



# The Scrolls

Helping **CENTRAL BIBLE CHURCH** Families Belong, Become and Go Beyond V26 N52 December 29, 2024

## CHRISTMAS PLAYLIST

“Songs on Repeat”

Ephesians 5:18-21

### THIS WEEK'S CORE COMPETENCY

#### Worship

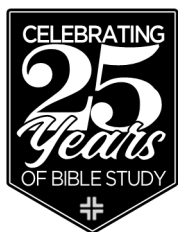
I worship God for who he is and what he has done for me.

“Come, let us bow down in worship, let us kneel before the LORD our Maker; for he is our God, and we are the people of his pasture, the flock under his care.”

Psalm 95:6-7



What has being filled with the Spirit got to do with worship?



It's safe to say that the songs of praise and worship found in Luke's birth narratives – the Magnificat (1:46-55), the Benedictus (vv. 68-79), and Nunc Dimittis (vv. 29-32) – were all explicitly prompted by the Holy Spirit. The same is likely true for Gloria in Excelsis Deo (2:14), given the presence of the angel and heavenly host. Mary's song was uttered in response to Spirit-filled Elizabeth's benediction, “Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the child you will bear” (Lk 1:42). Zechariah was filled with the Holy Spirit when he prophesied in his hymn (v. 67). And Simeon was “moved by the Spirit” to praise God for providing salvation not only for Israel but also for the Gentile nations (vv. 27, 30).

The connection of the Holy Spirit to songs of praise and worship is not confined to Luke's Gospel. Paul, too, makes an explicit reference to the link between them in Ephesians 5:18b-19. There he tells believers: “Instead, be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another with psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit” – suggesting that filling with the Spirit and worship go hand-in-hand. The command deserves a closer look.

The word “instead” implies *contrast* as in “don't do this, *but* do that *instead*.” The filling of the Holy Spirit is distinct from other works of his on our behalf, and therefore, it should be discussed separately. One author writes, “Whereas ministries such as the indwelling, baptism, regenerating, and sealing are non-experiential [i.e., they don't depend on what we do] and occur but once at the moment of conversion, the filling of the Spirit is experiential [it does depend on what we do] and also repeated” (Paul Enns, *The Moody Handbook of Theology*, 278). Unfortunately, many discussions on the work of the Holy Spirit lump indwelling, baptism, and filling together and inevitably end up confusing things.

Furthermore, Paul's command to “be filled with the Spirit” is given in *contrast* to the warning “do not get drunk with wine.” The analogy is straightforward. On the one hand, a drunk person

filled with alcohol is controlled by the alcohol, which explains the shorthand, DUI, driving under the influence. On the other hand, a sober person filled with the Spirit is controlled by the Spirit. By the way, the two are mutually exclusive; to the extent a person is under the influence of alcohol, that person is not under the influence of the Spirit. The idea behind the word ‘filled’ (Gk. *plērousthe*) is “control.” “The indwelling Spirit of God is the One who should continually control and dominate the life of the believer” (Fritz Rienecker, *A Linguistic Key to the Greek New Testament*, 538).

Ephesians 5:18 indicates three things about being filled with the Spirit. *First*, it is a command. Nowhere is the believer commanded to be indwelt or sealed with the Spirit; however, the believer is commanded to be filled with the Spirit. The fact that the command is in the present tense implies that believers are to be *continuously* (not continually) filled. According to one Greek grammar, “it signifies action in progress, or state in persistence, and may be represented by the graph (-----)” (H. E. Dana and Julius R. Mantey, *A Manual Grammar of the Greek New Testament*, 182). *Second*, it is conditional. Whereas there are no conditions attached to indwelling, baptism, and sealing, the fact that filling is commanded implies it is conditional. Other commands must be obeyed in order to be filled. For example, Paul commands his readers (1) “Do not grieve the Holy Spirit” (Eph 4:30). Sin grieves the Holy Spirit, and sin will prevent the believer from being filled with the Spirit. (2) “Do not quench the Spirit” (1Th 5:19 NKJV). Believers can pour cold water on the influence of the Spirit, which will prevent the believer from being filled with the Spirit. (3) “Walk by the Spirit” (Gal 5:16 NKJV). Rather than do what the sinful nature (lit., “flesh”) desires, believers are to do what the Spirit desires, which is necessary for the believer to be filled with the Spirit. *Third*, it is repeated. Ephesians 5:18 is a present imperative, commanding “be continuously filled,” indicating it's not a one-time experience.

# 1

## EXAMINE GOD'S WORD

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### Read Ephesians 5:18-21

18 *And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit, 19 addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with your heart, 20 giving thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, 21 submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ.* (ESV)

### Read in other translations

18 *And do not get drunk with wine, which is debauchery, but be filled by the Spirit, 19 speaking to one another in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, singing and making music in your hearts to the Lord, 20 always giving thanks to God the Father for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, 21 and submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ.* (NET)

8 *Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit, 19 speaking to one another with psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit. Sing and make music from your heart to the Lord, 20 always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

21 *Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.* (NIV)

After reading the text, practice your Observation skills by noting the following:

- Bracket "with wine" v. 18.
- Circle "debauchery" in v. 18.
- Box "but" indicating *contrast* in v. 18.
- Highlight "be filled *with the Spirit*" in v. 18.
- Circle "with" in v. 18.
- Underline the participles "addressing," "singing," "making melody," "giving thanks," and "submitting" in vv. 19-21.
- Circle "psalms," "hymns," and "spiritual songs" in v. 19.
- Bracket "with your heart" in v. 19.

What one word would you use to describe the **TONE** of this passage? (i.e., stern, joyful, cautious, etc.)

What word or idea stands out to you in this passage?

What one thing do you not understand in this passage?

Try to summarize the **THEME** of this passage in one word. If you were going to describe these verses, you might say, "This text is about \_\_\_\_\_."



## DIG DEEPER

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Answer the questions to help you apply the passage and prepare for discussion

1. Paul's command to believers (v. 18) is like a two-sided coin. How so? And do you think the two sides are mutually exclusive? Explain.
2. Do Paul's words "drunk *with wine*" not provide a loophole, that is, a way to circumvent his command against drunkenness? Explain.
3. Define "debauchery."
4. The command "be filled" is a *passive* command. What does that indicate?
5. Put *what "be filled"* in "*be filled with the Spirit*" means in your own words.
6. The command "be filled" is in the *present* tense. What does that indicate? (See p. 1, 3rd ¶, and p. 5, note.)
7. The results of being filled with the Spirit are expressed in *five* participles (vv. 19-20). List them.
8. Three of them have to do with making music. What do you infer from this?
9. The music believers make together is to be made "*with the heart*" (ESV). (Some translations have "from" or "in.") What does "with the heart" mean?
10. **Discussion:** Talk about how a believer can be filled with the Spirit. What must he or she do?

### Commentary On The Text

To be fully understood, with the compound command “do not get drunk on wine . . . instead be filled with the Spirit” and the five descriptive participles that follow, Ephesians 5:18-21 needs to be read in its broader three-fold context. In 5:1-6 Paul commands his readers to “live a life of love.” He tells them to act like their Heavenly Father who loved them so much that he sent his beloved Son to be their Savior so that they might become beloved sons as well. What’s more, he tells them to love “*just as Christ loved,*” deeply and sacrificially. That’s the positive side of his command. On the negative side, he goes on to tell them to abstain from evil practices, like sexual immorality in particular and any other kind of moral impurity in general, and to shun evil speech, like dirty language, senseless talk, and sarcastic ridicule, all of which fly in the face of love. These things are the fare of unbelievers, who have no inheritance in the kingdom of God and his Son and on whom God’s judgment comes. A cursory reading of verses 5 and 6 might lead the reader to conclude that Christians stand to lose their inheritance and face the wrath of God if they do these things the apostle forbids, but that’s not the case. Paul is simply saying to believers, to use a sports analogy, you’re not on the “sons of disobedience” team anymore, so take off their uniform and don’t hang out in their locker room any longer.

In 5:7-14 Paul commands his readers to “live as children of light.” To get his point across he uses two powerful metaphors, darkness and light. “You were once darkness,” he tells them. They not only walked in darkness; they were darkness! They spread darkness. “But now you are light in the Lord,” he assures them. Now they are, in Jesus’ words, “the light of the world” (Mt 5:14). As light, their deeds rule out the deeds of darkness. Matter of fact, as light, they can do nothing but expose “the fruitless deeds of darkness” for what they truly are, namely, too shameful to discuss. And whose deeds are to be exposed? One author answers, “It is all too easy to conclude that it is the deeds of those in darkness. Nevertheless, it is more likely that it refers to believers who are participating in unfruitful works of darkness . . . Hence believers, rather than participating in evil works, are to help those who have fallen by exposing their unfruitful works and showing them that participation in those works is totally inconsistent with light” (Harold W. Hoehner, *Ephesians*, 679).

Moving closer to verses 18-21, in 5:15-21 he commands them to live “not as unwise but as wise.” *The opening verse serves as a topic sentence for the paragraph, which is clearly about living wisely rather than foolish-*

*ly.* Living wisely, Paul goes on to explain, is a matter of understanding and doing the Lord’s will (v. 17). Doing the will of the Lord is explained in terms of one two-fold command (“do not get drunk . . . but be filled”) followed by a description of a number of the *results of obedience* to it (see Thomas L. Constable, “Notes on Ephesians,” 2024 ed. 116, [soniclight.com/tcon/notes/pdf/ephesians.pdf](http://soniclight.com/tcon/notes/pdf/ephesians.pdf)), expressed grammatically in five participles—“addressing” (i.e., fellowship) “singing,” “making melody” (i.e., worship), “giving thanks” (i.e., gratitude), and “submitting” (i.e., submission)—primarily in the context of church gatherings. The command is found in verse 18, “Do not get drunk on wine [or any other intoxicant for that matter], which is *debauchery* [living like the prodigal son]. According to one observer: “People who are drunk give way to wild, dissolute and uncontrolled actions. They behave like animals, indeed worse than animals” (John R. W. Stott, *The Message of Ephesians*, TBST, 205). Instead, be filled *by* the Spirit” (the NET Bible). The ESV (cf. NIV) translates the second part of this command, “be filled *with* the Spirit,” which makes the Holy Spirit the *content* of the filling. That translation fits the contrast of being filled with wine on the one hand versus being filled with the Spirit on the other, living under the influence of wine on the one hand versus living under the influence of the Spirit on the other. And yet, there are good grammatical reasons for translating the command, “be filled *by* the Spirit,” which makes the Holy Spirit the *agent* of the filling but leaves its content unspecified. This translation is preferred by the NET Bible as well as some commentators. The unspecified content would have to be inferred from the context. For example, it might be the things that follow: addressing one another corporately with psalms, singing praises, giving thanks, and submitting to one another. Or it might be something in the broader context of the book, e.g., “the fullness of God” (cf. 1:23; 3:19). The fact that the results of being filled are expressed in participles in the Greek text is reflected in most English translations.

“Of the five participles describing life in the Spirit, three have to do with singing (5:19). This whole section is reminiscent of the initial doxology in 1:3-14. Singing is the natural expression of joy that God brings into a person’s life. The presence of early Christian hymns (e.g., 1 Tim. 3:16; possibly Phil. 2:6-11) gives some indication of the importance of songs in the early church. The purpose of singing is both praise to God and instruction of believers” (Klyne Snodgrass, *The NIV Application Commentary: Ephesians*, 291). “Giving thanks to God the Father” and “submitting to one another” round out the five.

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## Word Studies/Notes

v. 18 *with wine* Cf. Ac 2:13. "In Paul's day wine was the most common intoxicant. In our day any substance that controls our bodies should be avoided" (Thomas L. Constable, "Notes on Ephesians," 2034 ed., 116, [soniclight.com/tcon/notes/pdf/ephesians.pdf](http://soniclight.com/tcon/notes/pdf/ephesians.pdf)).

v. 18 *debauchery* Cf. "wild living" (Lk 15:13). The word suggests a wild and undisciplined life. "In the NT the adverb is used only in Luke 15:13 where it relates how the prodigal son squandered all his money in 'dissolute' living. The noun occurs three times: (1) in Titus 1:6 where believers are told to select elders whose children are believers not accused of 'debauchery'; (2) 1 Pet 4:4 mentions that those in the world are surprised that believers do not join them in their excesses of 'dissipation' or 'ruination'; and (3) in the present verse. Hence, it has the idea of a disorderly life resulting from the lack of self-control. It refers to people who waste their resources to gratify their own sensual desires. They lack discipline that leads to excesses that can lead to ruination" (Harold W. Hoehner, *Ephesians*, 701).

v. 18 *be filled* "'Be filled' is a passive command. It amounts to letting the Holy Spirit, who indwells us, control us completely. We do this by trusting and obeying the Lord as His Word directs . . . Wuest interpreted it: 'Be constantly, moment by moment, being controlled by the Spirit.' This is our ongoing responsibility (Gr. present tense), and it is obligatory for every Christian, not optional." (Constable, 115-116). "The passive be filled implies that God does the filling . . . The idea of filling in this context describes an effective, controlling presence" (Darrell L. Bock, *Ephesians*, TNTC, 163).

v. 18 *with* Translating the Greek preposition "with," as many English translations do, implies that the Holy Spirit is the *content* of the filling. Translating the preposition "by," which may be preferable grammatically, implies that the Holy Spirit is the *agent* in the filling and leaves the content unspecified (cf. the NET Bible). One commentator who prefers "by" writes: "The content is not specifically mentioned in the present verse, but it may refer to the fullness of the moral excellence and power of God mentioned in Eph 1:23. Later Paul prays that believers would be 'filled up to all the fullness of God,' that is, filled with the content of God's moral excellence and power, which is to know the love of Christ (3:19). Also, in the preceding verse we are 'to

understand the will of the Lord,' the Lord here referring to Christ. Hence, the Holy Spirit is the means by which believers are filled with Christ and his will. This is fitting because the parallel passage of the present verse is Col 3:16 where Paul states, 'let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching, and admonishing one another with the singing of psalms, hymns, spiritual songs with thankfulness in your hearts to God'" (Hoehner, 704). To the question "Is the Holy Spirit the *content* or the *agent*?" a few reply, "Yes." Given the possibility that both are true, they argue that the Spirit, the agent, fills the believer with himself, the content (Charles C. Ryrie, *Basic Theology*, 435).

v. 21 *submitting* "In this text a result of believers filled by the Spirit is submission to one another in the body of believers. Unbelievers tend to take great pride in individualism and independence, which leads to selfishness. However, believers are to act differently. Jesus instructed the disciples that the world would know that they are his disciples if they love one another (John 13:34-35). Also, in other contexts Paul instructs believers to love one another with brotherly love and to prefer one another by showing honor (Rom 12:10) and in humility to count the other better than themselves" (Hoehner, 717).

v. 19 *psalms, hymns, songs* "Whether any difference is intended between psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs is difficult to say. In all probability no clear demarcation is intended" (Klyne Snodgrass, *The NIV Application Commentary: Ephesians*, 291).

v. 19 *with your heart* "That people are to sing in their heart is not a request that people sing with feeling or emotion [nor silently]. Rather, 'heart' refers to the controlling center of one's being. 'Sing with your whole being' (which certainly includes the emotions). The issue is the *integrity* with which one sings, not the feeling. Words are not merely sung, they express the reality of the life in the Spirit" (Snodgrass, 291).

# 4

## APPLY THE TEXT

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### CENTRAL MESSAGE OF THE TEXT

Be filled with the Holy Spirit, resulting in sincere worship and continuing gratitude to God, as well as submission to one another – for this is God’s will for your life.

### CENTRAL MESSAGE FOR YOUR LIFE

(Rewrite the Central Message above to personally apply to your own life)



### 3 LIVING QUESTIONS

The “Living Questions” are simple questions we may ask of any text in order to apply the Bible to our life. Answer the questions below as personally as you can.

1. What does this passage teach me about God?

2. What does this passage teach me about myself?

3. What does this passage lead me to do?



## PARENT CONNECTION

There's a difference between encouraging people and encouraging them in the Lord. Telling your child, "Great job on your test" or "Good hustle on the field" or "Thanks for sharing" isn't a bad thing and will encourage and reward strong performance. But, if you want to encourage godly character or spiritual attributes, consider changing things up a bit. Rather than acknowledging a good grade, try this: "You studied so hard to make that grade. God has created in you a good work ethic and the ability to stay strong even when things get hard." Instead of congratulating a win on the field, say, "That goal was amazing! I love that God has given you a quick mind to strategize on the field. I can't wait to see how He will use this as you continue to play soccer or when you get really old and have to work." Proud of them for sharing? Tell them! "God has given you such a generous heart. Your sharing meant your friend could play, too. You shared just like Jesus would have." I love a good compliment, but when someone notices Christlike character in me and stops to encourage me, I'm truly humbled and want to glorify God more and more. While you're writing your New Year's resolutions, make it a goal to encourage your kids in the Lord. Prayerfully become sensitive to and seek out godly character. Ask God to help you pay more attention to the attributes they're displaying that honor and glorify Him. Then speak words or write letters of encouragement to your kids. Encouraging them in the Lord is a game changer. We're praying for you!


What Does The Bible Say?	What Do You Think?	What Do You Do?
<p>Read Ephesians 5:18-21.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What are we to be filled with?</li> <li>2. How are we to speak to others?</li> <li>3. What do we thank God for?</li> </ol>	<p>Should we literally sing to people when we're talking about Jesus?</p>	<p>Today, try to notice godly character in others and tell them about it. Make it a goal to share one word of encouragement to one member of your family each day this week.</p>

### CORE COMPETENCY: Worship

I celebrate God for who He is and what He has done for me.

### MEMORY VERSE: Isaiah 9:6

*"For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace."*

<h3>KidPIX COUPON</h3> <p>Earn 1 KidPIX Token by completing the CENTRALKids Bible Study on this page and another token by memorizing and reciting the memory verse for this week.</p> <p>Questions: <a href="mailto:kids@wearecentral.org">kids@wearecentral.org</a></p>	<p>_____ I completed my Bible Study</p> <p>_____ I memorized this week's verse</p> <p>_____ I brought my Bible to church</p> <p>_____ I brought a friend</p>	
<p>CHILD'S NAME _____ GRADE _____ PARENT SIGNATURE _____</p>		

# OUR CORE COMPETENCIES

## CENTRAL BELIEFS

**Authority of the Bible** (2 Timothy 3:16-17)  
*I believe the Bible is the Word of God and has the right to command my belief and action.*

**Church** (Ephesians 4:15-16)

*I believe the church is God's primary way to accomplish His purposes on earth today.*

**Eternity** (John 14:1-4)

*I believe there is a heaven and a hell and that Jesus Christ is returning to judge the earth and to establish His eternal kingdom.*

**The Holy Spirit** (Romans 8:9)

*I believe the Holy Spirit convicts, calls, converts and changes me as a child of God.*

**Humanity** (John 3:16)

*I believe all people are loved by God and need Jesus Christ as their Savior.*

**Identity in Christ** (John 1:12)

*I believe I am significant because of my position as a child of God.*

**Jesus Christ** (Hebrews 1:1-4)

*I believe Jesus Christ is the Son of God who became man, died for sinners and rose from the dead.*

**Life Purpose** (Acts 20:24)

*I believe I am a steward of God's resources and have been redeemed to participate in His Kingdom purposes for His glory.*

**Personal God** (Psalm 121:1-2)

*I believe God is involved in and cares about my daily life.*

**Salvation by Grace** (Ephesians 2:8-9)

*I believe a person comes into a right relationship with God by His grace, through faith in Jesus Christ.*



## CENTRAL VIRTUES

**Love** (1 John 4:10-12)

*I sacrificially and unconditionally love and forgive others.*

**Joy** (John 15:11)

*I have inner contentment and purpose in spite of my circumstances.*

**Peace** (Philippians 4:6-7)

*I am free from anxiety because things are right between God, myself and others.*

**Patience** (Proverbs 14:29)

*I take a long time to overheat and endure patiently under the unavoidable pressures of life.*

**Kindness/Goodness** (1 Thessalonians 5:15)

*I choose to do the right things in my relationships with others*

**Faithfulness** (Proverbs 3:3-4)

*I have established a good name with God and with others based on my long-term loyalty to those relationships.*

**Gentleness** (Philippians 4:5)

*I am thoughtful, considerate and calm in dealing with others.*

**Self-Control** (Titus 2:11-13)

*I have the power, through Christ, to control myself.*

**Grace** (Colossians 3:13)

*I demonstrate forgiveness, mercy and generosity to others, even when they have offended me.*

**Hope** (1 Peter 1:3-5)

*I have a growing anticipation of God's promises and my secure eternity with Him.*

**Humility** (Philippians 2:3-4)

*I choose to esteem others above myself.*



## CENTRAL PRACTICES

**Bible Study** (Hebrews 4:12)

*I study the Bible to know God, the truth, and to find direction for my daily life.*

**Biblical Community** (Acts 2:44-47)

*I fellowship with other Christians to accomplish God's purposes in my life, others' lives, and in the world.*

**Compassion** (Psalm 82:3-4)

*I seek to serve the last, the least and the lost in my community.*

**Disciple-Making** (2 Timothy 2:2)

*I multiply godly beliefs, virtues and practices in others to encourage their spiritual growth in Christ.*

**Evangelism** (Acts 1:8)

*I share Jesus with others through personal proclamation and demonstration of the gospel.*

**Generosity** (2 Corinthians 9:6-11)

*I gladly give my resources to fulfill God's purposes.*

**Prayer** (Psalm 66:16-20)

*I pray to God to know Him, to lay my request before Him and to find direction for my daily life.*

**Single-Mindedness** (Matthew 6:33)

*I focus on God and His priorities for my life.*

**Spiritual Gifts** (Romans 12:4-6)

*I know and use my spiritual gifts to accomplish God's purposes.*

**Worship** (Psalm 95:1-7)

*I worship God for who He is and what He has done for me.*

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The Scrolls Bible Study is a spiritual growth resource of Central Bible Church, Fort Worth, Texas.

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**OUR MISSION**  
Making God known by making disciples who are changed by God to change their world.