

How to Walk in the Spirit

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[0 : 00] Holy, holy, holy Lord God Almighty. Please be seated. If you're not sure where we are, please turn with me to Ephesians 5.

Ephesians 5, verses 18 to 21 this morning. We're looking at Paul's final contrasting point from Ephesians 5.

The reality is, as most of you know, life is a choice. We make actions. We fail to do actions. So Paul has been quantifying these decisions that we make in our lives. Paul, as you all know, when we come into the book of Ephesians, he uses the word walk a lot. Walk. How do you carry your life? Who are you? What does your life look like? And in this passage, he kind of drills down on four contrasting points that if you are a Christian, and if you are a saint, you will make certain choices in life.

[1 : 22] The first one is you are going to choose God's love. God's love, which is selfless. It is that agape love.

That is to live for another. It's not self-taking love. It's giving love. So that's the first contrast that he builds into this passage.

The second one is the choice that we make to walk in light as opposed to walk in darkness. Right? That you will walk in things that are good, that God calls good, that are right, and that are true. That is a decision. As opposed to walking away in the things that are shameful. If any of you know a police officer, ask him what life in Squamish is like after dark.

It is a sobering message of the things that happen after dark. Because that's the time when people want to hide their shameful actions.

[2 : 36] That is the analogy that Paul is using. In the last one we talked about, like last week, we have a choice. Either walk in wisdom or walk in foolishness.

Walk in wisdom or walk in foolishness. It is based on knowing that you are a child of God, a child of the King. You will walk accordingly.

His desires will be your desires. You will be mindful of how you use your time. How you use the opportunities that are presented.

And one of the points of the wisdom is understanding the days that we're in. This isn't going to last forever. Even you as your parents know. You might have your children as really small, but they grow up really fast.

Different lessons are taught at different stages of life. And you need to be wise. You need to be aware of these things. And you need to be wise in knowing what God's will is.

[3 : 42] If you do not know what God's will is, you are not going to know what to do. You could use all the words. Hey, I want to please you, God. I want to do all these great things for you. But if you do not know what God's calling, and I'm not talking about your specific calling of what school I should go to, what person I should marry.

That's not the will we're talking about. We're talking about what God is doing. I think we all want to do something great for the Lord. Amen. We want to be a part of what God is doing.

There's many people whose lives are littered on the side of life because they thought they were doing what God was doing, but God was not involved in those areas. So it's important for us to know which way God is walking.

So this morning, we're going to learn about what it means to walk in the Spirit. Walk in the Spirit. That is the point that Paul is going to be making.

Now, we're going to read this passage. And to be honest with you, it's kind of an oddly worded passage. And some people have been confused by this.

[4 : 56] But my prayer is that before you leave this morning, you are not only going to understand clearly what this passage means, but that you will grow in your desire to say, hey, I want to walk by the Spirit.

So let's take a look. We're going to start in verse 15 of Ephesians 5. Look carefully, then, how you walk. There it is again.

Paul is calling us to examine our lives. Be aware of who we are, where we are, and what we are doing. Not as unwise, but as wise.

Making the best use of time because the days are evil. And that's an understanding. When it says the days are evil, it's in the last days of time.

The next epic chapter of life are going to be the end time events that are going to be happening. So therefore, do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is.

[5 : 59] And do not get drunk with wine. For that is debauchery. But be filled with the Spirit.

Addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs.

Singing and making melody to the Lord with your heart. Giving thanks always and for everything to God, the Father, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Submitting to one another out of reverence for God.

A lot of people, when they want to talk about, say they're on an anti-drinking campaign, this is the key verse that they go to. But the primary emphasis isn't on the drink.

Paul is using that as a contrast to what it means to walk in the Spirit. But when you kind of look at what does it mean to walk in the Spirit, he's kind of describing this sound of music type of lifestyle, right?

If you guys are going to be filled in the Spirit, you're going to be singing songs to one another. You know, all these songs of praise.

[7 : 06] And it seems like this is going to be a characteristic of every conversation or day of our life. That's not what Paul is getting at. And then at the very end, he drops this bombshell.

Submission. He brings in that four-letter word, submission, that people kind of jump back against, especially in our context of our day.

Mutual submission. What does that mean? How does that work? Well, these are some of the questions that I want to get to this morning. And I'm hoping you're going to come away with a fuller understanding.

So what I want to do today is I want you to both understand the structure of what Paul is calling us to today. So let's begin with a basic understanding of the structure of these verses.

The first command that he gives us is do not get drunk with wine. The second command, be filled with the Spirit. That's it. The rest of the passage explains to us what does it mean to be filled with the Spirit.

[8 : 18] That is why we're here this morning. So I want us to take a look at both the first section, the first command, the second command, and what that means for the Christian life.

So that's our basic outline. It's one do, one do not, one do. What does one do look like? Basic, you got it? Do's, don'ts, do nots, and do's happily.

All right. So let's take a look at the first command, verse 18. And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery. Debauchery means to do an action demonstrating no restraint.

It means, in another word, in the Greek, it means to do extravagant squandering. So it basically means to be acting without any accord for anybody or anything else and just doing what you want to such a gross way of being out of control.

Now, I think there's two ways that we can understand this. The first way to understand this is anybody here who's ever had a family member or a friend addicted to alcohol, you get what Paul's saying here, right?

[9 : 40] Most people know someone who's been addicted to alcohol has wrecked their life. It's actually been destroyed.

That's what it does when you give yourself over to alcohol. And what's interesting about alcohol, it just doesn't destroy you. It destroys everybody else around you. It destroys the people that love you, that care for you.

Some people think they're going into a closet when they drink to get around and alcohol is a depressant to run away from the problems of the world. But what it does is it creates many problems for those that love them and great heart aches.

I have family members that have lost their children, their wives, not just the respect of, but they left and have never been heard from again.

It is such a destructive thing. You lose jobs, careers, children, spouses.

[10:44] We get this. When Paul contrasts what to walk in the spirit versus the flesh, the drunk, debauchery, we get that analogy.

Do we not? We understand that. It is wickedness. Now there's the other option, the way we look at it, or this is the first way, but secondly, is that, you know, some people are saying, hey, it's not really calling for that.

It's just talking about having a little bit too much to drink. And one of the things, and I remember some of my friends would use that word, hey, I need a little bit of liquid courage.

They want to do something. They want to ask a pretty girl out. They feel the need that they got a little bit of liquid courage in to lower the inhibitions. I can give you a litany list of destroyed lives of university students that I worked with when I lived in residence.

One night has changed the trajectory of some of my peers' lives because of wrong choices built on one night of debauchery.

[11:52] Going out with the best of intentions to celebrate with friends. One wrong choice, getting behind the wheel of a car, took my good friend's life. Another decision led him to some serious accusations against him that it was so bad that he had to leave the school environment and is now, he's now caring with that for the rest of his life.

No matter what, when one tries to argue, whether it's too much or just a little, there is risk.

There's risk of embarrassment, sexual abuse, embarrassing behavior that hurts friends, breaks trust. It brings shame, it brings regret.

And some, it costs lives. When I was with the government, when you would meet with other nations, whether I was attending a Christmas party put on by the FBI or the CIA, they always made sure that there was plenty of alcohol because they wanted loose lips, right?

They wanted people to talk about and give away damning information. The world knows there's an evil associated with alcohol. It can cause great damage.

[13:15] So Paul is contrasting that. We just think of this from our common sense. But there's also a cultural understanding that Paul is driving home here.

You have to understand the people that Paul is addressing have come out of an incredible pagan lifestyle. And the way you used to worship the pagan gods was to lose control of your mind, control of your actions.

And one of the easy ways to do that was with alcohol. And it describes the pagan rituals described.

There was temple prostitutes and a lot of horrible sexual misconduct that went on with people.

And what they used to do is they'd try to create a disassociated frenzy. But they knew that most people really couldn't get into that type of worship unless alcohol was used.

In some cultures we see the use of drugs, mind-altering drugs, in order to get people to do what they know they shouldn't or just aren't even capable, even as God's designed them to do.

[14:26] So that's kind of what Paul is getting to. I know with many of my friends who have been a part of shameful, shameful behaviors.

And I ask them sometimes, what in the world were you thinking? Like what made you think that was a decision worth doing? And they always attribute to alcohol or drugs.

People that I knew on regular of life would never act the way they do. In fact, that's why Solomon gives this incredible proverb. Proverbs 23, 31 to 33.

It says, do not look at wine when it is red, when it sparkles in the cup and goes down smoothly.

That's a temptation, right? I've had a rough day.

I need to take the edge off. Look at how good it looks. Fruit of the vine. It's a choice wine. And then he says, in the end, it bites like a serpent and stings like an adder.

[15:34] Your eyes will see strange things. In your heart, utter perverse things. Whether it's a desire to fit in in a social context.

Whether it's a desire to come home alone and drown your spirits. It may look good. But it certainly isn't.

But the reality is there is hope for those, right? People have been addicted to wine, to drink. One of my family members who lost his wife, has lost his kids.

Finally found the Lord Jesus Christ. To change his life. He has a second life without his wife and kids. And there's obviously hurt and damage there. But God's redeemed him.

God's forgiven him. So there is hope beyond our mistakes. Our sin. Our destructive patterns. But it only comes through the grace and forgiveness of Jesus Christ.

[16:42] So that's that first command. Do not be drunk. Then he adds the second command here.

Be filled with the Spirit. Now, the question, if you're actually paying attention to the grammar in your Bibles, is, what am I to be filled with?

All right? There's a grammatical issue here in the text. Most people think the Spirit is the thing that you are filling yourself with.

But that's not what Paul's talking about. And we're going to get to that in a second. Most people wrongly interpret this text as saying, the Spirit is the one who fills me.

And that Spirit is filling me with God's Spirit. Right? Do most people see it that way? When you kind of look at it, that's kind of what you see? I got one hand up.

[17:46] I got a couple of nods. Right? That's the way we kind of see it. Now, let me tell you some of the reasons why. I'm going to give you three examples of what happens when we think that way. Or three erroneous teachings that happen when we look at it that way.

A lot of people who interpret that to being filled with the Spirit means we need to have a secondary experience, which is commonly referred to as the baptism of the Spirit.

Has anybody ever heard that term before? Baptism of the Spirit? Okay, I got a couple of hands up.

If you know anyone who comes from a Pentecostal life, generally they will talk about this baptism of the Spirit.

And what happens is there's a confusion. Basically, the person who believes that we need to be baptized in the Spirit outside of salvation believe that as a Christian there needs to be an experience of a second work of grace.

And what I mean is they believe that someone is saved, but following this they have to have an experience. They point towards the beginning chapters of Acts about the church when it was growing and they were talking about some of that stuff.

[19:00] Now, some of you know I preached a sermon. Listen, since COVID everything feels like it's years away, right? It was years ago that I taught on this, but I did speak on tongues.

And if you want to have a biblical understanding, you can just search for it on the website. But I do talk about this and some of the confusion that exists. But the Bible in no place speaks of the need for a Christian to have a secondary experience.

This passage is not teaching a secondary experience. Most of them will teach that the secondary experience is demonstrated by speaking in tongues or some other display of supernatural spiritual experience.

All right? They will encourage you to pray for tongues or they will encourage you to have this experience. Now, the problem with that is if you never speak in tongues, guess what that leads you?

Not spirit-filled. Right? So there's some spirit-filled people and there's not spirit-filled people. Have any of you guys ever heard that term before? If you have friends in that world, they do talk about some people are spirit-filled, some people aren't spirit-filled.

[20:20] And they use this verse as one of their lines of understanding. But that's not what this text is saying. What it's talking about right here is the spirit does the action of the filling, but it's not telling us yet what are we being filled with.

The second way that some people look at this is that when sometimes we're in the midst of sin or a discouraging life, they're going to encourage us, pray for the spirit.

As if at that moment in time, that spirit can come upon us and deliver us from our sin, our consequences of sin, or something that we're caught up on.

But the Bible actually doesn't teach that either. In fact, in 1 Corinthians, Paul, if you know the 1 Corinthians, it's a church he's writing to, they are smashed up with a lot of sin.

There's a whole whack of sin issues going there. And one of the pieces of advice that he gives them is not this. He does not ask them to pray, hey, you need to pray for the spirit.

[21:25] That's not what he asks them. Because he understands at that moment of salvation, every believer is equipped with the Holy Spirit, right? That happens at that moment of salvation.

And because of that, the Christian is fully equipped from day one to be all that God's called them to be. But it's interesting, when we look at 1 Corinthians, these people are saved, but they're exceptionally immature, and they're extremely sinful.

But what he calls them to do is to repent and free immorality. So the spirit isn't a tool to be called upon when we're in sin.

So we have the first one where it's a baptism of the spirit. That has been an erroneous teaching. That it's a mystical event that we use to cure us of sin. Or kind of on the positive note, some people will say, you know what, BK is going to be preaching.

I want to pray for the Holy Spirit to come upon him. And the word's going to go forth, and millions of people are going to be saved, right? We've heard people use that term when we're about to do something that is spiritual in nature.

[22 : 44] Hey, we want to make sure the spirit's in him. Here's the thing, the spirit's always with you. It is. It's complete. At the moment of salvation, you have the Holy Spirit.

You do not need to pray for more. You don't have to pray for more power as if he's only giving you a tenth of the power, and all of a sudden, you know what, I need three tenths to get me through this week.

That's not what he's talking about. It's not an event to be sought over with.

It's not some secret, special empowerment that is to be called upon. Why do I believe what I believe and what I'm teaching you?

First thing, it's understanding what the meaning of the word be filled with. When I use that word be filled, most people think of a glass.

[23 : 46] It's empty. It needs to be filled up again. All right, I got a big event coming. I want to pour that in the Holy Spirit so it gives me a little bit more umption, more juice for whatever the task is.

That's not how Paul is using that term. That would be an event to fill that cup. The best illustration that I've ever heard, it's like God who fills a sail of a ship.

A sail is full of wind. It doesn't end. It's a perpetuating filling of that sail to keep the boat moving.

You with me on that? You understanding there's a distinction? I can fill the cup, then it just ends.

There's too much. But it's just an event for a ship that's sailing, that wind needs to perpetually have wind to keep it moving.

That's us in life. There's a spirit that keeps us moving. It is an ongoing event.

[25 : 05] Another way that it says, it's to always be filled. It's always, how do I even say this? It's be always filled with the Spirit is the best way to say it.

You get that? It's always be filled with the Spirit. Not that one time during that one event. And so this is what happened. So the next problem is, all right, so now that we understand, it's perpetual filling that has to happen.

The Spirit is doing the filling. What is the Spirit filling us with? This is the second problem. I'll let the cat out of the bag right now.

It's Jesus Christ. It's Jesus Christ. And there's a distinction that I'm going to make very clear. So when it comes back to what does it mean to live by the Spirit of the flesh, Galatians 5, just turn with me to Galatians 5.

I'm going to read a section here that speaks exactly what I'm talking about. That this isn't a one-time event. This is an ongoing occurrence in a Christian's life.

[26 : 21] Paul teaches in Galatians that there is a life to be lived in the Spirit, or there is a life to be lived in the flesh. Verse 16 of Galatians 5, he says, But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you may not gratify the desires of the flesh.

All right, so he's talking about that walking again. We're seeing that this is a way of life that we live to be in the Spirit. When you're in the Spirit, you don't worry about the flesh.

So when that flesh is there, you're not like, Oh, I need that Spirit to get out of it. No, no, no. The mindset is to always be in the Spirit. For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh.

For these are opposed to each other to keep you from doing the things you want to do. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.

And that's the law that comes in. And if I do one thing, it's good. One thing, it's bad. I have to live under the law. I've got to try to perform these things. So then Paul, from 19 to 21, describes what some of the works of the flesh are.

[27 : 42] And he says, Now the works of the flesh are evident. They're clear to see. Anybody can spot them. Sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these.

I warn you as I warned you before that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. It's a simple counseling question. When people ask, I think I'm in the Spirit.

You just got to pull out that list. What is the fruit of your life? And then all of a sudden it's switched over to verse 22. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.

Against such things there is no law. And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with his passions and his desires. Verse 25. If we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit.

Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another. So what I want you to see from this, it is not an event.

[29 : 07] It's not something that we're asking the Spirit to do. It is a life. It is an ongoing disposition of who you are. So let me argue why it's Jesus Christ.

Turn back with me to Ephesians. And the reason sometimes we get unfocused is because we're in Ephesians. We're taking our time here. But this is the message that Paul has been teaching them over and over and over.

So take a look at Ephesians 1.23. So here, Paul is making a reference to Jesus Christ. And he said, and he put all things under his feet.

So God put all things under Jesus' feet and gave him as head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.

All right? So we are a church and we're to be filled by Jesus Christ. So later on, let's look down at chapter 3. Verse 14.

[30 : 16] So Paul writes, Here it is.

Through his spirit. He's not saying that it's the spirit that's doing it, but it's the spirit with the power in your inner being. Why? So that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith, that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth.

Verse 19. And to know the love of Christ that surpasses all knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God. So here he's identifying.

So the spirit's the power of the feeling. But what we are full of is the fullness of God, the fullness of Jesus Christ. What is the goal? Ephesians 4.

So take a look back down at Ephesians 4, 10 to 14. Verse 10. He, Jesus, who descended, is the one who also ascended far above all the heavens, that he may fill all things.

[31 : 33] There we go again. He's the one. And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds, and teachers to equip the saints for the work of the ministry, for building up the body of Christ.

Until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to get this, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

Fullness of Christ is what it means to be mature in Christ. That's why Paul tells us, be like me as I am like Christ.

The goal is to be like Christ. So the work that the Spirit does in our lives is not an extra spiritual power event, but is the work of making us more like Christ Jesus.

Maturity is the goal. Maturity is what separates someone from immaturity. Maturity is what causes one to walk in love.

[32 : 52] Maturity is what causes one to walk in light. Maturity in Christ is what causes one to walk in wisdom.

And maturity is what it means to walk in the Spirit. Maturity is what causes one to walk in the Spirit. Ephesians 4, walk in a manner worthy of your calling.

Humility, gentleness, patience, bearing with one another, in love, united in love. Now, I want you to think about what it means to be filled your heart because you guys know what I'm talking about.

Some of us have filled our hearts with anger. Some of us have filled our hearts with sorrow. Some of us have filled our hearts with fear.

We know that. We know when we're giving in to those things, we get angry about something. That's what it's talking about, about filling that heart.

[34 : 12] Right? It's no longer Christ that is blowing that ship. It's not as if Christ is with us as we walk. It's anger. Sometimes it's sorrow.

And for many of us that we meet along the path, the longer I go as a Christian and as a pastor, I see many people caught up in fear. That fear has bound their hearts.

And the goal of any kind of Christian counseling is to get rid of any of those idols that have replaced Jesus Christ. Because our hearts are to be filled with Jesus.

So where do I begin? I want this heart from, by Jesus you're saying. I don't want this anger. I don't want this sorrow. I don't want this fear. Or whatever it is that you are living for, instead of Jesus, it begins with a simple confession of sin.

It's to confess, Lord, I am not living with you in my heart. I am living with shame in my heart. I am not living with you in my heart. I am living with anger. And you might feel right to have that anger or that shame or that frustration.

[35 : 37] The reality is some lives have been tough. Some lives have been hard.

Some lives are painful. But sometimes we use those excuses to fill our heart with something other than Jesus Christ.

So it begins with a confession of sin. The second way, it's followed with a surrender of the will. It's the recognition that my body, my time, my talents, my possessions, my desires are God's.

Everything is God's. Whenever I want to hold on to something of my own, that's fertile ground for another idol to come up. You got to cut that root.

This year, we're not, I'm not a gardener. My wife's the gardener in the family. We thought we'd plant raspberry bushes, right? Great raspberry bushes. But I didn't know this, but raspberry bushes like to grow underground and pop up in the other parts of the garden, right?

[37 : 03] They like to take over those other gardens. You actually have to go in and make sure that they don't do that. That's what happens when we leave some untended area of our life.

It's going to come over. That's why the writer of Hebrews tells us so clearly, don't let anger grow into bitterness, right? It's okay to be angry.

It is okay to be sorrowful. It's okay to be fearful. There are some times that call for that, but when we give our hearts over to those things, they wreak destruction in our lives.

You see, Jesus wants all of you. I still remember the moment I had that epiphany. I was in a chapel session.

I was at the Masters College at the time. I thought I was a really good, understanding Christian. And I still have the song. It's not a very popular song, but it basically sings, I'll be the glove for your hands to fill.

[38 : 07] That our life is essentially a glove, and God is the one who works that glove to however he wants it to be. That's when I can honestly say I first surrendered everything to God in a mountain full of tears.

I needed to confess those areas that I wasn't giving to God.

You see, as one writer reminds us, this is a conscious continuation. It is not an option. To not live in the Spirit is to be spiritually weak, it's to live a life of frustration, and it is to live a life of defeat.

There is no rescue. There is no exception. To not have Jesus fill you will leave you weak, frustrated, defeated, and an immature Christian.

To be moved along in the Christian life by God himself drives our actions, our thoughts, and our desires for his glory. So what does that look like?

[39 : 37] Paul is actually explaining to us in the rest of this verse that there's three areas which this shows. Verse 19, I'll just read it, addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with your heart, giving thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, submitting to one another out of reverence in Christ.

So here's the first three. I'm going to give you three characteristics of spirit-filled people. Spirit-filled people are worshipful people. Spirit-filled people worship God.

And one of the most amazing ways that we worship God is through song. It brings us together fellowship. We are declaring the majesty and glories of God.

Who doesn't connect? Like just even the songs we're singing today, glory, glory, holy, holy, Lord God almighty. We can sing that with passion.

The world cannot. It means nothing. But a life that has been given over to Jesus Christ, he is my king. Let me raise my arms to him, my hands.

[41 : 04] He's preaching to a community of believers that Paul is writing to.

It's interesting, there was a news article about a church that's being harassed in California and even though they're adhering to all the COVID restrictions, guess what they do?

Because in California you have to worship outside, they sing too loud. they sing too loud. Sunday the neighbors are complaining. They sing too loud.

This is a group of people that is excited to be together, to be lifted up, God, in word and song. You see, there's a fellowship that happens when we are all united in being mature in Christ.

We rejoice over prayers prayed. We rejoice over words that are preached. preached. We lament with those who need to lament.

[42 : 08] We hold those who are doing so but we raise our hands and cheer to God. The second character, and the second way that we see this is it says to sing and praise God.

The old way of living in the pagan life was music was used to control, to sing, to make them do deplorable acts and actions. Our worship is vertical, amen?

It's to spiritually empower us. It's why the Bible tells us to continually to write new songs to the work that God is doing today. Is God still alive today?

Is God still alive today? Yeah. Is he still doing great things? Yes. We need to have more people writing about these great things that God is doing today.

The songs are a reflection of our passion. The songs don't make, it's not emotion we don't drive up to create fake emotion. It's the reality of Jesus Christ and the believer's life and understood what he has done for them is the emotion that drives singing.

[43 : 22] You see, spirit-filled people are worshipful people. They're those that have joy in their worship, truth in their worship, and lament in their worship because those are all things of life.

And the third element that we see of a spirit-filled people, spirit-filled people are thankful people.

Spirit-filled people are thankful, period. In Colossians 3, it's kind of the parallel passage, Paul writes, Colossians 3, 16, let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns, spiritual songs with thankfulness in your hearts to God.

Here in verse 20, giving thanks. And he breaks it down for us. He tells us one, give thanks constantly. That means frequently, regularly.

God's people are to be a thankful people. They have to have a thankful attitude of mind, heart, and soul when it comes to expression regularly about Christ.

If your heart is marked more by complaining and griping about life, you probably have another idol sitting in your heart.

[44 : 39] You have probably given yourself over to fear or bitterness or something else that is not of God. A Spirit-filled life is not a complaining life.

Even in the midst of hard trials, trials. Because the mature believer knows that a trial is also a form of discipline, not because they've been bad, but God is making them more like him.

He's driving them, he's taking them to a deeper understanding of who Jesus Christ is. And the mature Christian, as hard as it is, says, thank you, Lord, that I get to be more like you.

So that second characteristic, or the third characteristic, sorry, that we're to be a thankful people. And what do we give thanks for?

Everything. Everything. That means more comprehensively. Nothing is not to be covered. Like I said, even trials, even depths of sorrow.

[45 : 56] It is so easy to fill our hearts with complaints and criticisms, isn't it? You see, it's about graciously and humbly submitting our lives to God's sovereignty.

It's essentially saying, God, you are my king. See, a life filled with thanksgiving will find spontaneous expressions in psalm, hymns, and songs.

And who is it directed to? To God. And the final result of a spirit-filled life is spirit-filled people are submissive people.

Spirit-filled people are submissive people. Verse 21, submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ. All right, I'm going to be getting into it a later time, the whole aspect of submission, because it is a horribly taught on, woefully understood, and many people have had so much bad teachings in

that area that whenever you say the word submit, there's...

let me be clear. When it says to mutually submit, it actually means to look out for others' needs before our own.

[47 : 18] Bingo, that's it. It means to look out for others' needs before your own. It has nothing to do with a hierarchy, but it has to do with yourself placing yourself under another.

You see, this doesn't happen in a fleshly driven life. The fact of the matter is, the flesh seeks its own gain. The flesh seeks its own advantage. And nobody wants to submit to someone like that, right? Nobody wants to put themselves under someone like that. But, if we look at the whole of what we've learned in Ephesians, and we're going to be covering husbands, wives, children, parents, work, place, submission, and all those areas which seems to bubble up all sorts of issues, is when someone is characterized as a child of God, as humble, gentle, patient, forgiving, seeking unity, walking in love, walking in light, walking in wisdom, walking in spirit, who doesn't want to place themselves under someone like that?

Because you know who that was? Jesus Christ. That's who we're being made to be like. You see, it's to place ourselves under, to willingly come under someone else, to place them above us.

now I'm going to come back around and explain what this means in our marriages, in our everyday lives, where submission has been abused.

[49 : 12] But I'm just going to leave you with this one thought. Be someone worth submitting to. Seek after Christ.

God's love. So we see that Paul's call for a spiritual life is a worshipful heart, a thankful heart, and a submissive heart.

Let's pray. Dear Lord, Heavenly Father, sometimes the strongest things that I feel like I'm preaching against is all the wrong preaching that I've heard over the years and the hurt it's done to people, the confusion and the mess it's led to in your churches.

I think I'm grieved over it. Father, I know you are far more than I could ever be. So, Father, just over these next couple of weeks, I'm praying that you give me the clarity, oh, I don't know, of just pure water.

Let there be no distortion in the messages that we'll be hearing on what it is to be a godly husband, a godly wife, a godly parent, a godly child, godly worker, an employee, oh, Father.

[50 : 32] Father, I pray that today's message would really drive home of what it is to live the Christian life, what it is to put our lives under you, that it is your spirit at work in us, making us more like you.

Father, I pray that you would break our stubborn hearts. For those that are fearful, I pray that you would fill them with love. For those that are sorrowful, I pray that you bring healing.

For those that are angry, I pray that you will bring forgiveness. Father, we may we make a declaration as a church that we are going to throw out these idols, and the only one we are worshiping is you, Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior.

So to you this day, we give you our all, not for just today, but all time. May we simply be gloves for your hand to fill, and may we be fully satisfied, fully glorified, and fully if there's ever a right to use this word, fulfilled, in being that glove.

Let your will be done in our lives. And all of God's people said, you amen. Amen. let's let's let's open mayor, let's barn.

[52 : 07] Ash hand, FR