

Drunk or Spirit-Filled?, Part 3

Scripture: Ephesians 5:18-20

Code: 49-34

Now this morning we come back to the book of Ephesians chapter 5; and I want to invite you to open your Bible to Ephesians chapter 5, and we're coming to a very familiar command. That command is in verse 18: "Be filled with the Spirit." What does that mean? How are we to understand that? How are we to experience it? But let's look at the whole passage, verses 18 through 21—I'm going to read them for you. "Do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord; always giving thanks for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father; and be subject to one another in the fear of Christ."

What we have in this command is really the key to all Christian living, the key to all Christian living. It's only in keeping this command that we can keep any other commands. Apart from the truth in this command, which is the heart of Paul's message here, Ephesians would be legalistic. Apart from the reality of this command and the work of the Holy Spirit, we would be endeavoring to live the Christian life in the flesh, in the strength of our own will, our own power.

And we have been called to a very high standard. Back in chapter 4 and verse 1, remember, we have been called to walk worthy, to walk worthy of the calling to which we are called. It is a high calling. It is a heavenly calling. It is a holy calling. We have been called to become the children of God to manifest His character in the world. That is the highest of all callings. And we are to walk worthy of that calling.

And what does walk worthy mean? Well Paul, starting in chapter 4, begins to kind of unpack it for us. He says we are to walk in humility, we are to walk in unity, we are to walk in righteousness or separation, we are to walk in light, we are to walk in love, we are to walk in wisdom. That is a tall order, to put it mildly. But we can't do any of it apart from the Holy Spirit. In fact, chapter 5 and verse 1 says we are to "be imitators of God, as beloved children." Those are high standards. And as Jesus said in John 15:5, "Apart from Me you can do nothing." The way of the flesh is not going to be able to meet those standards. And so Paul gives us, in this simple command in verse 18, the key to Christian living: "Be filled with the Spirit." "Be filled with the Spirit."

Now Paul knew what he was saying. He wasn't there on the Day of Pentecost. He wasn't there when the Holy Spirit came and the church was established. But the fact that he was not there is no indication of what he knew about that great event. He surely had all the revelation and all the testimony of the ones that he had met who were there, to tell them of that great moment on the Day of Pentecost when the whole church was born by being filled with the Spirit. In Acts chapter 2 we have the record of that in verse 4: "And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other languages, as the Spirit was giving them utterance." And in verse 13 it says people "were mocking and saying, 'They are full of sweet wine.'"

When the Spirit came on them on the Day of Pentecost and filled all 120 believers gathered in the

upper room on the Day of Pentecost. This was the launch of the church, the birth of the church, and the inauguration of promises Jesus has made throughout the final days of His ministry, that He would send His Holy Spirit who would take up residence in the hearts of His people after He went back to heaven. That happened on the Day of Pentecost; they were filled with the Holy Spirit. Jesus had made those promises. Back in chapter 7, He said, "The Holy Spirit is going to come, and He's going to be in you, and He's going to be like a river flowing, a living river of life inside of you."

In the upper room in John 14:15 and 16, Jesus had said, "The Spirit of truth is going to come. I'm going to send the Spirit of truth; and when He comes, He will be with you forever." And then He said, "He will be in you." And then in that same encounter with the disciples in the upper room, He also said that "He is coming to show you the things concerning Me." So the gift of the Holy Spirit was promised by our Lord. The promise was repeated in John 14:15 and 16 as He met with His disciples, and He said, "The Spirit will be the Spirit of truth. He will take up residence in you, and He will teach you the truth concerning Me."

This is a glorious reality. This means to say that from the Day of Pentecost on, every believer in Jesus Christ has had the Holy Spirit living in that believer. Even to the Corinthians, Paul says, "Your body's a temple of the Holy Spirit. Your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit." "The Spirit of God is in you," he said in chapter 3. "The Holy Spirit is in you," he said in chapter 6. So this is a remarkable reality. And He is the Spirit of truth, and He is the Spirit of Christ.

In Romans it says in chapter 8 that if any person doesn't have the Spirit of Christ, he doesn't belong to Christ. Conversely, anyone who belongs to Christ possesses the Spirit of Christ. So if there's anything that describes a Christian, it is that: that a Christian is one in whom the Spirit of Christ, the Spirit of God, the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of truth, lives permanently. It's not something we have to attain. It's not something we have to achieve. It is the reality of salvation, transformation, regeneration, that the very eternal life that is in us is because the Spirit of Christ is in us. And that is the only way that we have the capacity to obey the Lord. In fact, earlier in the Ephesians we noted that He is called the Spirit of promise because everything that the Lord promises us in our obedient walk with Him is secured to us by the Holy Spirit. He secures it by empowering us. He secures for us all the promises that our Lord has given by empowering us to walk obediently, and therefore receive those promises from His good and gracious hand. Left to ourselves, it would be impossible. And that's why I said a moment ago that if all we had were all the commands of the New Testament and all the commands of the book of Ephesians, we might have a case of legalism. If we were left to our own will and our own way and our own power and resources to obey those commands, it would be impossible. Something dramatic had to change for us to be able to obey.

If you go back for a moment to Galatians chapter 5, the distinction becomes completely clear. And you can look at chapter 5 of Galatians and verse 16. Paul says, "But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh." There's the point. If you want to overcome your remaining humanness, you have to walk by the Spirit.

Verse 17, "For the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit." Even in believers there is that conflict between your unredeemed flesh and the ever-present Holy Spirit. "The flesh sets its desire against the Spirit, the Spirit against the flesh; for these are in opposition to one another, so that you may not do the things that you please." Left to yourself, the battle is overwhelming.

"But," verse 18, "if you are led by the Spirit, you're not under the Law." You're not going to be

condemned by the Law if you're led by the Spirit because if you're led by the Spirit, it proves that you belong to Christ, and the Law has been satisfied in His sacrifice. But you still have a battle on your hands, and the deeds of the flesh are still there in the remaining humanness that every believer possesses. And what are the deeds of the flesh? Left to yourself, what would you do? Oh, they are, "Immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, envying, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these." "Those are the kind of things that I warned you are characterized by people who don't inherit the kingdom of God." But even though you have inherited the kingdom of God, if you were left to your flesh, you wouldn't be able to rise above those things.

But on the other hand, verse 22 says, "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. Now those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires." So, "If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit." We now have life in the Spirit; we live by the presence of the Spirit in our lives. He is that eternal life. But the only way that we will be able to overcome the remaining flesh is to walk by the Spirit, to walk by the Spirit.

Again, I say it's basic to all understanding of Christian living that the only way you can live the Christian life is in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Now let's go back to Ephesians chapter 5 for a moment and look more closely at this command: "Be filled with the Spirit," verse 18. Literally, "Be being kept filled with the Spirit. Be being kept continuously filled with the Spirit." It's a way of life. It is the only way that you can possibly obey. It's the only way you can have triumph over the flesh. It's the only way you can enjoy the fruit of the Spirit. So it is a command for submission to the Holy Spirit's power and presence.

Now I want to say this is not some kind of momentary experience. It's not a second work of grace, it's not an event, it's not a special anointing; rather, it is a reality that is constant. You are to be being kept filled with the Holy Spirit all the time, continuously. That's the idea of walking; it's constant. And it speaks of the internal character of a believer being under the control of the Holy Spirit.

Now when I say the word "filling," I want to help you to understand that—maybe a little deep dive into that word in Greek, *plēroō*. It's not so much static, like filling a glass or filling a box or filling a bucket; that's not really the notion that you have here. It's more like filling the sails on a sailing boat. It's the kind of filling that moves. It's a powerful filling. It's not static; it's not something just sitting there. It's putting you in motion, in motion in sanctification, in motion in obedience to the Lord.

One way to understand its use here would be "powerful permeation." It literally takes over everything, and you are moved by the filling of the Holy Spirit. If we just kind of track that word a little bit, it's used a number of interesting ways that will help you maybe understand what I'm saying.

In John 16:6 there's a comment about the disciples: They were *filled* with sorrow. They were filled with sorrow. Now life throws sorrow at all of us, and so we sort of try to find equilibrium. And there are things that make us sad and things that make us happy, and we try to balance those things off; and maybe in times of sorrow we think about the blessings God has given us, and we maintain some kind of balance. But then there are those moments when we can't do that anymore, and we are filled with sorrow. So the word is used when something takes you over.

In Luke chapter 5 it is used of being filled with fear. There are lots of things in life to terrify us and make us afraid. There are other things that make us feel secure, and we try to find equilibrium in our lives between the things that frighten us and the things that make us feel safe. But there are occasions when we are filled with fear, and we can't hold on to that balance. That's how this word is used—when something dominates you, when sorrow dominates you, when fear dominates you.

In Luke 6 it's used with this expression: "filled with madness." I mean we're all, in some sense, potentially on a brink of a kind of madness. We can get trapped in some things that drive us "crazy," push us over the edge, make us depressed. But we balance those things by the things that make us happy and the people that bring us joy. But there may be times when you can't maintain that balance, and that's where the word *plēroō* would come in—when you are literally gone mad, you've lost your ability to rationally deal with your situation. That's the kind of control this word is expressing.

It's used also in Acts chapter 6, "full of faith," those early leaders of the church who were defined by a fullness of faith, like Stephen. In the fifth chapter of Acts it's used: "full of Satan"—those who are literally under the total domination of the devil.

There's one other illustration that's maybe most helpful; it's in Acts 4:31, and it says that "they were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak the word of God with boldness." "They were filled with the Spirit and began to speak the word of God with boldness." They lost their inhibitions; they lost their normal timidity. They literally were so moved and so permeated by the presence of the Spirit of God that all fears subsided, and they spoke the word of God with boldness. And then it says, "And [they] were of one heart and [one mind]." It affected their life to the degree that it affected how they interacted with non-believers. They just unloaded on them the gospel with boldness. And it affected how they got along with each other and produced a kind of beautiful heart unity.

So what we're talking about when we talk about the filling of the Spirit is something dominating, something permeating in your life on a regular basis: "Be being continuously kept filled with the Spirit." It's just another way to talk about walking in the Spirit. That's the essential truth. If we're going to live the Christian life, that's required.

Now, what exactly do we understand by that? What do we gain by that apart from the power of obedience? What will be the evidence of that? I'm going to show you that in a moment. But it's very different—and that's the point that Paul makes in verse 18—than their former life. "You used to commune with false gods by getting drunk and debauched." We've talked about that now for a couple of weeks. "Your old religion was requiring drunkenness, temple prostitution, immorality, orgies, gluttony, and all manner of debauchery. And that's what the false gods required of you, and that's what Satan required of you. That's what he always requires of you; he wants to debase and debauch people." And they had all—all these Ephesians basically had grown up in this pagan religion that dominated Rome. And this is religion. This is not just going to the bar on the weekend or at night; this is their religion. Drunkenness was their religion, and debauchery along with it. Wild revelries.

So Paul is saying, "Now you have a different God and a different form of worshiping that God—very different. You're going to be filled with the Spirit. You're going to be permeated, not with false religion, not with demons, not with drunkenness, not with debauchery; but you're going to be

permeated with the Holy Spirit.”

As I showed you a few moments ago, the church was filled with the Spirit on the Day of Pentecost. By chapter 4, Peter was filled with the Holy Spirit. The end of chapter 4, they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the Word of God with boldness. By chapter 6 and chapter 7, Stephen was filled with the Holy Spirit. By chapter 9, it says Saul was filled with the Holy Spirit in Damascus. In chapter 11, Barnabas was filled with the Holy Spirit. And then in chapter 13 again, Saul, who now is Paul, was filled with the Holy Spirit.

Completely under the control of the Holy Spirit, it is possible. It's a command in Ephesians, but I just gave you illustrations of its reality. It's not something that has to be attained with some kind of great long-term difficulty; it's a command that can be obeyed, and it can be obeyed because the one great requirement for this command to be a reality is the Holy Spirit. And He's already there. He's already there.

Every believer possesses the Holy Spirit. As I said, in Romans 8, “If anyone has not the Spirit of Christ he's none of His.” We all, Romans tells us, possess the Holy Spirit. First Corinthians says, “We all”—chapter 12—“have received the same Spirit.” So you're never going to read a command in the Bible that says, “Go find the Holy Spirit. Pursue the Holy Spirit. Invite the Holy Spirit into your life.” You're never going to find that. You're never going to find a command that says, “Seek the Holy Spirit,” because you already have the Holy Spirit.

And contrary to what many people have tried to teach, there is no command to be baptized by the Spirit. Seven times the New Testament refers to the baptism of the Holy Spirit, and not one of them is an imperative; not one of them is a command. So you're not trying to find the Holy Spirit, attain the Holy Spirit, achieve the Holy Spirit, seek the Holy Spirit, discover the Holy Spirit, uncover the Holy Spirit; He lives in you.

And you're not looking for a baptism. What is the baptism of the Holy Spirit? It's simply an expression that describes the moment of your salvation: The Spirit of God immersed you, spiritually, into the living church of Christ. Baptism of the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God immersing a believer into the body of Christ. That's a fact. You don't seek that. So you have the Holy Spirit; you are immersed in the Holy Spirit, who immersed you into the church so that you're one with every other believer.

And the Scripture also talks about the sealing of the Holy Spirit, that we are sealed by the Spirit. And that's not something you seek either. That's never a command, that's always a fact. What does the sealing of the Holy Spirit mean? Well essentially what it means—we saw it back in chapter 1 of Ephesians—is that the Holy Spirit is God's seal on you that you belong to Him. He is the down payment on your eternal reward. He is the *arrabōn*, the engagement ring that indicates that you are part of the Bridegroom—part of the bride and will one day meet the Bridegroom. He is the down payment on your eternal inheritance.

So you don't need to seek the Holy Spirit. You don't need to seek to be baptized by the Holy Spirit or in the Holy Spirit or with the Holy Spirit into the church. You don't need to seek the Holy Spirit to hang onto you as if there was some question about whether you were secure. All of that is absolutely settled.

There are some commands about the Holy Spirit. One is, “Don’t grieve the Holy Spirit.” Another is, “Don’t quench the Holy Spirit.” And you can do either of those things by being sinful. But the command is simple and clear: “Be being kept filled with the Holy Spirit.” And the result is not going to be some gifts of the Spirit; those are given at salvation. The result is going to be the fruit of the Spirit: love, joy, peace, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, self-control.

So that’s the spiritual pathology and reality of the filling of the Holy Spirit. But let me help you even one step further to understand this. Would you notice, back now in our text, that there are some results? And I want to point out the first two results.

Being filled with the Holy Spirit results, first of all in verse 19, in joyful worship: “speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord.” Secondly, it results in thanksgiving to God: “always giving thanks for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father.” So if you’re filled with the Spirit, the evidence is not that you’re going to fall over, not that you’re going to faint, not that you’re going to have visions and dreams; you’re going to literally be overwhelmed with joyful worship and thanksgiving. That’s exactly what it says.

Now to help you to understand this from another angle, turn to Colossians chapter 3, Colossians chapter 3 and verse 16: “Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God.” Did you notice something there? Those are the exact results of being filled with the Spirit, only here it’s not being filled with the Spirit, it’s “the word of Christ richly [dwelling] within you.” It has the same results; therefore, it has to be the same reality.

So another way to understand being filled with the Spirit is to understand that it means that you are permeated by the word of Christ which richly dwells within you. “Richly dwell” would be a parallel to “filled.” What does it mean to be filled with the Spirit? It means to have the Spirit dominate, richly, every facet of your inner person.

And in Ephesians, it’s the Spirit; but here, it’s the word concerning Christ. Why the difference? Because what the Spirit came to do is to show you—whom? Christ. And we’re back to John 14:15 and 16, “When the Spirit comes, He’ll point you to Me.” And he could have said, in Colossians 3:16, “the word of God.” If you’re Spirit-filled, it means the Word of God has permeated every part of your life and taken over. But he said “the word of Christ” because it’s primarily Christ that the Spirit of God directs you to see.

That’s 2 Corinthians 3:18: As you look at the glory of the Lord, the Spirit changes you into His image from one level of glory to the next. The Spirit conforms you to Christ. The Spirit-filled life simply is a life dominated by the revelation of Scripture concerning Christ, which the Holy Spirit uses to take total control of a person, accomplishing His will, and increasingly making that person like the Savior Himself. This is stunning, amazing. You just need to understand that being filled with the Holy Spirit is just being completely, richly dominated by things that concern Jesus Christ.

The idea of being richly indwelt by the revelation concerning Christ is exactly what it means to be filled, dominated by the Holy Spirit. The Spirit’s work is to take you to the Scripture, point you to Christ, and as you see the revelation of Christ, change you from one level of glory to the next, to the

next, increasingly more like Christ.

So how do you know when this is happening? How do you know if you're Spirit-filled? Well it's immediate. Go back to Ephesians. What happens? Same thing we saw in Colossians.

The first thing that happens is joyful worship, "speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord." This is all internal because you're filled internally. You're richly indwelt internally, and the first thing that happens is joyful worship. Literally, you're dominated by it. Look at this: "speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord." Some of it is public, and some of it is private, but you're consumed with it.

How do you know if you're Spirit-filled? Because you can't hold back praise—joyful worship of Christ. Music—what a gift, what a gift. I'm so glad that I am not limited to praise the Lord with the music that I can compose; this would be the worst of all thoughts. I am so grateful that I have two thousand years of praise songs written to Christ that I can sing and my heart can sing. There's rarely a waking, conscious moment in my life when I'm not singing. That's the default position of every spare moment in my life.

"Speaking to one another," yes, but also with your heart. This is the defining reality of the Spirit-filled life: music. I mean, think about it. For a thousand years, the Roman Catholic Church robbed the entire world of music until the Reformation and Luther came back and started writing hymns with the other Reformers. Congregations in the contemporary church these days put on entertainment, but they don't seem to care about the singing hearts that long to participate.

Redemption has a song, and it's a new song; it's not the old song. In fact, the word "new" in the Psalms is used more with "song" than any other substantive. And if you take a trip to heaven in Revelation chapter 5, everybody around the throne is singing, and they're singing a new song. God gave us the capacity for music. This is an incredible gift to our souls. Even as a common grace, it's an amazing gift; but for believers, it's necessary.

And then God has given us a wealth of music to express the new song we sing. Music is necessary to release the joy of the heart. Exodus 15, Moses sang. In Judges chapter 5, Deborah and Barak sang a duet. In 2 Chronicles chapter 29, Hezekiah restored Temple worship with music and singing and instruments. And by the way, in the Temple there were 38,000 people who served the Temple, and 4,000 of them were musicians—nearly 1 in every 10. In Exodus 15, Miriam led a women's chorus. In 1 Samuel 10, the prophets had a men's choir. In 1 Chronicles 13:8, all the people sang with congregational praise and musical instruments, and it says, "with all their might." Loud. We know it was loud because it tells us they had lyres, harps, tambourines, cymbals, and trumpets.

The people of God have to sing. First Chronicles 16—I read this morning—that's the song of thanksgiving David introduced when he brought the ark back to put it in the Tabernacle. There were all kinds of instruments that day as well. Even after the Jews came back from Babylonian captivity and they built a second temple, Ezra 2:65 says Zerubbabel appointed a temple choir of at least 200 people. Some of the Levites were skillful singers, no doubt, solo singers or leaders. In Nehemiah 12, we read that there was antiphonal singing, and it was loud—and antiphonal means it was back and forth.

In 2 Chronicles chapter 5, when the ark was finally brought to the Temple, there was a massive explosion of song. They had a lot of amazing instruments: an asor, which was like a harp; a dulcimer, which was struck rather than plucked, like a piano; a harp; sackbut, which was a large handheld harp. They had drums; they had timbrel; they had bells. They had trumpets, cornets, flutes, mouth organs, ram's horns. And they celebrated. God really loves music when it is offered in praise to Him. And by the way, in the millennial temple when Christ comes back to reign on the earth—and the millennial temple is described in Ezekiel 40—in that millennial temple to come, there is a choir loft that, by my speculations, could seat 4,000 people. That's a millennial choir.

And the New Testament is full of music. The night the disciples met with the Lord at the Last Supper, it says after they sang a hymn they went out into the Mount of Olives. And in Acts 16, Paul and Barnabas are in jail. But what are they doing? They're singing. And in 1 Corinthians 14, the Scripture says, "Sing with your mind and sing with your spirit." In Revelation, as I showed you, they're singing around the throne. In Revelation 14, there's the singing of the 144,000 Jews saved out of the Tribulation. In Revelation 15, there's the singing of all the saints.

We have to sing. We get to sing together, but we have to sing in our hearts. And that's what we do; we sing and make melody with our heart to the Lord.

The music of the world reflects the world, and the more degenerate a society becomes, the more corrupt its music becomes. It'll be more corrupt in every aspect, composition, and performance. And by the way, the corruption of a culture is on display in its music. The corruption of a culture is on display in its music. And as that society sinks deeper into the morass of sin, it drags its music with it.

The music of the redeemed is totally different. It's reflective of truth and beauty and virtue that never changes because God never changes. We don't follow the musical styles of the world down the black hole into the pit; we have our music. Our God never changes, righteousness and holiness and virtue never change, truth never changes, and that's why we can sing 2,000 years of music. Our music displays features consistent with God's nature, like beauty, intelligence. It is systematic, sequential, orderly, poetic, harmonic, rhythmic, possesses resolution.

Now music is not worship. Music is not worship; music is a means of worship. Music doesn't motivate worship. You can't play certain kind of music and induce somebody into worship. You might induce them into something, a lot of things; but music does not motivate worship, it expresses it. Worship comes from the heart. Music, the songs of the redeemed, are not designed to appeal to the unsaved. They're not designed for evangelistic purposes—they're at home in their fallenness; they have their music. Let them have their music, but let it never be the songs of the redeemed. We sing, verse 19 says, with the heart. This is where it all originates.

Back in Amos chapter 5, God indicted the people of Israel. He said, "Stop your songs; your hearts aren't right. Your songs are an abomination to Me because your hearts aren't right. Don't sing the songs of the redeemed unless you are redeemed."

So we sing because we cannot be silent. And what does this, in particular, look like or sound like? Well, verse 19 says we sing from *adō*—the voice is the primary means, most universal, usable, flexible, and mostly beautiful instrument; we sing. And then we make melody, *psallō*. It means "to

twang” or “to twitch” or “to pluck” or “to pull”; and this indicates the use of instruments. It could actually be translated “using instruments.” We sing using instruments.

But it also says we make melody in our hearts. We make melody in our hearts, speaking in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs. The word “speaking” is very interesting—the word *la-leō*, la-la, “La-la-la-la-la.” It’s an onomatopoeic word. It’s used of birds whistling, used of people humming. You know how you’re filled with the Spirit? You’re singing in your heart, you’re making sounds, you’re chirping, you’re whistling, because that’s what happens to spiritual people who are dominated by the realities of Christ.

And our songs take three forms at least. Some of them are “psalms,” it says, psalms. Again, this connotes what we know about the Psalms and also the use of musical instruments as were used with the Psalms. Some are “hymns.” Hymns, festal praise to God. And some are “spiritual songs,” or odes, which express human experience: an ode to something God has done in your life, some gracious gift, or even a sad song. So it’s a range of everything. Psalms: history, theology. Hymns: the recognition of God’s glory. Spiritual songs: personal testimony. We sing all of that. But please notice where it is all directed: to the Lord, to the Lord. You don’t only sing together, we sing to the Lord, to the Lord. That’s where all the praise has to go: to the Lord. And we come together as a church and sing—we sing to the Lord. When we sing in our hearts, we sing to the Lord.

Listen to this outburst in 2 Chronicles 5. “When the priests came forth from the holy place (for all the priests who were present had sanctified themselves . . .), and all the Levitical singers and their sons and kinsmen, clothed in fine linen, with cymbals, harps and lyres, standing east of the altar, and with them [a] hundred and twenty priests blowing trumpets in unison when the trumpeters and the singers were to make themselves heard with one voice to praise and to glorify the Lord, and when they lifted up their voice accompanied by trumpets and cymbals and instruments of music, and when they praised the Lord saying, ‘He indeed is good for His lovingkindness is everlasting,’ then the house, the house of the Lord, was filled with a cloud, so that the priests couldn’t stand to minister because of the cloud, for the glory of the Lord filled the house of God.” Sing like that to Him, and He’ll show up, He’ll show up, because the psalmist said, “The Lord inhabits the praise of His people.”

What does it mean to be Spirit filled? It means to be so dominated by the glories of Christ that the Spirit of God makes Christ all-glorious, and you break forth in song. James said this: “Is anyone cheerful? Let him sing praises.” That’s what we do.

Music is not an evangelistic tool. It’s not offered for non-Christians, it’s offered to the Lord; and if He’s not pleased, He’s not pleased because the heart’s not right. But if the heart is right, it’s the most necessary thing that a believer does. It’s wonderful when we come together to do it collectively. But even when you’re not here, if you’re filled with the Spirit and you’re dominated with the word of Christ, you’re going to be making music to the Lord—joyful worship.

Secondly, thanks for everything—verse 20, “Always giving thanks for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father.” Thanksgiving is going to be the tone of all that singing—joyful praise with thanksgiving.

So that’s what it is to have a life under the control of the Holy Spirit. Walk in the Spirit. It’s all the love, joy, peace, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, self-control—all the beauties and glories of

Christ breaking forth in song to Him.

Now before you go, I have something that I want to talk to you about—change the subject for a moment—that is on my heart, and it's very, very important to me, and I need your help with this. So we're watching a culture that is under divine judgment. And you can think about that in terms of a culture, or you can realize that the people who defy God in the culture are under divine judgment. It's very personal, and it struck me this week in a way that it hadn't in the past.

Governor Gavin Newsom, who has decided that he is going to lead the nation in providing the slaughter of the children that God creates in the womb, has postured himself as if he were Herod; and I am deeply concerned for the jeopardy of his eternal soul. I have talked to him in the past, and I know he was raised in the Roman Catholic Church. But a line was crossed this week that really, really gripped my heart. He began putting up billboards all across America advertising the website in California that you can connect to if you want to have an abortion. And on all those billboards, he included the words of Jesus—billboards advertising abortion. This is what he put on those billboards: “Jesus said in Mark 12:31, ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself. There is no other commandment greater than these.’” He had the terrifying audacity to use the words of Jesus to support the slaughter of the ones that He creates in the womb. The jeopardy of his soul is evident.

I say this because my heart is grieved that Christ should be so dishonored. Billboards across the country with the words of Jesus, trying to support abortion—terrifying. And my concern is about his eternal soul, because he will meet his Maker. And there's a passage in Psalm 50—listen to it—verse 16: “But to the wicked God says, ‘What right have you to tell of My statutes and take My covenant in your mouth?’” What a statement.

Let me read it again: “But to the wicked God says, ‘What right have you to tell of My statutes and take My covenant in your mouth?’ . . . You cast My words behind you.” Then God says in Psalm 50, “Now consider this . . . I will tear you in pieces, and there will be none to deliver [you].” The jeopardy is clear.

But there is a closing verse in that psalm: “He who offers a sacrifice of thanksgiving honors Me; and to him who orders his way aright I shall show the salvation of God.” That psalm ends with mercy and the offer of salvation. And as the church of Jesus Christ with compassion, we want the governor and all who follow him and all who reject the Lord to know that no matter what they have done, He offers salvation, He offers salvation.

I think, with a new kind of resolve I want to ask you to begin to pray for the salvation of the governor and the people around him. We can't do anything else. There's no political solutions to anything. But we can cry out to the Lord to be merciful, because we care. This is why the church is in the world. And that he would understand what he has done, that he would turn from sin, he would repent, along with those who accommodate that, follow that, and cry out for mercy from God, who will grant it through Jesus Christ. Amen. Amen.

Father, we thank You for Your truth, and we boldly proclaim it like those who were filled with the Spirit in Acts 4:31. It says there that they were filled with the Spirit and boldly proclaimed the Word. We proclaim it boldly from the housetop to all. And You have told us in particular to pray for the salvation of rulers and leaders. And so we boldly proclaim the truth of Christ—this is our calling in the

world—and ask that You would be gracious to those sinners in leadership who are in the line of fire for Your judgment, and turn them to penitence, to repentance and faith in Christ, and provide for them the forgiveness that You give every penitent sinner who comes and calls on Your name. And, Lord, help us to so live that in the midst of a world that is so profoundly troubled, our song never ends—the new song of redemption—because we are filled with Your Spirit. We ask these things in Christ's name. Amen.

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