in the heart to the Lord, and gives thanks to GOD for the Lord JESUS. Are you filled with the Spirit? Do you know the fulness of the Spirit? It is your blessing to possess if you are willing to pay the price. Redemption is free - you cannot pay the price for redemption. Salvation is free . . . but there is a price to be paid if we enjoy the fulness of the Spirit. The price is to submit to GOD to be emptied of self, selfishness, sensual lust, and the world; and when you are emptied, you are then ready to be filled. **"Be not drunk with wine... but be filled with the Spirit!"**

In verse 21 we are commanded to submit one to another in the fear of GOD. One of the greatest needs in the local church today is for people to fear GOD, and work in harmony and unity. One of the terrible sins in the visible church today is the lack of unity. As in the Corinthian church, every person has a song, every person has a doctrine, every person has a testimony, every person has a sermon - and everybody wants to run things. GOD has an abundance of bosses, superintendents, presidents, chairmen of the board; He is looking for common laborers . . . folks who will get down in the dirt and be a humble servant. We are to submit one to another, and when we are filled with the Spirit we do that. We do not feel our importance, and we esteem our brethren higher and nobler than ourselves.

I would heartily agree that there are few examples of a Spirit-filled life today - but thank GOD, there are some. GOD help you and me to permit the HOLY SPIRIT to search our hearts, GOD help us to be emptied of everything that would hinder the cause of CHRIST, the building up of the Body, the bringing in of the unsaved. GOD help us to be filled with the Spirit.

~ end of chapter 22 ~

<http://www.baptistbiblebelievers.com/>
