
The Summation of All Things in Christ

Studies in Ephesians with a Local Church Emphasis

LESSON CXIII : THE WISE AND SPIRIT FILLED LIFE OF SUBMISSION / THE HAUSTAFEL (5:15-6:9)

Ephesians 5:15 ~ 6:9 —

¹⁵ Therfor, britheren, se ye, hou warli ye schulen go; ¹⁶ not as vnwise men, but as wise men, ayenbiynge tyme, for the daies ben yuele. ¹⁷ Therfor nyle ye be maad vnwise, but vndurstondynge which is the wille of God. ¹⁸ And nyle ye be drunkun of wyn, in which is letcherie, but be ye fillid with the Hooli Goost; and speke ye to you silf in salmes, ¹⁹ and ymnes, and spiritual songis, syngynge and seiynge salm in youre hertis to the Lord; ²⁰ euermore doynge thankinis for alle thingis in the name of oure Lord Jhesu Crist to God and to the fadir. ²¹ Be ye suget togidere in the drede of Crist. (John Wycliffe Bible, 1382)

¹⁵ Take hede therfore that ye walke circumspectly: not as foles: but as wyse ¹⁶ redemynge the tyme: for the dayes are evyll. ¹⁷ Wherfore be ye not vnwyse but vnderstonde what the will of the Lorde is ¹⁸ and be not dronke with wyne wherein is excesse: but be fulfilled with the sprete ¹⁹ speakynge vnto youre selves in psalmes and ymnes and spretuall songes synginge and makinge melodie to the Lorde in youre hertes ²⁰ gevinge thanks all wayes for all thinges vnto God the father in the name of oure Lorde Iesu Christ: ²¹ submittinge youre selves one to another in the feare of God. (Tyndale's New Testament, 1534)

¹⁵ Take heede therefore that yee walke circumspectly, not as fooles, but as wise, ¹⁶ Redeeming ye season: for ye daies are euill. ¹⁷ Wherefore, be ye not vnwise, but vnderstand what the will of the Lord is. ¹⁸ And be not drunke with wine, wherein is excesse: but be fulfilled with the Spirit, ¹⁹ Speaking vnto your selues in psalmes, and hymnes, and spirituall songs, singing, and making melodie to the Lord in your hearts, ²⁰ Giuing thanks alwaies for all thinges vnto God euen the Father, in the Name of our Lord Iesus Christ, ²¹ Submitting your selues one to another in the feare of God. (Geneva Bible, 1599)

¹⁵ See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, ¹⁶ Redeeming the time, because the days are evil. ¹⁷ Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is. ¹⁸ And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit; ¹⁹ Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord; ²⁰ Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ; ²¹ Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God. (King James Version, 1769)

¹⁵ See, then, how exactly ye walk, not as unwise, but as wise, ¹⁶ redeeming the time, because the days are evil; ¹⁷ because of this become not fools, but — understanding what is the will of the Lord, ¹⁸ and be not drunk with wine, in which is dissoluteness, but be filled in the Spirit, ¹⁹ speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord, ²⁰ giving thanks always for all things, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, to the God and Father; ²¹ subjecting yourselves to one another in the fear of God. (Young's Literal Translation, 1898)

¹⁵ Look therefore carefully how ye walk, not as unwise, but as wise; ¹⁶ redeeming the time, because the days are evil. ¹⁷ Wherefore be ye not foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord

is. ¹⁸ *And be not drunken with wine, wherein is riot, but be filled with the Spirit;* ¹⁹ *speaking one to another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord;* ²⁰ *giving thanks always for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father;* ²¹ *subjecting yourselves one to another in the fear of Christ.* (Revised Version, 1885)

¹⁵ *Look therefore carefully how ye walk, not as unwise, but as wise;* ¹⁶ *redeeming the time, because the days are evil.* ¹⁷ *Wherefore be ye not foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is.* ¹⁸ *And be not drunken with wine, wherein is riot, but be filled with the Spirit;* ¹⁹ *speaking one to another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord;* ²⁰ *giving thanks always for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father;* ²¹ *subjecting yourselves one to another in the fear of Christ.* (American Standard Version, 1901)

¹⁵ *Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise men but as wise,* ¹⁶ *making the most of the time, because the days are evil.* ¹⁷ *Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is.* ¹⁸ *And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery; but be filled with the Spirit,* ¹⁹ *addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with all your heart,* ²⁰ *always and for everything giving thanks in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God the Father.* ²¹ *Be subject to one another out of reverence for Christ.* (Revised Standard Version, 1952)

¹⁵⁻²¹ *Be constantly taking heed therefore how accurately you are conducting yourselves, not as unwise ones but as wise ones, buying up for yourselves the opportune time, because the days are pernicious. On this account stop becoming those who are without reflection or intelligence, but be understanding what the will of the Lord is. And stop being intoxicated with wine, in which state of intoxication there is profligacy. But be constantly controlled by the Spirit, speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your hearts to the Lord, giving thanks always concerning all things in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father, putting yourselves in subjection to one another in the fear of Christ.* (Kenneth Wuest's Expanded Translation, 1961)

¹⁵ *See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise,* ¹⁶ *redeeming the time, because the days are evil.* ¹⁷ *Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is.* ¹⁸ *And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit,* ¹⁹ *speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord,* ²⁰ *giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ,* ²¹ *submitting to one another in the fear of God.* (New King James Version, 1982)

¹⁵ *Therefore be careful how you walk, not as unwise men but as wise,* ¹⁶ *making the most of your time, because the days are evil.* ¹⁷ *So then do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is.* ¹⁸ *And do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit,* ¹⁹ *speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord;* ²⁰ *always giving thanks for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father;* ²¹ *and be subject to one another in the fear of Christ.* (New American Standard Version, 1995)

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. ²¹ Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ. (New International Version, 2011)

¹⁵ Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, ¹⁶ making the best use of the time, because the days are evil. ¹⁷ Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. ¹⁸ And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit, ¹⁹ addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with your heart, ²⁰ giving thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, ²¹ submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ. (English Standard Version, 2016)

¹⁵ Therefore consider carefully how you live — not as unwise but as wise, ¹⁶ taking advantage of every opportunity, because the days are evil. ¹⁷ For this reason do not be foolish, but be wise by understanding what the Lord's will is. ¹⁸ And do not get drunk with wine, which is debauchery, but be filled by the Spirit, ¹⁹ speaking to one another in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, singing and making music in your hearts to the Lord, ²⁰ always giving thanks to God the Father for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, ²¹ and submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ. (New English Translation Second Edition, 2017)

¹⁵ Βλέπετε οὖν πῶς ἀκριβῶς περιπατεῖτε μὴ ὡς ἄσοφοι ἀλλ' ὡς σοφοί ¹⁶ ἐξαγοραζόμενοι τὸν καιρὸν ὅτι αἱ ἡμέραι ποινηαί εἰσιν ¹⁷ διὰ τοῦτο μὴ γίνεσθε ἄφρονες ἀλλὰ συνιέντες τί τὸ θέλημα τοῦ κυρίου ¹⁸ καὶ μὴ μεθύσκεσθε οἴνῳ ἐν ᾧ ἐστὶν ἀσωτία ἀλλὰ πληροῦσθε ἐν πνεύματι ¹⁹ λαλοῦντες ἑαυτοῖς ψαλμοῖς καὶ ὕμνοις καὶ ᾠδαῖς πνευματικαῖς ᾄδοντες καὶ ψάλλοντες ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ ὑμῶν τῷ κυρίῳ ²⁰ εὐχαριστοῦντες πάντοτε ὑπὲρ πάντων ἐν ὀνόματι τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ τῷ θεῷ καὶ πατρί ²¹ ὑποτασσόμενοι ἀλλήλοις ἐν φόβῳ Θεοῦ. (Stephanus Greek NT, 1550)

¹⁵ Βλέπετε οὖν ἀκριβῶς πῶς περιπατεῖτε μὴ ὡς ἄσοφοι ἀλλ' ὡς σοφοί, ¹⁶ ἐξαγοραζόμενοι τὸν καιρὸν, ὅτι αἱ ἡμέραι ποινηαί εἰσιν. ¹⁷ διὰ τοῦτο μὴ γίνεσθε ἄφρονες, ἀλλὰ συνίετε τί τὸ θέλημα τοῦ κυρίου. ¹⁸ καὶ μὴ μεθύσκεσθε οἴνῳ, ἐν ᾧ ἐστὶν ἀσωτία, ἀλλὰ πληροῦσθε ἐν πνεύματι, ¹⁹ λαλοῦντες ἑαυτοῖς [ἐν] ψαλμοῖς καὶ ὕμνοις καὶ ᾠδαῖς πνευματικαῖς, ᾄδοντες καὶ ψάλλοντες τῇ καρδίᾳ ὑμῶν τῷ κυρίῳ, ²⁰ εὐχαριστοῦντες πάντοτε ὑπὲρ πάντων ἐν ὀνόματι τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ τῷ θεῷ καὶ πατρί. ²¹ Ὑποτασσόμενοι ἀλλήλοις ἐν φόβῳ Χριστοῦ, (NA28 Greek New Testament)

STRUCTURE — This section could be divided into two main thoughts: ‘wisdom’ (vv. 15-18) and ‘worship’ (vv. 19-20 [21?]). The first thought is grouped around three main exhortations and three ‘not ... but ...’ contrasts. In v. 15 the contrast is added after the exhortation while in vv. 17,18 the contrasts are part of the exhortations themselves.

THEME 1: “WISDOM”

¹⁵ See, then, how exactly ye walk, [‘see’ = ye see, ye be careful – 2nd person plural present active imperative verb]

FIRST CONTRAST: UNWISE vs. WISE

not as unwise, but as wise,

¹⁶ redeeming the time, because the days are evil;

SECOND CONTRAST: BECOME NOT FOOLS vs. UNDERSTAND THE WILL

OF THE LORD

¹⁷ *because of this become not fools, but — understanding what is the will of the Lord,*

THIRD CONTRAST: DRUNKENNESS vs. SPIRIT-CONTROLLED

¹⁸ *and be not drunk with wine, in which is dissoluteness, **but be filled in the Spirit,***

THEME 2: “WORSHIP” — FIVE PARTICIPLES, EACH DEPENDENT UPON ‘BE FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT’

¹⁹ speaking

one to another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs,

singing and making melody

in your heart to the Lord,

²⁰ giving thanks

always for all things, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, to the God and Father;

²¹ submitting yourselves

to one another in the fear of God.

“Household Code of Conduct”

²²⁻³³ *(husbands and wives)*

^{6:1-4} *(children and parents)*

^{6:5-9} *(servants and masters)*

V. 17 — Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is. —

διὰ τοῦτο μὴ γίνεσθε ἄφρονες ἀλλὰ συνιέντες τί τὸ θέλημα τοῦ κυρίου [dia touto mē ginesthe aphrones alla sunientes ti to thelēma tou kuriou] — **SECOND CONTRAST** — This is the second contrast and very similar to the first, ‘not as fools but as wise’ (v. 15b). The previous contrast was between the wise and fools; this contrast is between being foolish and having understanding. *Those who have already been exhorted not to live as unwise people are now warned not to succumb to folly.*

‘**BECAUSE OF THIS**’ — ‘Therefore, because of this’ probably relates back to the central idea of 5:15,16, ‘give careful attention to walk wisely’ rather than the immediately preceding phrase, ‘because the days are evil’ (5:16b). Paul has summoned the believers to walk wisely, taking advantage of every opportunity because the days are evil. For this reason he warns them not to become foolish. It is a restatement of verse 15b with slightly different words.

‘**DO NOT BE, DO NOT BECOME**’ — We are not to either ‘be’ or ‘become’ foolish; either translation is possible. We are to continue being what we already are as ‘in the light’: ‘wise.’ *The sad implication however is that regardless of our current walk with Christ, we too may become ‘foolish, unwise.’* This points once again that the Christian life is not static, remaining the same year after year (or even day after day). We are always either growing in Christ and holiness or we are going backwards. Also, sadly, it is also true that years of integrity, faithfulness and walking

with Christ may be thrown away in one careless act. (Note the caveat involved in throwing away one's testimony in a single act: people fall *inwardly* long before an *outward* fall. We must guard our hearts!)

FOOLISH — The '*foolish*' person is not someone without a mind but the unthinking person who fails to use the mind he or she already has. In Classical Greek it has the idea of '*senseless, unthinking, lack of understanding, folly*' and can also mean '*out of one's mind, demented*.' "The term '*foolish*' (ἄφρων [aphrōn]) appears 74 times in the LXX of Proverbs to contrast '*the fool*' with the one who walks in the ways of the Lord and follows the path of wisdom. For instance, Prov 10:23 states, '*A fool finds pleasure in evil conduct, but a man of understanding delights in wisdom*' (cf. Prov 23:9; 24:7). A few of the characteristics that Proverbs reveals about '*fools*' are that they are lazy (24:30); they have uncontrolled tongues (18:6-7; 29:20) and thus lie (6:12), slander (10:18), quarrel (20:3), and are quick-tempered (14:29; 29:11; see also Eccl 7:9); they are proud (13:16), hate knowledge (1:22), and despise advice or correction (12:1, 15; 15:5); and they are reckless and careless (14:16). Much of this list corresponds with the kind of moral exhortation Paul has give in Eph 4:25-5:14." [Arnold, 347]

'UNDERSTANDING' REQUIRES INTELLECTUAL EFFORT — *Part of what it means to live wisely is to discern how God would want believers to think and live in every unique situation that confronts them and in every opportunity that presents itself. Just as the children of light will learn what is pleasing to the Lord (5:10), so those who are wise will understand what the will of the Lord is.* "The use of [GK suniemi, 'understanding'] emphasises the need for intellectual effort (cf 1 Pet 1.13) in discerning the Lord's will. Unlike 3.4 where the noun referred to insight given by God, the verb here refers to human insight, though when set in a Christian context this is never mere human insight but insight guided by the Holy Spirit. True understanding of the Lord's will does not remain theoretical but involves the carrying out of it in practice. [Paul] does not tell how the Lord's will is to be discovered any more than in v. 10 he explained what is pleasing to God.... It is sufficient to note that here he stresses the need to use the enlightened mind in seeking out the path of true conduct. *Believers have to reason out for themselves what they should do, learning from their personal ongoing experience and the experience of others within their community. This may be why [Paul] moves on in vv. 19f to their common worship, for it*



"The word of God can be in the mind without being in the heart; but it cannot be in the heart without first being in the mind." – R.C. Sproul



gives them the opportunity to learn from one another." [Best, 506] "*In all these cases ['unwise, foolish'] means one who does not make a right use of his understanding, who does not see things in their true light, or estimate them according to their relative importance. It is here opposed to ['understanding']: 'Be ye not senseless, indiscriminating between what is true and false, right and wrong, important and unimportant, but understanding' (i.e., 'discerning') 'what the will of the Lord is.' That is, seeing things as he sees them, and making his will or judgment the standard of yours, and the rule of your conduct.*" [Hodge, 220] "As with many of the terms in this passage, 'understand' (συνίημι [suniēmi]) has its roots in Jewish wisdom. *It goes beyond simple cognitive awareness to applied knowledge.* Louw and Nida [Greek Lexicon] explain that the term entails employing

‘one’s capacity for understanding and thus to arrive at insight.’” [Arnold, 347] *So believers are to understand by careful consideration of individual circumstances what is the will of the Lord and then to carry out his will.*

‘UNDERSTANDING’ RELIES UPON WORD OF GOD — This reasoning process is predicated on hearing from the Lord and giving heed to his words as revealed in Scripture, as illustrated in the book of Proverbs:

- ‘My son, if you accept my words and store up my commands within you ... applying your heart to understanding (σύνεσις [sunesis]) ...’ (Prov 2:1,2)
- ‘... then you will understand (συνήσεις [sunēseis]) the fear of the LORD’ (Prov 2:5)
- ‘... For the LORD gives wisdom, and from his mouth come knowledge and understanding (σύνησις [sunēsis]).’ (Prov 2:6)
- ‘... Then you will understand (συνήσεις [sunēseis]) what is right and just and fair — every good path’ (Prov 2:9)

The Spirit of God is closely involved in this process (Eph 1:17; 6:17).

‘THE WILL OF THE LORD’ — The ‘Lord’ always refers to Christ in the book of Ephesians (except where it refers to human masters, 6:5,9); compare Paul’s statement here with his comments in Romans: *‘I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God’* (Rom 12:1,2) In this immediate context, part of this ‘understanding the will of the Lord’ relies upon making the most of opportunities as providentially presented to us. “Not independent reason but the illuminated perceptions of a soul awake to God will have a true intuition into ‘His will,’ both as to that invariable attitude of the Christian, subjection to and love of the will of God, and as to the detailed opportunities of action in that attitude.” [Moule, 135]

v. 18 — **and be not drunk with wine, (Tyndale, Geneva, KJV, YLT, RV, ASV); And do not get drunk with wine, (RSV, NKJV, NASV, NIV, ESV)** — καὶ μὴ μεθύσκεσθε οἴνῳ [kai mē methuskesthe oinō] — **SURPRISING SWITCH FROM GENERALITIES TO A SPECIFIC SIN** — This third contrast may not be overly surprising but there have been questions as to why Paul would introduce a specific sin at this point: in vv. 15-17 everything has been general (‘fools’ vs. ‘wise’, ‘being foolish’ vs. ‘understanding the will of the Lord’); v. 18a forbids one specific sin (drunkenness); then vv. 19-20 return to generalities. Because ‘drunkenness’ refers to a specific sin, at first glance it appears Paul would have been more appropriate to have added it to the sequences of 4:25-32. Why here? Several suggestions have been given but most seem to reject any specific reason (see the final point). Theories:

- **WAS PAUL MERELY QUOTING FROM THE OT?** — Paul may have been quoting Prov 23:31 (LXX), the only other place in Scripture where the expression ‘do not get drunk with wine’ appears but this would only account for the form of Paul’s comment, not the reason for it.
- **WAS PAUL THINKING OF MIS-USE OF THE ‘LOVE FEAST’?** — As Paul wrote to the Corinthians (1 Cor 11:17ff), were the worshipers eating and drinking too much at the

Lord's Table or the accompanying 'love feast'? Since Paul follows this contrast with worship in vv. 19f, some have considered this a possibility. But if this was so, Paul would have probably been more specific. There is also no evidence the problems in Corinth were being duplicated in the churches that received this letter.

● **WAS PAUL THINKING OF SOME OF THE MYSTERY RELIGIONS, ESPECIALLY THAT OF DIONYSIUS (AKA BACCHUS)?** — Considering the pagan background of which the Gentile believers had been a part, many of the religious 'celebration' services included drunkenness; was that being carried over into their new life? Or possibly Paul was just denying the connection of Christianity with pagan religious drunkenness? But again, if this was so, Paul would have probably been more specific.

● **WAS PAUL MERELY ADDRESSING A WIDELY CONDEMNED THEME?** — The Jews (among many ancients) rightly considered drunkenness a sin and it was common in the ancient world. While wine itself is neither condemned nor approved in the Scriptures, the Word of God has much to say about its use and misuse:

'Wine is a mocker, strong drink is a brawler, and whoever is led astray by it is not wise.' (Prov 20:1)

'Who has woe? Who has sorrow? Who has contentions? Who has complaints? Who has wounds without cause? Who has redness of eyes? Those who linger long at the wine, those who go in search of mixed wine. Do not look on the wine when it is red, when it sparkles in the cup, when it swirls around smoothly; at the last it bites like a serpent, and stings like a viper. Your eyes will see strange things, and your heart will utter perverse things. Yes, you will be like one who lies down in the midst of the sea, or like one who lies at the top of the mast, saying: "They have struck me, but I was not hurt; they have beaten me, but I did not feel it. When shall I awake, that I may seek another drink?"' (Prov 23:29-35)

'But take heed to yourselves, lest your hearts be weighed down with carousing, drunkenness, and cares of this life, and that Day come on you unexpectedly.' (Luke 21:34)

'Let us walk properly, as in the day, not in revelry and drunkenness, not in lewdness and lust, not in strife and envy.' (Rom 13:13)

'But now I have written to you not to keep company with anyone named a brother, who is sexually immoral, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or an extortioner — not even to eat with such a person.' (1 Cor 5:11)

'Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God.' (1 Cor 6:9-11)

'Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, envy, murders, drunkenness,

revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.’ (Gal 5:19-21)

Other writers outside of the Scriptures:

“Wine acts like a drug producing folly.” (Philo, De Vita Contemplativa [‘On the Contemplative Life’] 74).

“Do not be drunk with wine, because wine perverts the mind from truth, arouses the impulses of desire, and leads the eyes into the path of error.” (Targum of Judges 14.1)

Isocrates warning Demonicus about becoming intoxicated at drinking parties: *“For when the mind is impaired by wine, it is like chariots which have lost their drivers.... The soul stumbles again and again when the intellect is impaired.” (Isocrates, Demonicus 32)*

Andrew Lincoln, 344: “But Philo’s reflections on drunkenness are equally illuminating. Not only does he identify drunkenness with spiritual folly (cf. *De Ebr.* 11, 95, 125-26, 154), but he also sees a comparison between it and being possessed by God: *‘Now when grace fills the soul, that soul thereby rejoices and smiles and dances, for it is possessed and inspired, so that to many of the unenlightened it may seem to be drunken, crazy, and beside itself.... For with the God-possessed not only is the soul wont to be stirred and goaded as it were into ecstasy but the body also is flushed and fiery ... and thus many of the foolish are deceived and suppose that the sober are drunk ... and it is true that these sober ones are drunk in a sense.’” (Philo, De Ebrietate [‘On Drunkenness’] 146-148)*

None of these however explains why Paul would introduce drunkenness here.

● MOST PROBABLY MENTIONED SINCE IT WAS A COMMON SIN AND IT PROVIDED A COMPARABLE CONTRAST — There is no evidence of these churches having a particular problem with alcoholism. Even the sins Paul mentions (lying, theft, anger, improper talk in 4:25-29) is not because these were particular sins at Ephesus but were common failings, therefore drunkenness should probably be taken in the same way. If Paul thought the church was full of alcoholics, his comments would probably have been more explicit. So why the reference to this particular sin at this point? All attempts to solve the problem are not really satisfactory; the best we can accomplish is make an informed guess. The context is that of ‘fools’ vs. ‘wise’; ‘do not be foolish’ vs. ‘understand the will of the Lord’; and of the wise use of time since ‘the days are evil.’ ***Fitting in with the context, drunkenness “... robs the mind of orderliness and therefore good behaviour, ordinary moral restraints are loosened; those who are drunk are more likely to imagine they are wise when in fact they are unwise.” [Best, 508]; “... and while drunk they would be unable to comprehend intelligently the will of the Lord. [Hoehner, 700] “The shift from the notion of drunkenness to that of being filled with the Spirit is not as abrupt as it may appear at first sight. The former represents folly; the latter is the prerequisite for wisdom. Both involve the self coming under the control of an external power, and the states of alcoholic and of religious intoxication were often compared. Luke’s Pentecost narrative, where the earliest believers’ experience of being filled with the Spirit is***

mistaken for drunkenness (cf. Acts 2:4, 13, 15), is frequently cited in this connection, although there is no evidence that [Paul] is actually drawing on the Acts passage.”

[Lincoln, 344] *As Andrew Lincoln mentioned, the crowd surrounding the Apostles on the Day of Pentecost were quick to assume those preaching were drunk. Why? Were they staggering around? Did they have a hard time standing? They were probably mistaken for being drunk because to the crowd, what was being preached was senseless, mere babbling, the ramblings of fools. Is that not what the Gospel is to those who are lost?*

WHAT IS THE LESSON FOR BELIEVERS TODAY? — “God wants his people to be completely under the influence of his Spirit. Anything that overwhelms or replaces the influence of the Spirit needs to be resisted and rejected. Coming under the influence of alcohol is one such activity that one needs to stay away from completely. Being under the influence of alcohol means that we cannot be under the influence of the Spirit. Naturally this would extend to various forms of drugs that dull one’s senses or, even worse, lead to an altered state of consciousness. It is important to note that Paul does not completely forbid the consumption of alcohol, but as Calvin wisely notes, ‘he forbids all excessive and immoderate drinking.’ One of the difficulties here is that people are not often a good judge of how much alcohol they can handle before it begins to impair their senses.... It should be noted that one difference between the ancient world and now is that there were no high-proof alcoholic beverages in the Graeco-Roman world. In other words, there were no 100-proof (50 percent alcohol by volume) or 86-proof whiskeys at the time that Paul was writing this. Pure distillation was invented only in the eighth century AD. What this means for us is that the possibility for drunkenness increases dramatically with the consumption of distilled alcoholic beverages.” [Arnold, 360]

wherein is excess; (Tyndale, Geneva, KJV); in which is dissoluteness, (YLT); wherein is riot, (RV, ASV); for that is debauchery; (RSV); in which is dissipation; (NKJV); for that is dissipation, (NASV); which leads to debauchery. (NIV); for that is debauchery, (ESV) — ἐν ᾧ ἐστὶν ἀσωτία [en hō estin asōtia] **— THE ‘IN WHICH’ REFERS BACK TO ‘DRUNK’ AND NOT SIMPLY TO THE NOUN ‘WINE’ —** *The contrast is not between the instruments (wine and the Spirit) but between the two states expressed by the two verbs: being drunk leads to dissipation but being filled by the Spirit leads to joy in fellowship and obedience to the commands of the Lord’s will.* [Best, 508; Arnold, 349; Hoehner, 700; O’Brien, 389; Moule, 135] *“The literal translation of this clause would be ‘in which is dissipation.’ The thought is that to become drunk involves one in an action which is characteristic of a dissipated life.”* [Lincoln, 337]

‘DISSIPATION, DEBAUCHERY’ DEFINED — ἐστὶν ἀσωτία [en hō estin asōtia] **—** The word Paul uses here is ἀσωτία [asōtia] and can be variously translated as is obvious by the versions being used in this study above. Add to that the translations by the commentators:

‘And do not be drunk with wine — it brings ruin —’ [Ernest Best]

‘And do not get drunk with wine, leading to dissipation’ [Andrew Lincoln]; cp. *‘And do not get drunk with wine, in which there is dissipation’* [Harold Hoehner]

‘Do not get drunk with wine, which is a senseless waste’ [Clinton Arnold]

‘Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery’ [Peter O’Brien]; cp. *‘Do not get drunk with wine, in which is debauchery’* [Frank Thielman]

Some definitions:

debauchery – noun: *excessive indulgence in sensual pleasures; intemperance.*

dissipation – noun: *dissolute way of living, especially excessive drinking of liquor; intemperance.*

dissolute – adjective: *indifferent to moral restraints; given to immoral or improper conduct; licentious; dissipated.*

“The problem with drunkenness is that it leads to ‘debauchery,’ or ‘behavior which shows lack of concern or thought for the consequences of an action.’ [Merkle, 95] “In drunkenness, he says, there is [asōtia], ‘revelry,’ ‘debauchery,’ ‘riot,’ whatever tends to destruction; for the word is derived from ἄσωτος [asōtos], which means ‘what cannot be saved,’ one given up to a destructive course of life.” [Hodge, 220] “The meaning therefore is, that drunkards throw off quickly every restraint of modesty or shame; that where wine reigns, profligacy naturally follows; and consequently, that all who have any regard to moderation or decency ought to avoid and abhor drunkenness.” [Calvin, 315] “The term ἄσωτος [asōtos], from α [a] privative and σώζω [sōzō], is the picture of a sad and very common result. It is sometimes used by the classics to signify one who is, as we say, ‘past redemption’.... [The adverb form of this word] is used of the conduct of the prodigal son in the far country in Luke xv. 7.... ***There is in the vice of intemperance that kind of dissoluteness which brooks no restraint, which defies all efforts to reform it, and which sinks lower and lower into hopeless and helpless ruin....*** This tremendous sin of intemperance is all the more to be shunned as its hold is so great on its victims, for with periodical remorse there is periodical inebriety; the fatal cup is again coveted and drained; while character, fortune, and life are risked and lost in the gratification of an appetite of all others the most brutal in form and brutifying in result. There are few vices out of which there is less hope of recovery — its haunts are so numerous and its hold is so tremendous.” [Eadie, 396f] “The word family of the noun ἄσωτία [asōtia] originally had the idea of an ‘incurable’ sickness and was used of ‘shamelessness, dissipation, profligacy, debauchery.’ Aristotle discusses the term ἄσωτία [asōtia] stating that people with this vice are prodigals who waste their substance and are in the path of ruination of their own lives. [Aristotle, *Ethica Nicomachea* 4.1.2-5] Most prodigals squander their money in debauchery and have no high moral standards as they readily yield to the temptation of pleasure. [Werner Foester, in the *Theological Dictionary of the NT*] summarizes ἄσωτία [asōtia] as a ‘wild and undisciplined life.’ In the LXX, the adjective ἄσωτος [asōtos] is found only in Prov 7:11 and the noun ἄσωτία [asōtia] is found only in Prov 28:7 and 2 Macc 6:4 where it continues to have the idea of ‘debauchery’ and ‘profligacy.’ Josephus uses the noun ἄσωτος [asōtos] twice: (1) Anion, Hyrcanus’ steward in Alexandria, questioned Hyrcanus’ son as to why he lived a ‘dissolute’ life in contrast to his father who had accumulated wealth by hard work and by restraining his desires; and (2) drunken Vitellius, knowing his end was imminent, gorged himself with the most lavish and ‘luxurious’ banquet. The word ‘luxurious’ is used in the sense of wasteful or without any restraint. In the NT the adverb ἄσωτως [asōtōs] is used only in Luke 15:13 where it relates how the prodigal son squandered all his money in ‘dissolute’ living. The noun ἄσωτία [asōtia] occurs three times: (1) in Titus 1:6 where believers are told to select elders whose children are believers not accused of ‘debauchery’; (2) 1 Pet 4:4 mentions that those in the world are surprised that believers do not join them in their excesses of ‘dissipation’ or ‘ruination’; and (3) in the present verse. ***Hence, it has the idea of a disorderly life resulting from the lack of self-control. It refers to people who waste their resources to gratify their own sensual desires. They lack discipline that leads to***

excesses that can lead to ruination. The word literally means ‘incorrigibility.’ A drunk person lacks understanding and control. Thus, in this context Paul instructs believers not to be drunk with wine which causes unrestrained, dissolute living, leading only to ruin. It is difficult to select one precise word that describes this condition but probably ‘dissipation’ is the closest. It is the opposite of being wise which takes full advantage of every opportunity (vv. 15-16).”

[Hoehner, 700f] *“Paul condemns drunkenness as an utter and senseless waste. The term is often translated as ‘dissipation’ or ‘debauchery.’ The basic idea of the word is wastefulness and is often used in contexts of moral exhortation to describe a life that is devoid of virtue and representing a waste of time (contrasted to one who ‘redeems the time’).”* [Arnold, 349]

“Because of the indefiniteness of the word it is best translated with a general term and the context allowed to impart precision, if any is intended.” [Best, 508]

but be filled with the Spirit; (KJV, RV, ASV, RSV, NKJV, NASV, NIV, ESV); but be fulfilled with the Spirit, (Tyndale, Geneva); but be filled in the Spirit, (YLT) — ἀλλὰ πληροῦσθε ἐν πνεύματι [alla plērousthe en pneumatī] — **REFERS TO THE HOLY SPIRIT** — The ‘*Spirit*’ here is not the human spirit but the Holy Spirit, the Third Person of the Trinity. The meaning is not ‘*be filled in your spirits*’; if that were so, what is to fill your spirit is left completely undefined. In addition, Paul uses the term ‘spirit’ thirteen other times in Ephesians (1:13, 17; 2:2, 18, 22; 3:5, 16; 4:3, 4, 23, 30; 6:17, 18) and each time it refers to a spirit outside of a person. Once it refers to the spirit of the devil or his demons (2:2) but the other twelve times it refers to the Spirit of God (1:17; 4:3, 23 are disputed but is understood by many to refer to the Holy Spirit). [Hoehner, 702f] Furthermore, two other times in the NT (Luke 1:15; Acts 2:13-18) the use of wine is contrasted with ‘*spirit*’ and each of those times the reference is to the Holy Spirit. *“The command to be filled with the Spirit stands in the center of the passage and has links with what precedes — wisdom — as well as with what follows — worship. The Spirit provides the power for both aspects of Christian living. Believers, who have already been reminded of their sealing by the Spirit (1:13; 4:30) and enjoined not to grieve the Spirit (4:30), are now exhorted to allow the Spirit to have the fullest control that they are conscious of in their lives and to open themselves continually to the one who can enable them to walk wisely and to understand Christ’s will and who can inspire their worship and thanksgiving.”* [Lincoln, 344f] Being filled with the Spirit — this does not mean we get “more” of the Holy Spirit. “To be drunk” does not mean that a person is incapable of taking another drink, rather it means the alcohol controls that person. In like manner, “being filled with the Holy Spirit” does not mean that we get “more” of the Holy Spirit but that we are controlled by Him. We do not get “more” of the Holy Spirit but the Holy Spirit gets “more” of us!

THE VERB IS A COMMAND — The verb ‘*be filled*’ is in the imperative mood, meaning this is a command. *Being a command places the responsibility upon each believer ‘to be filled.’ To not do this is to be in disobedience.*

THE VERB IS PASSIVE — While the verb is a command, it is also in the passive voice meaning this is not something the believer is capable of performing himself but is dependent upon the work of the Holy Spirit. This does not mean it is not the believer’s responsibility to be filled; as mentioned above, this is a command. *But rather the passive voice suggests believers cannot fill themselves; to be filled requires yielding and cooperating with the Spirit.*

REPEATED ACTION? — The words ‘*get drunk*’ and ‘*be filled*’ are both in the present tense which is often translated with a ‘*repeated*’ or ‘*continued action*’ sense. Some would deny that emphasis here, giving Paul’s listing of commands in 4:25ff as an example; e.g., the verb form in

those verses does not demand to mean the believers continually lie, lose their tempers, etc. But Paul's command *'do not get drunk'* would not necessarily demand they were in a constant drunken stupor but it could mean being drunk as a repeated condition that could characterize the believer. ***Therefore 'to experience the Spirit's fullness' is to be a continuing one, a repeated action of being filled with the Spirit. John MacArthur translates it as 'be being kept filled.'***

BE FILLED 'IN,' 'WITH' OR 'BY' THE HOLY SPIRIT? — The preposition used in v.18b is most frequently translated *'in'* but most commentators and Bible Versions would not demand that emphasis here. As with most words, context would demand how the word is translated. As seen in the versions listed above, most would state the emphasis here is best matched by using the word *'with'*. What difference does it make?

- ***'Be filled by the Spirit'*** would understand Christ as the One Who does the filling (alternatively, the Holy Spirit is the One Who does the filling, *'by the Spirit'* or *'by means of the Spirit'*) and the content, while not specifically mentioned in this verse, is probably the fullness of God (1:23; 3:19). A variation on this view makes the Holy Spirit not only the content of the filling but the agent or means of the filling as well. The sense would therefore be that the Holy Spirit is the means by which believers are filled with Christ and His will.
- ***'Be filled with the Spirit'*** would make the content of the filling to be the Holy Spirit Himself. One example of this *'filling'* is the temple: under the Old Covenant, the temple was filled with the glory of God (Isa 6:1; Ezek 43:5; 44:4). The *Shekinah* glory of God (as it was known by the later rabbis) is coextensive with God's Spirit. Under the new covenant, both believers individually (*'Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own?'* — 1 Cor 6:19) and as a church body as the believers gather together (*'Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? If anyone defiles the temple of God, God will destroy him. For the temple of God is holy, which temple you are.'* — 1 Cor 3:16,17) have replaced the physical structure of the temple as the dwelling place of God's Spirit (see also Eph 2:22). Along with the *'temple'* analogy would be the contrast present within v. 18 better fits *'do not get drunk with wine.'* Wine is the content (the beverage) that is consumed and that makes one drunk. By analogy, the Spirit is the content with which the believer is filled.

So while most translate this as *'with'*, there is probably a sense in which both are true. Regardless of the fine details and the particular grammar nuances of which the scholars like to argue, the bottom line is ***the Holy Spirit inhabits the lives of believers (and churches) and Paul is wanting this surrender to the Holy Spirit's will to happen in an ever-increasing manner.***

'BE FILLED' IS KEY, WITH THE FOLLOWING FIVE PARTICIPLES DEPENDENT ON IT — The command to *'be filled'* is an important one, with the following five participles all dependent upon it: *'speaking'* (v. 19); *'singing'* (v. 19); *'making melody'* (v. 19); *'giving thanks'* (v. 20); and *'submitting'* (v. 21).

BEING FILLED ALLOWS THE HOLY SPIRIT TO CONTROL THE ACTIONS OF BELIEVERS — *Those under the influence of alcohol are no longer in control of their actions; in like manner those under the control of the Holy Spirit has surrendered their will to the Lord and thus no longer control themselves. This is what is elsewhere called 'dying to*

ourselves'. Being 'filled with the Holy Spirit' is therefore not a dramatic, esoteric experience of suddenly being energized and spiritualized, either temporarily (as some believe would be evidenced by speaking in other languages) or permanently (as some believe happens when they 'receive the second blessing'). Nor is it the notion at the other extreme: stoically trying to obey the Lord under our own fleshly power. Nothing of the flesh is blessed by the Lord. (Rom 8:1-11)

*"The continuous aspect of being filled ('be being kept filled') involves day-by-day, moment-by-moment submission to the Spirit's control. The passive aspect indicates that it is not something we do but that we allow to be done in us. The filling is entirely the work of the Spirit Himself, but He works only through our willing submission. The present aspect of the command indicates that we cannot rely on a past filling nor live in expectation of future filling. We can rejoice in past fillings and hope for future fillings, but we can live only in present filling. The mark of a good marriage relationship is not the love and devotion the husband and wife have had in the past — as meaningful and lovely as that may have been — nor is it the love and devotion they hope to have in the future. The strength of their marriage is in the love and devotion they have for each other in the present.... [**'Being filled'**] has the connotation of total control. The person who is filled with sorrow (see John 16:6) is no longer under his own control but is totally under the control of that emotion. In the same way, someone who is filled with fear (Luke 5:26), anger (Luke 6:11), faith (Acts 6:5), or even Satan (Acts 5:3) is no longer under his own control but under the total control of that which dominates him. To be filled in this sense is to be totally dominated and controlled, and it is the most important sense for believers. As we have already seen, to be filled with the Spirit is not to have Him somehow progressively added to our life until we are full of Him. It is to be under His total domination and control.....* When the church at Jerusalem wanted men to free the apostles for the more important work of prayer and ministering the Word, they chose men such as Stephen, who was 'full of faith and of the Holy Spirit' (Acts 6:4-5). Because Stephen continued in the fullness of the Spirit, 'he gazed intently into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God,' even as he was about to be stoned to death (Acts 7:55). ***Being filled with the Spirit detaches us from the desires, the standards, the objectives, the fears, and the very system of this world and gives us a vision of God that comes in no other way. Being filled with the Spirit makes everything else of secondary importance, and often of no importance at all.***" [MacArthur, 249ff]

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN 'BEING FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT' AND THE WORD OF GOD — The parallels between these verses in Ephesians with Colossians 3 have long been noticed. Paul said in Colossians:

'Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him. Wives, submit to your own husbands, as is fitting in the Lord. Husbands, love your wives and do not be bitter toward them. Children, obey your parents in all things, for this is well pleasing to the Lord. Fathers, do not provoke your children, lest they become discouraged. Bondservants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh, not with eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but in sincerity of heart, fearing God.' (Col 3:16-22)

While not perfectly identical, we see certain actions having the results of singing, giving thanks, and submissiveness. In Ephesians we see the 'cause' leading to the 'effect' is 'being filled with the Holy Spirit' while in Colossians the 'cause' is 'letting the Word of Christ dwell in you richly.' **"It**

is therefore easy to conclude that the filling of the Spirit is not an esoteric, mystical experience bestowed on the spiritual elite through some secret formula or other such means. It is simply taking the Word of Christ (Scripture) and letting it indwell and infuse every part of our being. To be filled with God's Spirit is to be filled with His Word. And as we are filled with God's Word, it controls our thinking and action, and we thereby come more and more under the Spirit's control." [MacArthur, 252]

HOW DOES 'BEING FILLED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT' COMPARE WITH OTHER MINISTRIES OF THE SPIRIT? — It may help clarify what Paul is discussing here if we compare the 'filling of the Holy Spirit' with other ways in which the Spirit ministers:

● **THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT AT THE MOMENT OF OUR SALVATION**
— *The following items relates to individual believers, happens at the moment of our salvation (therefore has to do with our justification), and is never commanded of believers in the Scriptures:*

BELIEVERS ARE SEALED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT — *This serves as a mark of identification or ownership, showing the believer belongs to God and the Holy Spirit is the 'down-payment' of our future inheritance:*

'who also has sealed us and given us the Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee' (2 Cor 1:22)

'Now He who has prepared us for this very thing is God, who also has given us the Spirit as a guarantee.' (2 Cor 5:5)

'In Him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise' (Eph 1:13)

'And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.' (Eph 4:30)

BELIEVERS ARE INDWELT BY THE HOLY SPIRIT — *The Holy Spirit is thus a resource of God's presence and power:*

'He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water. But this He spoke concerning the Spirit, whom those believing in Him would receive; for the Holy Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.' (John 7:38,39)

'And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever — the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you.' (John 14:16,17)

'But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His. And if Christ is in you, the body is dead because of sin, but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you.' (Rom 8:9-11)

'Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God.' (1 Cor 2:12)

'Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own?' (1 Cor 6:19)

'And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, "Abba, Father!"' (Gal 4:6)

'Now he who keeps His commandments abides in Him, and He in him. And by this we know that He abides in us, by the Spirit whom He has given us.' (1 John 3:24)

'By this we know that we abide in Him, and He in us, because He has given us of His Spirit.' (1 John 4:13)

● **THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN OUR EVERY DAY LIFE** — *The following items relates to individual believers, happens on a daily basis (therefore has to do with our sanctification), and are commands to believers in the Scriptures:*

BELIEVERS ARE TO BE FILLED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT — *As noted in this lesson, this is a command to submit our wills to the Holy Spirit:*

'And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit' (Eph 5:18)

BELIEVERS ARE TO DAILY WALK IN THE HOLY SPIRIT — *In a similar way of saying the same thing, this is also a command to submit our wills to the Holy Spirit:*

'that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit.' (Rom 8:4,5).

'I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.... If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.' (Gal 5:16-18, 25).

“In examining these various passages regarding the injunction to walk by the Spirit, they seem to parallel being filled by the Spirit.... The point is that walking by the Spirit and being filled by the Spirit mean that the Spirit of God directs and empowers a believer to live a life pleasing to God and his will. Those who live under the control of their flesh will not please God and God does not control their lives.... The filling by the Spirit is more than the Spirit's indwelling — it is his activities realized in and through us. Believers are commanded to be filled by the Spirit so that they will understand the will of the Lord and allow God's control of their lives, thus providing enablement to make the most of every opportunity rather than succumbing to the desires of the flesh. If believers were only filled with wisdom, the influence would be impersonal; however, the filling by the Spirit adds God's personal presence, influence, and enablement to walk wisely, all of which are

beneficial to believers and pleasing to God. With the indwelling each Christian has all of the Spirit, but the command to be filled by the Spirit enables the Spirit to have all of the believer. The wise walk, therefore, is one that is characterized by the Holy Spirit's control." [Hoehner, 705]

"To be filled with the Spirit is to live in the consciousness of the personal presence of the Lord Jesus Christ, as if we were standing next to Him, and to let His mind dominate our life. It is to fill ourselves with God's Word, so that His thoughts will be our thoughts, His standards our standards, His work our work, and His will our will. As we yield to the truth of Christ, the Holy Spirit will lead us to say, do, and be what God wants us to say, do, and be. *'We all, with unveiled face beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit' (2 Cor. 3:18).* Christ consciousness leads to Christ likeness. Perhaps the best analogy of moment-by-moment yielding to the Holy Spirit's control is the figure of walking, the figure Paul introduced in Ephesians 4:1. Walking involves moving one step at a time, and can be done in no other way. ***Being filled with the Spirit is walking thought by thought, decision by decision, act by act under the Spirit's control.*** The Spirit-filled life yields every step to the Spirit of God. *'Walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh. For the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are in opposition to one another, so that you may not do the things that you please' (Gal. 5:16-17).* Our flesh is the beachhead of sin, the yet unredeemed part of our humanness that is exposed to and inclined toward sin. Even as Christians, as new creatures in Christ, our spiritual and moral Achilles' heel is the flesh, the remnant of the old self that seeks to drag us down from behavior consistent with our heavenly citizenship. Paul spoke of it as *'a different law in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind, and making me a prisoner of the law of sin which is in my members' (Rom. 7:23).* The only way to override that residual sinfulness, our evil desires, and the temptations of Satan is to function in the Spirit." [MacArthur, 253]

● **THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN OUR GATHERING TOGETHER IN THE CHURCH BODY** — ***Some may note the absence of a very important work of the Holy Spirit: being baptized by the Holy Spirit. I personally do not relate this to individual believers directly (although there are indirect benefits) but rather as a work to identify and empower our local churches. This is therefore a historic item accomplished in time past (Pentecost) but has on-going results. Note as well this is never commanded of believers in the Scriptures:***

THE BAPTISM OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

'And being assembled together with them, He commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the Promise of the Father, "which," He said, "you have heard from Me; for John truly baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now."' (Acts 1:4,5)

'While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit fell upon all those who heard the word. And those of the circumcision who believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out on the Gentiles also. For they heard them speak with tongues and magnify God. Then Peter answered, "Can anyone forbid water, that these should not be baptized who

have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?” And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. Then they asked him to stay a few days.... And as I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell upon them, as upon us at the beginning. Then I remembered the word of the Lord, how He said, “John indeed baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit.” If therefore God gave them the same gift as He gave us when we believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I that I could withstand God?’ (Acts 10:44-48; 11:15-17)

‘For as the body is one and has many members, but all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ. For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body — whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free — and have all been made to drink into one Spirit.... Now you [referring to the believers within the church at Corinth] are the body of Christ, and members individually.’ (1 Cor 12:12,13,27)