

BE FILLED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT

Ephesians 5:18

And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit.

INTRODUCTION

Too many of us neglect to let our lights shine as Christians should. We seem to be asleep in the darkness. We have abundant resources and opportunities to develop ourselves and influence the world; yet, it appears that we are sleepwalking. We seem to have little sense of direction. We demonstrate little awareness of who we are and what we are. What can awaken us from our sleep? What awakened the early Christians when they dozed off in their devotion to God? In **Ephesians 5:14** Paul gave them a wake-up call - *“Awake, sleeper, And arise from the dead, And Christ will shine on you”* In **Ephesians 5:15-18**, Paul awakened sleepers with this message: 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.***

Paul used three keys to wake up those who were asleep spiritually. In **verse 15-16**, Paul's first key was **wisdom**. For one to awake from sleep spiritually, he has to seek the wisdom of God in everything he does. Waking up start with wisdom, in **verse 17**, his second key was **understanding**. For one to awake from sleep spiritually, he has to understand the importance of God's will. **John Stott** commented, *“Nothing is more important in life than to discover and do the will of God.”* Messages bombard us daily, running counter to God's will, and they influence Christians of all ages. We all feel the pressure of a culture out of step with God. Some of us need to wake up and think about our sources of entertainment. We need to wake up and think about the books we read, the places we go, the dress we wear, the things we drink, and the way we spend our time. We need to wake up to God's will. The third key Paul used was **power**. Power revives and awakes spiritually. For one to awake from sleep spiritually, he has to be empowered by the Holy Spirit. Power for Christians comes from only one source: the **Holy Spirit of the Lord**.

WHY BE FILLED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT

Why would Paul through God's inspiration make a comparison between drinking and filling? What is contained in drinking? Dissipation! Dissipation is the umbrella of sin. It is the mother of all evil and lawlessness. Dissipation means intemperance (as against temperance which is abstinence from alcoholic drink), self-indulgence, depravity (degeneration into immorality), wastefulness, licentiousness (uncontrolled sexual desires), and drunkenness. When a person drinks alcoholic wine, he has committed dissipation. He was wasted his time, energy and resources. He is under the influence of alcohol. Its effects control him, he becomes a different person (whether he is conscious of it or not).

The person who is filled with wine pursues selfish gratification of the physical, but the other filled with the Spirit of God is focused on finding joy in spiritual blessings. The person

who is filled with wine is devoted to the false joys of the world, but the other filled with the Spirit of God is filled with songs of joy. In drinking wine, there is dissipation (wastefulness) because the person involved has no control at all, while in being filled with the Spirit of God, the godly individual finds treasured rewards through self-control.

Ephesians 5:18 presents the Christian as one who is and who should be filled with the Spirit of God and the worldly person as being filled with poisonous wine. Is there any other explanation we can give to what God has revealed here?

Ephesians 5:18 presents to us that there should and there must be a special difference between a Christian and an unbeliever. Any time we realize that there is and there should be a vast difference between us and the world, we are securing the protection of our influence over the world. Understanding this great difference will be motivation for us to influence the world.

Paul called on Christians to become different—to be under the influence of God's Holy Spirit. The Spirit seeks to fill our lives through the Word of God. However, our sins, stubbornness, and refusal to repent can rob us of the Spirit's power. When we are open to God and obedient to His Word, the Holy Spirit fills us. His power flows into our lives.

HOW, THEN, CAN WE BE FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT?

The Spirit will not empower our lives if we lack the desire for His power.

- Waking up to the Spirit's power in our lives starts with thirsting for what Jesus offers—the opportunity to be like Him and be different from the world. Making us like Jesus is the Spirit's specialty through the Word, but He does this only if we desire it. Why? Because we often grieve Him - **Ephesians 4:30** ³⁰ *And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.*
- Second, we must heed the call to be filled with the Spirit by getting to know the Word of God. **Ephesians 5:18** says we must allow the Holy Spirit fill us. The Spirit and the Word go together. To be filled with the Spirit requires that we know the Word and that the Word dwell in us. To have the Spirit filling our lives causes the Word of God to come alive in us. The Spirit and the Word work together.
- Third, in order to be filled with the Spirit, we must make surrendering to Jesus a lifestyle. As Christians, we must strive to impact the world surrounding us. Our presence should cause others to recognize that there is a gracious God in heaven and that we are His children. We can have a powerful impact on the people surrounding us. This depends on how we let the Holy Spirit fill our lives. This also depends on discarding what will bring us into dissipation – drinking alcoholic wine. This depends on how we awake from our sleep spiritually by using God's wisdom and understanding to do His will and have a transformed life that influences the world in all we do, eat, drink, speak, dress and relate. *Always remember that God, the Father up above is looking down in love, and He expects us to walk as one of His children of Light.*

CONCLUSION

Are you sleepwalking as a Christian? It is time to accept the power that comes from being Spirit-filled. God wants His church wide awake. If you are not a Christian, it is time for you to wake up to what Christ has done for you. Turn to Him, repenting of your old life, and be baptized to wash away your sins and be added to the church of Christ.