
The Summation of All Things in Christ

Studies in Ephesians with a Local Church Emphasis

LESSON CXIV : 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 ποινηραὶ 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 ποινηραὶ εἰσιν. ¹⁷ διὰ τοῦτο μὴ γίνεσθε ἄφρονες, ἀλλὰ συνιέτε 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: (NOT BETWEEN TWO ENTITIES, WINE vs. SPIRIT BUT ...) DRUNKENNESS vs. SPIRIT-CONTROLLED

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

THEME 2: “WORSHIP” (NOTE: THE THIRD CONTRAST FORMS THE TRANSITION FROM “WISDOM” TO “WORSHIP”) — THIS CENTERS AROUND 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)*

OVERVIEW — **“When Christians are filled with the Spirit they worship together. When this happens they: (i) speak to one another in song (v. 19a), (ii) praise the Lord through song (v. 19b; cf 2 Sam 23.2 for the movement from Spirit to song), (iii) return thanks to Christ and God (v. 20), (iv) submit to one another (v. 21) and this finally leads on directly to the nature of conduct in the home.”** [Best, 510] “This section of paraenesis continues the contrast of 5:3-14 between the behavior of the believing community and that of unbelieving outsiders. Whereas the

previous section had carried this out in terms of sexual morality and the antithesis between light and darkness, 5:15-20 begins with the contrast between wisdom and folly. Wise living is then shown to be Spirit-filled living, which is described primarily in terms of its consequences for the community's corporate worship.... The focus of the passage is again on believers and the conduct that is required of them if they are to be distinct from the surrounding society. This conduct can be summed up in terms of a wise living that discerns the times and the Lord's will, an openness to and appropriation of the power of the Spirit, and a participation in corporate worship that is full of song, praise, and thanksgiving. The explicit emphasis on the Church's joyful celebration in worship in vv 19, 20 is distinctive to this section of the letter. The three participial clauses incorporate several aspects of worship, highlighting the importance of song, indicating the role this can play in corporate edification ('speaking to one another...'), stressing the need for worship to come from the individual's heart, telling of praise addressed to Christ and thanksgiving directed to God, and above all making clear the indispensable function of the Spirit. The mention of 'speaking to one another' in v 19 recalls [Paul's] concern in earlier sections to contrast outsiders' sinful speech with believers' edifying discourse. As opposed to the coarse and empty words of outsiders (5:4, 6), believers' speech is characterized by the psalms, hymns, and songs the Spirit puts in their mouths.... *Being filled with the Spirit involves not simply private mystical experiences but corporate worship and relationships. The singing prompted by the Spirit is an addressing of fellow believers, and the mutual submission of v 21 is also a manifestation of the Spirit's fullness. Thus believers' being filled with the Spirit means, on the one hand, their praising Christ and thanking the Father together and, on the other, their speaking and submitting to one another. According to [Paul's] perspective, therefore, the fullness of the Spirit can only be properly experienced in community....* Again, a primary purpose of this paraenetic material is to give the readers a clearer sense of their distinctive identity by contrasting the qualities which should characterize their conduct with the folly and drunkenness of the world. The Spirit-filled worship which [Paul] enjoins also contributes to the community's sense of identity and cohesion that he is attempting to foster. The spiritual songs, the praise, and the thanksgiving all help to shape believers' attitudes and to form the community's ethos. The development of the argument in this section suggests, however, that the emphasis on the experience of the Spirit and on the community's worship is not intended by [Paul] to lead to an obsession with religious enthusiasm for its own sake or to an absorption by the community in its own life and a corresponding retreat from the world. On the contrary, as has been noted, the passage links Spirit-led worship with the wisdom required for living in this present evil age. It is precisely the experience of being filled with the Spirit that gives believers understanding of their Lord's will, and it is the spiritual songs that are a means of promoting the knowledge of that will. In this way the community's worship can be seen to make a vital contribution to its wise living in the world." [Lincoln, 347ff]

v. 19 – 21 — speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord, giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, submitting to one another in the fear of God. — λαλῶντες ἑαυτοῖς ψαλμοῖς καὶ ὕμνοις καὶ ᾠδαῖς πνευματικαῖς ᾄδοντες καὶ ψάλλοντες ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ ὑμῶν τῷ κυρίῳ εὐχαριστοῦντες πάντοτε ὑπὲρ πάντων ἐν ὀνόματι τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ τῷ θεῷ καὶ πατρὶ ὑποτασσόμενοι ἀλλήλοις ἐν φόβῳ Θεοῦ. [lalountes heautois phalmois kai hymnois kai ōdais pneumatikais adontes kai psallontes en tē kardia humō tō kuriō eucharistountes pantote hyper pantōn en onomati tou kuriou hēmōn Iēsou Christou tō theō kai patri hupotassomenoi allēlois en phobō Theou] — **THE RELATIONSHIP OF 'BEING FILLED' WITH WORSHIP** — As previously noted, the five participles in vv. 19-21 depend heavily on

'being filled with the Spirit,' but there are nuances of how the participles relate back to the main verb. Briefly:

- A less accepted view is that the participles are understood as commands (an *'imperative sense'*); in other words, *'be filled with the Spirit. Speak to one another ... Sing ...'*. Several Bible versions take this position; e.g., Eph 5:18-21:

'Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another with psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit. Sing and make music from your heart to the Lord, always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.' (NIV; TNIV [Today's NIV])

'Do not get drunk with wine; this is simply dissipation; be filled with the Spirit. Sing psalms and hymns and inspired songs among yourselves, singing and chanting to the Lord in your hearts, always and everywhere giving thanks to God who is our Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Be subject to one another out of reverence for Christ.' (New Jerusalem Bible)

I am not a scholar nor a Greek grammarian but it strikes me odd that of these five participles, some would be understood as commands while the others are not.

- One common view is that *'be filled with the Spirit'* precedes the time of the participles; in other words, *'being filled with the Spirit leads to worship.'* Of those I use in these studies, this is the understanding of Harold Hoehner, 706; Andrew Lincoln, 345; Peter O'Brien, 387; John Eadie, 399. ***"Drunkness leads to disorderly and dissolute behavior, but being filled with the Spirit produces very different results — praise, thanksgiving, and, when the participle of v 21 is also included, mutual submission."*** [Lincoln, 345]

- Another equally common view is that *'being filled with the Spirit'* depends upon the participles; in other words, *'worship is a means of being filled with the Spirit.'* Clinton Arnold argues this makes the most sense both grammatically and in the context. ***"The regular act of gathering together with other believers to worship God and sing praise to his name is one of the means by which believers are filled with the Spirit. At this juncture, Paul employs a series of five present participles to clarify the means by which believers can be filled with the Spirit. These do not exhaust the various means of being filled with the Spirit, but Paul presents them as crucially important. Some reject the means interpretation because, as one interpreter puts it, 'it would be almost inconceivable to see this text suggesting that the way in which one is to be Spirit-filled is by a five-step, partially mechanical formula.' But that is not what Paul would be saying in this view. Rather, the text is simply asserting a connection between being filled with the Spirit and the church gathering together for corporate worship. This is not a mechanistic approach, but rather a recognition that God meets his people and strengthens them by his Spirit as they corporately worship him and praise his name."*** [Arnold, 351f]

- A few take the view that the verb and participles are contemporaneous (taking the participles as *'attendant circumstance'*). At least one Bible version takes this position:

'Do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery; but be filled with the Spirit, as you sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs among yourselves, singing and making melody to the Lord in your hearts, giving thanks to God the Father at all

times and for everything in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Be subject to one another out of reverence for Christ.’ (Eph 5:18-21 NRSV)

Even though this is argued against because of the grammar, I like the emphasis placed upon this view by Ernest Best, ***“there is neither worship without the Spirit nor a Spirit which does not lead to worship.”*** [Best, 509]

PARTICIPLE #1 – SPEAKING, ADDRESSING, COMMUNICATING

speaking, addressing — λαλοῦντες [lalountes] — According to BDAG, this word is defined as ‘(1) to make a sound, give forth sounds / tones; (2) to utter words, talk, speak.’ Harold Hoehner defines the word as ‘to communicate’. While a fine distinction, the synonym λέγω [legō] usually refers to the substance of what is said whereas our word here λαλέω [laleō] refers to the sound which communicates [Hoehner, 707]; e.g.,

the sound of a trumpet: *‘After these things I looked, and behold, a door standing open in heaven. And the first voice which I heard was like a trumpet speaking [laleō] with me, saying, [legō] “Come up here, and I will show you things which must take place after this.”’* (Rev 4:1)

thunder: *‘Now when the seven thunders uttered [laleō] their voices, I was about to write; but I heard a voice from heaven saying [legō] to me, “Seal up the things which the seven thunders uttered, and do not write them.”’* (Rev 10:4)

It would be incorrect to limit this term to our understanding of ‘speaking’ to the mere saying of words; e.g., Moses ‘spoke’ the words of his song to the entire assembly of Israel (Deut 31:30); Deborah ‘spoke’ her song to Israel (Judges 5:1) and David his song to the Lord (2 Sam 22:1; Ps 18:1). [Arnold, 352] ***“In this context Paul states that believers are to use their voices to communicate to one another. This communication is probably the same or similar to the ‘teaching and admonishing one another’ in the parallel passage in Col 3:16. It is not empty talk, for Paul exhorts, ‘let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, as you teach and admonish one another in all wisdom, with psalms, hymns, spiritual songs, singing with gratitude in your hearts to God.’”*** [Hoehner, 707]

to one another, to yourselves — ἑαυτοῖς [heautois] — **WORSHIP DIRECTED TOWARDS TWO AUDIENCES** — This is not to be understood as reflexive, ‘singing to themselves’ as if they sang for their own private pleasure. It could possibly indicate antiphonal singing, a practice going back to the Old Testament (see, e.g., Ezra 3:11; some of the Psalms); there are some writings to indicate early believers sometimes sang in such a fashion (e.g., see Pliny the Younger, *Epistles* 10, Letter 96). But if Paul had meant that, one would think he would have made it clearer; plus this understanding of the word is not possible in Col 3:16. [Best, 511] ***The best manner to understand this is believers singing with and for other believers in a congregational setting. “The singing of praise is always directed to God as the primary audience and recipient, but there is also a horizontal dimension. The people of God hear one another singing praise to God, and their hearts are encouraged and strengthened. In Col 3:16, Paul even ascribes a teaching function to the worship: ‘Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs’ (NASB).... There are two audiences. Worship is directed to God (5:20), but it is also directed to ‘one another’ (5:19). This is how it can have a teaching function as well.”*** [Arnold, 352f; 362]

“The psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs are part of believers’ addressing of one another in the assembly, serving as a means of edification, instruction, and exhortation (cf. also Col 3:16, ‘teaching and admonishing one another’).” [Lincoln, 345] *“To yourselves – R.V., one to another. The Gr. admits either rendering; but the parallel, Col. iii. 16 (‘teaching and admonishing, &c.’) is clearly for the R.V. here, as the much most natural reference there is to mutual edification. It has been thought that we have here a suggestion of responsive chanting. But this is most precarious, to say the least; the words being fully satisfied by the thought of the mutual spiritual help, most real and powerful now as then, given on any occasion of common spiritual praise.”* [Moule, 136] Therefore while *‘being filled with the Spirit’* is obviously an act of each believer, there is a corporate aspect of this as well: *‘speaking to one another’* (v. 19); *‘submitting yourselves one to another’* (v. 21). **Thus ‘let the Spirit fill you’ when you gather for worship!**

OUR SINGING IS FOR WORSHIP NOT EVANGELISM — “The primary audience for our singing is to be fellow believers, one another. Throughout Scripture the singing of God’s people is shown to be within the fellowship of believers. No music in the Bible is ever characterized as being or intended to be evangelistic. God may use the gospel content set to music to bring the truth to the lost and thus lead them to Himself. Since the message is so powerful, the open heart may receive it even though it comes with a melody. But that is not the intent for music, and when emotions are played on without a clear or complete presentation of God’s truth to the mind, such music can be counterproductive by producing a feeling of well-being and contentment that is a counterfeit of God’s peace and that serves to further insulate an unbeliever from the saving gospel.... The songs of faith are not for the world to sing or really even to hear. The unsaved person has no comprehension of the praises we sing, because he has no presence of God’s Spirit within him. He cannot sing the song of redemption because he is not redeemed. Christian singing is an expression of individual and corporate worship, of celebrating life together in Jesus Christ.” [MacArthur, 257f]

PAUL’S INSTRUCTIONS HERE INDICATE CLEAR SPEECH RATHER THAN THE SPEAKING IN OTHER LANGUAGES (‘TONGUES’) — Given that these songs are described as being addressed by believers to one another, it is likely to be intelligible singing rather than singing in tongues that is in view. [Lincoln, 346; Hoehner, 707]

in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, — ψαλμοῖς καὶ ὕμνοις καὶ ᾠδαῖς πνευματικαῖς [psalmois kai hymnois kai ōdais pneumatikais] — The sense here is that *‘we are to address, communicate to one another in our times of worship by means of psalms, hymns and spiritual songs.’* While there are minor distinctions between these three styles of song, it is generally agreed Paul used these not as a comprehensive list but to cover all the singing that went on in the multi-cultural churches. They are the three most common terms in the LXX for religious songs and often used interchangeably in the titles of the Psalms. The terms were also used by contemporary Jewish writers: Josephus tells us that David ‘composed songs [GK ōdas] and hymns [GK hymnous] to God in varied meters’ (*Ant.* 7.305) and that when Judas Maccabaeus celebrated the rededication of the temple, he delighted the people and honored God ‘with hymns [GK hymnois] and psalms [GK psalmois]’ (*Ant.* 12.323). Luke regularly uses the term [GK psalmos] for the material in the canonical book of Psalms (Luke 20:42; 24:44; Acts 1:20; 13:33), although Paul uses the same term to refer to a Spirit-inspired song that someone utters in a Christian assembly (1 Cor. 14:26; cf. 1 Cor. 14:15; James 5:13). That the use of song in the early churches was extensive is indirectly evidenced by Paul and Silas in prison: *‘But at midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them.’* (Acts 16:25) **One thing this does**

highlight is the various forms of songs used in worship. [Best, 511f; Arnold, 353; Lincoln, 345f; Hoehner, 708ff; Thielman, 361] ***“One may legitimately infer from the expression ‘psalms, hymns, and songs’ that a diversity of forms and styles is in view. Paul does not answer some of the questions that we may bring in terms of how this should be structured into the services, but it does represent a nudge away from a homogeneity of forms. In Paul’s day, the forms used in a particular house church may have been reflective of the diversity of cultural backgrounds of the people present.”*** [Arnold, 362]

It is well established the early churches both used OT Psalms and composed hymns of their own; e.g., Paul just quoted one a few verses back:

Therefore He says:

*“Awake, you who sleep,
Arise from the dead,
And Christ will give you light.”* (Eph 5:14)

Paul quotes or adapts other early hymns in various other places:

For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation, having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances, so as to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace, and that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity. And He came and preached peace to you who were afar off and to those who were near. For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father. (Eph 2:14-18)

And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness:

*God was manifested in the flesh,
Justified in the Spirit,
Seen by angels,
Preached among the Gentiles,
Believed on in the world,
Received up in glory.* (1 Tim 3:16)

Who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross. Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. (Phil 2:6-11)

He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him. And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist. And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence. For it pleased the Father that in Him all the fullness should dwell, and by Him to reconcile all things to Himself, by Him, whether things on earth or things in heaven, having made peace through the blood of His cross. (Col 1:15-20)

There are several in Luke's infancy narratives:

And Mary said:

*"My soul magnifies the Lord,
And my spirit has rejoiced in God my Savior.
For He has regarded the lowly state of His maidservant;
For behold, henceforth all generations will call me blessed.
For He who is mighty has done great things for me,
And holy is His name.
And His mercy is on those who fear Him
From generation to generation.
He has shown strength with His arm;
He has scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.
He has put down the mighty from their thrones,
And exalted the lowly.
He has filled the hungry with good things,
And the rich He has sent away empty.
He has helped His servant Israel,
In remembrance of His mercy,
As He spoke to our fathers,
To Abraham and to his seed forever." (Luke 1:46-55)*

Now his father Zacharias was filled with the Holy Spirit, and prophesied, saying:

*"Blessed is the Lord God of Israel,
For He has visited and redeemed His people,
And has raised up a horn of salvation for us
In the house of His servant David,
As He spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets,
Who have been since the world began,
That we should be saved from our enemies
And from the hand of all who hate us,
To perform the mercy promised to our fathers
And to remember His holy covenant,
The oath which He swore to our father Abraham:
To grant us that we,
Being delivered from the hand of our enemies,
Might serve Him without fear,
In holiness and righteousness before Him all the days of our life.
"And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Highest;
For you will go before the face of the Lord to prepare His ways,
To give knowledge of salvation to His people
By the remission of their sins,
Through the tender mercy of our God,
With which the Dayspring from on high has visited us;
To give light to those who sit in darkness and the shadow of death,
To guide our feet into the way of peace." (Luke 1:67-79)*

he took Him up in his arms and blessed God and said:

*“Lord, now You are letting Your servant depart in peace,
According to Your word;
For my eyes have seen Your salvation
Which You have prepared before the face of all peoples,
A light to bring revelation to the Gentiles,
And the glory of Your people Israel.” (Luke 2:28-32)*

Several songs are noted in the book of Revelations:

And they sang a new song, saying:

*“You are worthy to take the scroll,
And to open its seals;
For You were slain,
And have redeemed us to God by Your blood
Out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation,
And have made us kings and priests to our God;
And we shall reign on the earth.” (Rev 5:9-10)*

*“Therefore they are before the throne of God,
and serve him day and night in his temple;
and he who sits on the throne will shelter them with his presence.
They shall hunger no more, neither thirst anymore;
the sun shall not strike them,
nor any scorching heat.
For the Lamb in the midst of the throne will be their shepherd,
and he will guide them to springs of living water,
and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.” (Rev 7:15-17 ESV)*

And the twenty-four elders who sat before God on their thrones fell on their faces and worshiped God, saying:

*“We give You thanks, O Lord God Almighty,
The One who is and who was and who is to come,
Because You have taken Your great power and reigned.
The nations were angry, and Your wrath has come,
And the time of the dead, that they should be judged,
And that You should reward Your servants the prophets and the saints,
And those who fear Your name, small and great,
And should destroy those who destroy the earth.” (Rev 11:17-18)*

They sing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying:

*“Great and marvelous are Your works,
Lord God Almighty!
Just and true are Your ways,
O King of the saints!
Who shall not fear You, O Lord, and glorify Your name?
For You alone are holy.
For all nations shall come and worship before You,
For Your judgments have been manifested.” (Rev 15:3-4)*

in psalms — ψαλμοῖς [psalmois] — This term originally meant ‘*plucking*’ the string of a bow or the sound of a string instrument, which we may surmise that the singing of the psalms was accompanied by stringed instruments. Josephus uses this word to designate a harp-like stringed instrument. The word was used primarily in the context of Judaism and serves as the title in the LXX for the 150 songs of the Hebrew *Tehillim*, the book of ‘*praises*,’ and appears 72 times throughout the collection. By contrast, this term is far less frequent in Graeco-Roman texts of paganism. [Arnold, 353; Hoehner, 708; Lincoln, 345]

and hymns — καὶ ὕμνοις [kai hymnois] — Essentially this word means ‘*a song of praise to God.*’ The word in this noun form is used only here and Col 3:16, while the verb form is found in Mark 14:26 || Matt 26:30; Acts 16:25; and Heb 2:12. This word was commonly used in poetic ascriptions of praise to various gods and goddesses throughout antiquity. Some of the best known ascriptions are the ‘*Homeric Hymns*’ – an anonymous collection of thirty-four hymns of praise to the various pagan deities in the same style as Homer used in the writing of *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. In Ephesus inscriptions have been recovered which refers to an association of hymn writers in honor of ‘*the most holy goddess Artemis.*’ So while this term does occur occasionally in Jewish texts (including thirteen times in the LXX) it was more common in Greek religious circles. [Arnold, 353; Hoehner, 708f; Lincoln, 345]

and spiritual songs, — καὶ ὧδαῖς πνευματικαῖς [kai ὄdais pneumatikais] — The word for ‘*songs*’ used here is where we get our English word ‘*ode.*’ While it was used of a dirge in Greek tragedy and was found in a funerary inscription in Ephesus that described a group of mourners who honored the deceased ‘*with tears and songs*’ [GK ὄdais], it more often refers to songs of joy or praise or just simply singing. This was a general term and equally at home in Jewish or Gentile circles. Sometimes this word is used with musical accompaniment mentioned (e.g., 1 Chron 16:42) and on occasion both music and dancing (e.g., 2 Sam 6:5). It is used in the NT seven times, once here and once in Col 3:16 and the rest in the book of Revelation. In Revelation it refers to a song of rejoicing and praise for the Lamb of God’s victory over evil. It could refer to songs of rejoicing and praise to God. [Arnold, 353; Hoehner, 709; Lincoln, 345]

TO WHAT DOES ‘SPIRITUAL’ APPLY? — Most of those to whom I study agree Paul is using the word ‘*spiritual*’ to refer to all three styles of song. They are ‘*spiritual*’ because they are inspired by the Holy Spirit (not used in the sense of Scriptural inspiration) and manifest the life of the Spirit or charged with spiritual truths. [Best, 511; Arnold, 362; Lincoln, 346; Moule, 137] Some disagree, saying ‘*spiritual*’ refers to the last term only, possibly as a reference to the spontaneous, ‘*Spirit-inspired*’ singing to which 1 Cor 14:15,26 refer. Or it may refer only to the last term since the first two terms are readily recognizable as ‘*songs to God*’ while the final term may not be so identified (i.e., ‘*secular*’ vs. ‘*sacred*’). But that is unlikely since the term is used elsewhere without such an identifier. [Hoehner, 709; Thielman, 361]

‘What is the conclusion then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will also pray with the understanding. I will sing with the spirit, and I will also sing with the understanding.... How is it then, brethren? Whenever you come together, each of you has a psalm, has a teaching, has a tongue, has a revelation, has an interpretation. Let all things be done for edification.’ (1 Cor 14:15,26)

“The filling of the Holy Spirit makes us rightly related to ourselves, to God, and to others.... The Spirit’s music is not hindered by a monotone or enhanced by a musical degree or magnificent voice. Spiritual joy will shine through a song sung with the raspy, off-pitch voice of a saint who is

rejoicing in the Lord, and it will be absent from the song sung with technical skill and accuracy, but with a voice that rejoices only in self.... Even as Christians we will not have a true song in our hearts unless we are under the Spirit's control. It is possible to sing for pride, to sing for acclaim and fame, and to sing for money — but such singing is Spiritless singing. A person who comes to worship while bitter toward God, angry with a loved one or friend, or in any other way is out of harmony with God's Spirit should not participate in singing God's praises. Hypocrisy can neither praise nor please the Lord. When peoples' hearts are not right with God, He has a way of turning their 'festivals into mourning' and their 'songs into lamentation' (Amos 8:10). Through the same prophet God said, 'Take away from Me the noise of your songs; I will not even listen to the sound of your harps. But let justice roll down like waters and righteousness like an everflowing stream' (5:23-24). 'Stop your songs until your hearts are right,' he was saying." [MacArthur, 256, 260]

PARTICIPLE #2 – SINGING

singing — ᾄδοντες [adontes] — These next two participles are almost synonymous; in fact, most say they combine into one participial phrase since they are joined by 'and' and are followed by a qualifying phrase (*'in your heart to the Lord'*). They stand in parallel to '*speaking, communicating*' and is likewise dependent upon the main verb '*be filled.*' They do not describe a separate action from '*speaking*' but give more detail about what this '*speaking*' involves. If the first participial clause had a horizontal aspect (*'singing to one another'*) these next two participles have more of a vertical and individual focus. [Best, 512f; Arnold, 354; Lincoln, 346; Hoehner, 711; Thielman, 362]

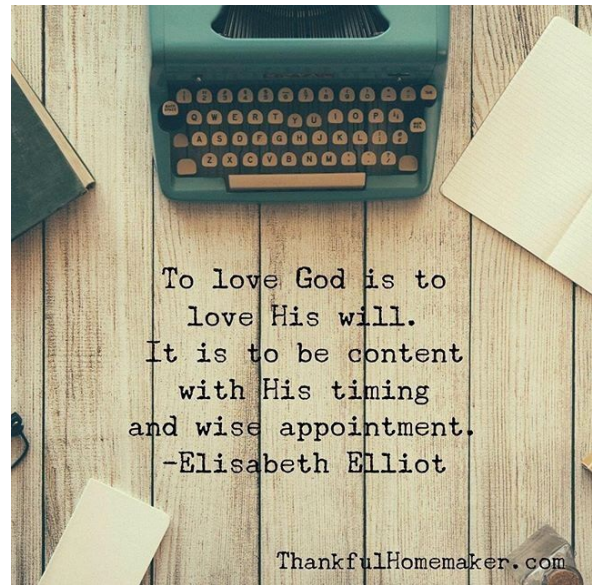
This first word [GK adontes, '*singing,*'] is the verbal form of the noun found in the previous verse, [GK ὀδῆ, '*song*']. As with the noun, it is used of singing with reference to humans, animals (e.g., the crowing of a rooster), or inanimate objects (e.g., wind whistling through the trees) and is used in contrast to speaking.

PARTICIPLE #3 – MAKING MELODY

and making melody — καὶ ψάλλοντες [kai psallontes] — Literally, '*and psalming.*' This second word [GK psallontes, '*making psalms*'], like our previous participle, is the verbal form of the noun found in the previous verse, [GK phalmois, '*psalms*']. As with the noun, its root means '*to pluck*' as on a stringed instrument. Some think this relates only to stringed instruments but that reads too much into the meaning. None of the passages in which this word is found demands instrument playing in conjunction with the singing of praises but it would likewise not forbid it. The main point is the verbalizing of praise through singing. [Hoehner, 711f; Arnold, 354; Lincoln, 346]

in your heart — ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ ὑμῶν [en tē kardia humō] — This is not a reference to '*silent worship with our hearts*' but rather worship offered from the heart where the Spirit dwells; it comes from the deepest level of existence, who we truly are. '*In your heart*' = '*in your innermost being, our inner self*' which involves our intellect and our ability to reason and choose as well as emotion. Many modern believers may be tempted to consider worship a matter of emotion only which, while included in this expression, is not limited to that. It is singing with understanding of who God is, our hearts and our lips being in agreement. This is important for God listens not to the outward voice but to the heart.

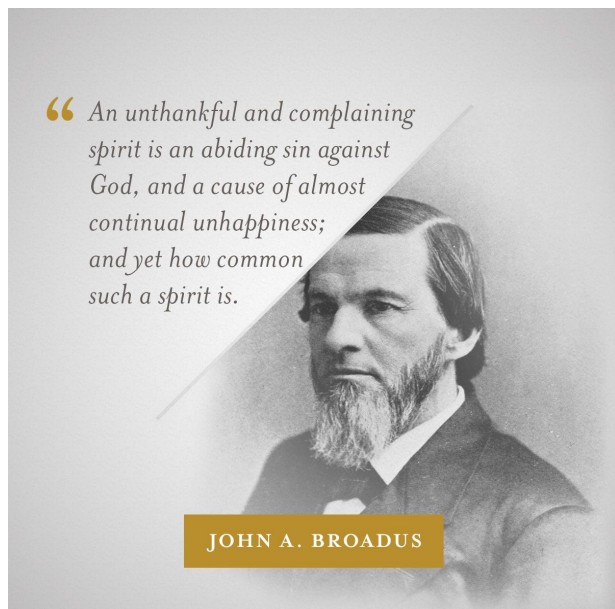
to the Lord, — τῷ κυρίῳ [tō kuriō] — *This praise is not directed towards other believers (as v. 19a) but to the Lord, a reference to the Lord Jesus Christ. Every occurrence of ‘Lord’ in Ephesians has the reference to Jesus and not to the Father, so it is most likely that this singing and praise was focused upon Christ.* Other hymns or hymn fragments in the NT are Christological in nature, focusing on Christ for Who He is in His pre-existence, for His work on the cross, and for what He will accomplish (cp. Phil 2:6-10; Col 1:15-20; 1 Tim 3:16). “This focus on the praise of Christ in early Christian worship did not escape the notice of Pliny, the governor of Bithynia in Asia Minor, when he observed in a letter to the Emperor Trajan in AD 109 that the Christians ‘met regularly before dawn on a fixed day to chant verses alternately amongst themselves in honor of Christ as if to a god.’” [Arnold, 354] “The next dative phrase [GK ‘to the Lord’] indicates direction, that is, the singing is directed ‘to the Lord,’ or specifically to Christ their new Lord who has delivered them from wrath and gives them power to live a life that is pleasing to God. The singing of praises is part of the believer’s individual and corporate worship. Music is the means by which believers minister to each other and worship the Lord.” [Hoehner, 713] “Believers who are filled with the Spirit delight to sing the praise of Christ, and such praise comes not just from the lips but from the individual’s innermost being, from the heart, where the Spirit himself resides (cf. 3:16, 17, where the Spirit in the inner person is equivalent to Christ in the heart).” [Lincoln, 346]



PARTICIPLE #4 – GIVING THANKS

giving thanks — εὐχαριστοῦντες [eucharistountes] — This verse forms the third clause dependent on v. 18, ‘*be filled with the Spirit.*’ Believers within our churches are to speak to one another in song, praise Christ with all our hearts, and now as a kind of climax are to return thanks to God. As Paul said in 5:4, thanksgiving is the opposite and alternative to sinful behavior.

Thanksgiving formed an important part of Jewish praise of God as the OT Psalms and Qumran hymns testify, and quickly became a part of Christian worship (cf. 1 Thess 5:18; Col 4:2; 1 Tim 2:1). Constant gratitude to the Father for all that he has done for his people in and through the Lord Jesus Christ should be a defining characteristic of the lives of all believers. This word was primarily used for thanksgiving to God, only twice being used for giving thanks to men, Luke 17:16; Rom 16:4. [Best, 513f; Arnold, 355; Hoehner, 713f; Thielman, 362] The word for ‘*giving thanks*’ is εὐχαριστοῦντες [eucharistountes] which in some circles took on a technical sense and was used as another name for the Lord’s Table, the ‘*eucharist*,’ as early as *The Didache* (accepted by most as written in



mid first century). The verb itself was used by Paul in relation to prayer at the Lord's Supper (1 Cor 11:24) and in the Gospel accounts of the Last Supper (Mt 26:27; Mk 14:23; Lk 22:17, 19). Roman Catholicism uses the term to refer to the *'body and blood of Christ'* which is consumed during the Mass. But there is nothing in these verses which might be used to support such a ceremony, nor does the prohibition *'do not get drunk with wine'* refer to any misuse of the agape meal which was often observed along with the Lord's Table. [Best, 515; Lincoln, 347]

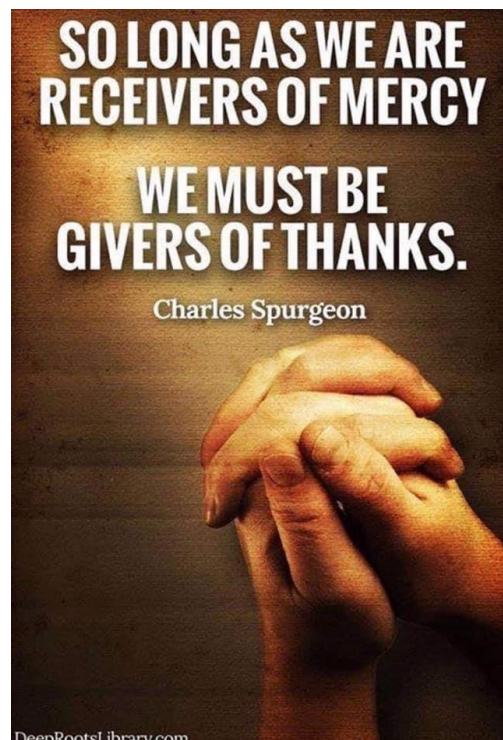
always for all things — πάντοτε ὑπὲρ πάντων [pantote huper pantōn] — The 'adverb of time' expresses that this thanksgiving is continual (*'at all times, always'*). The prepositional phrase shows the extent of the thanksgiving — *'for all things.'* While this could be masculine and translated *'for all people'* (e.g., see the church father Theodoret's exposition of Ephesians), most consider this neutral and translated as shown. Certainly the context as well as the parallel passage in Colossians supports this rendering:

'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.' (Col 3:17)

This thanksgiving thus permeates the believers' lives; they will not just give thanks sometimes for some things but always for everything! This is in the place of dissatisfaction and complaints.

'Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. Do not quench the Spirit.' (1 Thess 5:16-19)

If understood in a congregational sense, the *'all times'* would be all those occasions when worship is offered. "In difficult circumstances an attitude of thanksgiving is easier to achieve with the knowledge that God is always in control. In addition, since Paul mentions blessings so frequently in this letter, no doubt he has these in mind when he enjoins believers filled by the Spirit to give thanks to God." [Hoehner, 714] "To be thankful always is to recognize God's control of our lives in every detail as He seeks to conform us to the image of His Son. To be thankless is to disregard God's control, Christ's lordship, and the Holy Spirit's filling. Nothing must grieve the Holy Spirit so much as the believer who does not give thanks. In *King Lear* (I.ii.283, 312)



Shakespeare wrote, 'Ingratitude, thou marble-hearted fiend! ... How sharper than a serpent's tooth it is to have a thankless child!' When God brings trials and difficulties into our lives and we complain and grumble, we question His wisdom and love as well as His sovereignty.... Being thankful is not a Christian option, a high order of living that we are free to choose or disregard. As Joni Eareckson Tada, a quadriplegic author, has observed, 'Giving thanks is not a matter of feeling thankful, it is a matter of obedience.'" [MacArthur, 265f] "*Always for all things* — Because everything in hourly providence is an expression, to the believing heart, of God's 'good, perfect, and acceptable will' (Rom. xii. 2). In view of this, the Christian will be thankful, both generally and as to details. St Chrysostom's habitual doxology was, 'Glory be to God for all things'; and it was the last word of his suffering life." [Moule, 137]

To what extent is ‘for all things’? “Some of the Fathers (e.g. Jerome, Pelagius, Chrysostom), instancing Job 1.23, suggest that everything that happens, including unfortunate events, should be included. But while it is certainly possible to thank God for the response of people to evil events (famines, earthquakes, etc.), is it possible to thank him for the evil events themselves? Yet it must be recognised as true that some kinds of suffering, principally suffering for the sake of Christ as distinct from the suffering that comes in the normal course of life (e.g. unemployment, sickness), do bring joy. Meyer, followed by Barth, would rightly include such suffering (cf 3.13; Mt 5.11f; Lk 6.22f; Acts 5.41; Phil 4.4ff; Col 1.24; 1 Th 1.6; Jas 1.2f; 1 Pet 1.6; 4.13).” [Best, 513f]

“Chrysostom goes too far in giving thanks for even hell and its torments (Chrysostom *Eph* 5:20 [PG 62:130]). Paul is referring to the things of this life, negative or positive, that affect the believers and for which they should respond with thanksgiving.” [Hoehner, 714; see also Best, 513f; Arnold, 355; Lincoln, 346; Thielman, 362]

“The only person who can genuinely give thanks for all things is the humble person, the person who knows he deserves nothing and who therefore gives thanks even for the smallest things. Lack of thankfulness comes from pride, from the conviction that we deserve something better than we have. Pride tries to convince us that our job, our health, our spouse, and most of what we have is not as good as we deserve. Pride was the root of the first sin and remains the root of all sin. Satan’s pride led him to rebel against God and try to usurp God’s throne. The pride of Adam and Eve led them to believe Satan’s lie that they deserved more than they had and that they even had a right to be like God.” [MacArthur, 267]

in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, — ἐν ὀνόματι τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ [*en onomati tou kuriou hēmōn Iēsou Christou*] — It is interesting how the different versions handle these phrases (all the GK texts place ‘*in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ*’ before ‘*to God, even the Father*’):

‘in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, to the God and Father’ (YLT)

‘in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father’ (RV, ASV, NASV)

‘in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God the Father’ (RSV)

Reversing the order are these versions:

‘unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ’ (KJV)

‘vnto God the father in the name of oure Lorde Iesu Christ’ (Tyndale)

‘vnto God euen the Father, in the Name of our Lord Iesus Christ’ (Geneva)

‘to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ’ (NKJV, ESV)

‘*In the name*’ is used almost forty times in the NT, all but two of those times in reference to a divine name (John 5:43b; 1 Pet 4:16). Eleven of those times it refers to God the Father, the other times to the name of Jesus. This recalls the use of ‘*the name of the LORD*’ in the OT; thus Paul uses language reserved for Yahweh in reference to Jesus, an ascription of deity to Christ. The ‘name’ of Jesus Christ was used (among other things) in baptism (Matt 28:19; Acts 8:16; 10:48), in healing (Acts 3:6; 10:1; James 5:14), in the gathering of believers (Matt 18:20; 1 Cor 5:4), and in prayer (John 14:13,14; 15:16; 16:26) but only here in v. 20 is it used in relation to praise. These thanksgiving are offered to God in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. This is because it is only through the redeeming life / death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ that we are able to approach God (Eph 2:18; 3:12; Rom 5:2; 1 Pet 3:18). [Best, 514; Hoehner, 715; Arnold, 355;

Thielman, 363] “Were it not for Christ, it would be foolish to be thankful for everything, because apart from Him all things do *not* turn out for good. But because we are in Christ, the good things and the bad things all have a part in God’s conforming us to the image of His Son. A person who is not a Christian does not have Christ interceding on his behalf at the right hand of God or indwelling his life. He does not have the promise of heirship in God’s family and citizenship in God’s kingdom — or any other of the wonderful promises of Christ. He does not have the indwelling of the Holy Spirit and cannot have His filling. He cannot be thankful for everything because for him everything does not give a reason for thanks. He sees only the present, not eternal glory. But the child of God *is* indwelt by Christ, is a joint heir with Him, and *does* have the Son interceding for him at the Father’s right hand. He has all of Christ’s promises made certain through the Holy Spirit who indwells him. And as the Spirit fills him, he is cleansed from sin and made more and more into conformity to Christ.” [MacArthur, 268]

to God the Father — τῷ θεῷ καὶ πατρί [tō theō kai patri] — “Just as Jesus taught his disciples to pray to the Father in his name (John 14:13,14; 15:16; 16:23,24,26), so Paul here instructs his readers to utter their expressions of praise and gratitude to the Father in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Thanksgiving should be rendered to ‘*our God and Father*.’ It is grammatically significant that there is only one article governing both nouns. This construction is best explained by the so-called Granville Sharp Rule, which states that whenever two nouns are connected by ‘*and*’ and the article precedes only the first noun, then the two nouns indicate unity, equality, or identity. In this case, Paul is referring to God, who is also the Father. His addition of the term Father here suggests the closeness and nearness that God has with his people.” [Arnold, 355] While there is no argument about the deity of the Father (as represented here), the Granville Sharp rule is important in John 1:1 which speaks of our Lord Jesus Christ. Ernest Best suggests the grammar probably means something like ‘*to Him Who is God and also Father, to Him Who is at once God and Father*.’ [Best, 514] The translations handle the grammar in this manner: some quite literally ‘*to God and Father*’ (KJV, NEB), other translations ‘*to God the Father*’ (RSV, TEV, NIV, NRSV), ‘*to God, even the Father*’ (RV, ASV, NASV), ‘*to God who is our Father*’ (JB, NJB). [Hoehner, 715; see also Lincoln, 346f; Thielman, 362] “Lit. to the God and Father.” [Moule, 137]