**Brought to Life; Brought Together**

**Walking Worthy: Spirit Filled Worship**

Ephesians 5:18-21

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We are continuing our series in Ephesians, Brought to Life; Brought Together. As we have said, Ephesians can be divided into two sections, chapters one through three describe what *God has done in us* through Christ while chapters four through six call us to *live out what God has done in us*, what Paul calls Walking Worthy. We have been looking at 5:15-21 which addresses the theme of walking in wisdom. Last week we saw that one way we walk in wisdom is by seeking to be filled with the Spirit (5:18). This week and next we are looking at three results being filled with the Spirit.

Let me recap. Paul tells us to walk wisely because the days are evil (5:15-16). This present evil age seeks to draw us away from Christ so we are to be careful how we live by using our time wisely, understanding God’s will for us in daily life, and seeking to be filled with the Spirit. We saw that being filled with the Spirit is being filled with the fullness of God, God’s power and presence in our lives, filling us with his love and joy (see Eph 3:15-19). We looked at three means or ways[[1]](#footnote-1) which God fills us with his Spirit. First, thirst for Jesus (Jn 7:37-39); second, fill yourself with Scripture (Jn 6:63); and third make time for prayer. Then Paul gives three results of being filled with the Spirit: worship, gratitude, and submissiveness. Today we will look at Spirit Filled Worship (19) and next week we will look at Spirit Filled Gratitude (20) and Spirit Filled Submission (21). In verse 19, Paul gives four characteristics of Spirit filled worship. My big idea today is Spirit filled people gladly worship the Lord.

**Spirit Filled Worship is Joyful Worship**

The first characteristic of Spirit filled worship is that it is joyful worship. Paul says Spirit filled people address one another in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, singing and making melody. Have you ever wondered why the bible puts so much emphasis on worshipping in song? The Old Testament has one whole book devoted to worship songs. Both the Old and New Testament command us to sing when we gather together. I think the reason is because God is too great to merely think about, we must feel deeply about him too. Jonathan Edward said this, God glorifies himself toward the creatures two ways, first by appearing to their understanding (minds) and by communicating to their heart (affections). Treasuring God with our thoughts and our affections is necessary for genuine faith. Worship in song helps us to think truly and feel deeply about God. So, worship is a supernatural act that is birthed in us when God’s Spirit makes our spirit alive and unites us to Jesus. And when God fills us with his Spirit, joyful worship is the result.

**Spirit Filled Worship is from the Heart**

Secondly, Spirit filled worship is singing and making melody to the Lord with our hearts. Genuine worship is not just opening your mouth vocally by human will power. It is the heart God makes alive and fills by his Spirit that influences the will to move our mouths. Genuine, Spirit filled worship is more than just participating in religious activities but is our heart’s response to God in those activities (Mat 15:7-8). But we can still genuinely worship when our desires for God are lacking. Genuine worship is not always filled with passionate desires for God but includes the longing for those desires for God, the longing to have your love for God rekindled, or sadness and frustration that those longings are absent. That is also genuine worship because your hope in God drives you to him. Genuine worship is always an expression of the heart, whether your heart longs for desires for God or your heart is overflowing with passionate desires for God.

**Spirit Filled Worship is Singing to the Lord**

Then Paul tells us that Spirit filled worship is vertical, described as singing and making melody to the Lord. Spirit filled worship is centered on who God is and what he has done. We are singing to the Lord because he is present with us, the church gathered is God’s new temple, God’s dwelling place (Eph 2:21-22). So, we worship the Lord by singing songs that are filled with truth that focus our attention on Him and raise our affections for him. So, the elders want worship that is God centered, gospel saturated, Spirit led, and heart felt. Singing to the Lord points us to a soberness and seriousness in worship. When men and women come into God’s presence in the bible, they know it which causes them to respond soberly and seriously. Moses he takes off his shoes at the burning bush (Ex 3:5), Israel is struck with fear at Mount Sinai (Ex 20:18), Isaiah quakes and is undone in his vision of God’s throne (Isa 6:4-5), Job silences his lips before God (Job 40:3-4), John falls down as though dead in his vision of the exalted Jesus (Rev. 1:17). Casual worship of the living, true, holy, sovereign God of the universe just doesn’t exist.

**Spirit Filled Worship Encourages Each Other**

Finally, Spirit filled worship also has a horizontal dimension to it, Paul describes Spirit filled worship as addressing one another in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs. [[2]](#footnote-2) We are to sing some songs to each other as we sing to the Lord. He is referring to gathering together as the church. Spirit filled people want to encourage others and one way we do that is by addressing one another in our singing. But what is he talking about? I think he is talking about being encouraged as we gather and hear each other sing. There is something unique about worshiping together in the presence of God by his Spirit. But I think he is also talking about songs that address the congregation that encourages us to worship God (1 Cor 14:15-16). Gathering together to worship not only intensifies our own desires for God but helps intensify each other’s desires for God. Gathering together is a necessary part of our being encouraged as followers of Christ.

Response:

* Are you seeking to be filled with the Spirit?
* Is your life characterized by Spirit filled Worship?
* How is God speaking to you?

**Life Group Questions:**

1. David has said that the six chapters can be divided into two sections. Explain those two sections in your own words. Why is understanding the order of these two sections so important to living the christian life?
2. What does it mean walk in wisdom?
3. What did David say what it means to be filled with the Spirit?
4. How are we filled with the Spirit?
5. What are the three results of being filled with the Spirit?
6. What are some of expressions of Spirit filled worship that stuck out to you?
7. How is God speaking to you in this message?
8. How does this passage relate to you own discipleship?
9. How does this message help you in making disciple?

1. David Mathis, in his book *Habits of Grace* says means of grace are the various channels God has appointed for regularly supplying his church with spiritual power. The key principles of the means of grace are Jesus’ voice (word), his ear (prayer), and his body (church). The various disciplines and practices, then—our habits of grace—are ways of hearing him (his word), and responding (in prayer) to him, in the context of his people (the church),”p. 179. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Most commentators do not see any significant different in the three words except that spiritual songs probably are Spirit inspires, whether that be preplanned or spontaneous songs. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)