

NOT DRUNK WITH WINE BUT FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT

**Bible Reading: Ephesians 5:1-21 Focus passage: Verses 15 – 21**

Every person lives under some form of control—either the guiding presence of God’s Spirit or the pull of sinful desires and the allure of the world. For this reason, the Bible tells us: **“And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit” (Eph. 5:18)**. This means that drunkenness and the Spirit of God cannot coexist in our lives. Drunkenness brings excess, which are behaviours God disapproves of. It represents the old life driven by selfish desires, lusts, and temporary pleasures. (1Peter 4:3-5)

On the other hand, the Lord exhorts us through Apostle Paul to be filled with the Spirit. The evidence of this is a life full of praise, thanksgiving, lasting joy, holiness, spiritual strength, and total submission in the fear of God (Gal. 5:19–23; Rom. 14:17).

**THE WAYWARD WALK OF THE SURFEITED SOUL (Ephesians 5:15-18)**

**“And be not drunk with wine... but be filled with the Spirit” (Eph. 5:18)**. God warns that wine deceives and enslaves those who rely on it (Prov. 20:1; Prov. 23:29–32; Isa. 5:11). A life dominated by worldly intoxication often leads to foolish talking, violence, carelessness, moral compromise, and spiritual decline. For example, Noah’s drunkenness brought shame to his household (Gen. 9:20–23), and Belshazzar’s drunken feast in Babylon led to pride and divine judgment (Dan. 5:1–5, 22–23). These examples illustrate how intoxication dulls spiritual awareness and leads to destructive consequences.

God therefore warns us **to walk not as fools**. The warning is not limited to literal wine. Anything that occupies our minds and hearts in place of God—pleasure, ambition, materialism, entertainment, or sinful habits—can become a form of spiritual intoxication that dulls spiritual sensitivity (1 Jn. 2:15–17; Luke 21:34).

Some habits, such as eating, spending time with friends, or engaging in hobbies or sport, may not be sinful in moderation. However, indulging excessively in these can gradually distract us from God and dull our spiritual sensitivity and discipline until they begin to take His place in our lives. **See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time because the days are evil. (Eph 5:15-16)**

**THE WISE WALK OF THE SPIRIT-FILLED SAINT (Ephesians 5:18-21)**

**...but be filled with the Spirit” (Eph. 5:18)**. In contrast, the Spirit-filled life produces clarity, discipline, and spiritual power. On the Day of Pentecost, the disciples were accused of being drunk because of their joyful boldness, but Peter explained that they were filled with the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:13–17).

Instead of the confusion, disorientation, and disorder that drunkenness brings, the Spirit brings righteousness, peace, and joy into the believer’s life (Rom. 14:17).

When we are filled with the Spirit, we will undoubtedly reap its benefits some of which are listed hereafter: One, Joyful and thankful hearts (Eph. 5:19–20). Two, The fruit of a Christlike character (Gal. 5:22–23). Three, Power for bold witness (Acts 1:8). Four, Victory over the flesh (Gal. 5:16). Five, Unity and humility (Eph. 5:21). Six, Divine guidance and spiritual discernment (Rom. 8:14)

In order to be filled with the Spirit and walk consistently with God, we must:

- a. Consciously and intentionally abstain from worldly pleasures, even when they may not necessarily be sinful (1 Thess. 5:22; 1 Cor. 10:23).
- b. Submit daily to the Spirit’s leading through prayer (Luke 11:13; Acts 4:31).
- c. Devote ourselves to the consistent study of God’s Word (2 Tim. 2:15; Josh 1:8; Col 3:16).
- d. Yield ourselves unconditionally to God’s Word and His leading (Gen. 22:3; Prov 3:5-6).

When the Spirit fills the believer’s life, He replaces the confusion of worldly intoxication with the clarity, power, and joy that come from living under God’s control.