

EPHESIANS - Ephesians 5:17-18a

Message 86

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INTRO: It is some time since we were in Ephesians. We are concluding on Ephesians 5:17. We are in a section I have titled, "Walk Circumspectly." This walk might be further described as walking perfectly, or diligently, carefully, exactly, or precisely. This walk is described in general, with relation to life. In the circumspect life, one cannot live as being unwise, but being wise. Oh how much wisdom life requires. And as you grow and mature physically and spiritually it takes more and more wisdom. And as God sees our progress He allows new things to come our way. And in it all He seeks to conform us to the image of Christ. Our goal should be to glorify God and His goal is to make us like His Son, Jesus Christ.

We are presently in the concluding verse in which Paul deals with the circumspect walk with relation to life. So we'll read verses 15-18:

*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,*

The instruction to Christians is that they are not to walk as fools. We saw that this word meant to be unwise. Positively, the Christian is to walk wisely. Well, how do you do that? By redeeming the time. We buy up every opportunity for the Lord. At any time when the time is right, we are to buy up the time. This may involve speaking to others about the Lord, or encouraging or helping someone and any others of a multitude of things.

And why is this so important? Because the days are evil. Evil on every hand seeks to draw us in. And not only should we not enter it, but we should seek to redeem others out of it. This brings us to verse 17, and in our last message what I did not have time for was the last part of verse 17 and that is that instead of

being unwise, or non-thinking, we are to understand what the will of the Lord is.

### 3) Conclusion cont'd (5:17)

Well, I am not able to spell out how to know the will of the Lord in many aspects of it. But let me point out two large aspects to knowing the will of the Lord that I find helpful. There is God's general will. Included in God's general will are things like thou shalt not and thou shalt, as in the Ten Commandments. We are not to steal. That holds true for all. It is God's will for all of us. Even much of this is difficult. For example, we are taught in Scripture to obey our government. But in our present situation, with the covid19 pandemic, where are the boundaries? When boundaries are grey and instructions unclear, and contradictions are numerous and motivations unknown but suspicious, all of a sudden, what was clear is no longer clear. So even in the more objective areas, it takes a lot of wisdom to discern the will of the Lord.

As taxing as gaining an understanding what the will of God is in general, it becomes even more taxing to know what the will of the Lord is for me or for you in particular. But most important to this is walking in that which one knows is right. If ever one needs to be a thinker in godly wisdom, it is in discerning God's particular will. The effort to understand what the will of the Lord is for each one of us personally, takes as much thought and prayer as anything will. Discerning the will of the Lord in all the new things that come along in life is a very taxing task.

This is true in guiding one's family or one's job and other areas related to daily life is a huge task. How many times do we seem to run out of wisdom? Then we are asked by others what we think about certain

things, and again it takes a lot of wisdom. So one must do a lot of thinking and reading and praying to discern the will of the Lord in life.

I want to recommend two crucial things to knowing God's will for our personal lives. The first is to live up to the requirements of the general will of God as much as possible. We could summarize God's general will as given in the Ten Commandments. If one is honest, one does not lie or steal or cheat, that is one is obedient to these more clear areas, that will help one beyond measure in determining what God's specific will is for each one of us.

So first, live up to the general will of God. This will guide us in most of issues we need to know God's will in. Then there is a second very important matter. Turn to Romans 12. Paul gives a very helpful passage here that will help us to determine the will of God. We'll read verses 1-2:

*1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.*

*2 And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.*

In verse 1 Paul says we are to present our bodies a living sacrifice, holy, and acceptable to God. It is a reasonable service. If Christ sacrificed His body on the cruel cross for us, it is only reasonable that we offer our bodies to Him as a living, holy, and acceptable sacrifice.

Verse 2 then says, "Do not be conformed to this world..." I have spoken on these verses before, but let me mention again, that this

word 'conformed' has to do with our external appearance. No doubt it involves how we dress. When we dress we need to ask, "Am I conforming to this world?" But it may include our whole demeanor, externally such as a proud look. But one can hardly wear the latest fads and fashions and not be conformed to this world. Some fashions may not be immoral, but they are in. That is external conformity.

So Paul says do not be conformed to this world. Then he says, "But be transformed by the renewing of your mind." How we appear on the outside is determined by what we are on the inside. The word transformed, has not to do with external things, but internal. We get our word 'metamorphosis' from this word. You see a cocoon, a brown, dull, thing on the outside. But inside a beautiful butterfly is forming. It becomes beautiful from the inside out. That is the word used here. Real change does not happen by how you make yourself look on the outside. Real change happens by how you think on the inside.

So how do you transform the outside not to be like the world anymore? Something has to happen inside. It is a transformation that happens by the renewing of the mind. The mind is absolutely essential to this transformation.

And now we ask, why does Paul say we should not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of the mind? Look at the verse. It is so, and I quote: *that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.*

The word for mind here is *nous* and you are familiar with it. That speaks of the data storage part of the mind. When we get saved, our whole mind needs to undergo a renewal. We say, "This is wrong. It needs to go. This is what is right and needs to

go in." The whole mind needs constant renewal. And what will this do. By this we will learn to prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God in all issues of life. In the general areas, we can tell others what God's will is for them. In the specifics, every person has to renew their own mind in order to know the will of God. So you can't spell out for others what God's will is for them in these areas.

b. With relation to spiritual life (5:18-21)

1) Negatively - do not (5:18a)

We come then to verse 18. As I outline our subject, in verses 15-17 Paul has dealt with the circumspect walk in general. And now he will begin to deal with the believer's walk with relation to the spiritual life in specifics.

With regard to the Christian's spiritual life, the Apostle begins negatively. He says, "And do not be drunk with wine."

I have been over this verse many times in the past, but have never studied it in its context. And I came across something that dumbfounded me. It stopped me short. I can find no commentary that will comment or help me out on this new thing I discovered and it has caused me a lot of work and I still am not fully happy with my explanation, though I will make a suggestion.

Here is my difficulty. In the original language, when you have a verb that is a present, imperative command negated by the negative *mee*, it means to stop an action already in progress. So here is the problem. In the construction of this verse it would read like this, "Stop being drunk with wine..."

Now there is a huge difference between the command, "Do not be drunk with wine", and the command to "Stop being drunk with wine." The first says, "Don't start doing it." The second says, "Stop doing what you are already doing." The second one is what we have here. And here is the question: Were the Ephesians getting drunk all the time, and they were to stop doing that? And if they were getting drunk on a regular basis, how would he mention that as a kind of side-line thought to teaching them to be filled with the Spirit?

We must ask ourselves, what does drunkenness have to do with the context? What does drunkenness have to do with the whole subject here? Why is Paul all of a sudden talking about drunkenness? Are the Ephesians guilty of getting drunk a lot? Why does he tell them to stop being drunk with wine?

When I read Jones, I found he had struggled with the question of having the subject of drunkenness given like this here. He speaks of Paul making a transition from dealing with things in the negative to the positive. And then he says:

"But why does he make the transition in what at first may seem a strange and indeed surprising manner? It comes almost as a shock to us, in the midst of all that he has been saying, and all he is going to say, to read suddenly, 'be not drunk with wine wherein is excess, but be filled with the Spirit'. Why did he not go on to put this positive teaching of the life of one who is filled with the Spirit, in a direct manner? Why introduce this element of drunkenness, excessive drinking? It seems to me that there are two main answers to that question. The first is, that there was nothing which was more characteristic of the old life which these people had been living, and which their

contemporaries were still living, than drunkenness and debauchery. The ancient world at the time when our Lord came into it was characterized by this very thing. There are many classical examples of it" (IV:12).

But, even Jones missed the real difficulty of Paul telling the Ephesians to stop being drunk with wine. He reads it as if it is something they were not to begin to do rather than something they were already doing.

Let us take, for a moment, the view that this verse says, "Don't be drunk with wine." How does one explain this verse then? Here is the usual view of Christians with regard to wine. Wine is always alcoholic and it is OK to drink with moderation. Taking that view, here is how the JFB commentary explains this verse: "not in the wine itself when used aright (#1Ti 5:23), but in the 'excess' as to it." They are saying it is not wrong to drink some wine because Paul tells Timothy to drink a little wine for the benefit of his stomach. But, one should not drink to excess, which they say means: worthless, ruinous, reckless prodigality."

But if one takes the view that they were already getting drunk and they were to stop doing it, that raises huge difficulties. If the Ephesians were regularly getting drunk, I think he would have dealt with it earlier. He would have included this sin in verses 1-5 in this chapter. Look at what he said:

*1 Therefore be imitators of God as dear children.*

*2 And walk in love, as Christ also has loved us and given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling aroma.*

3 *But fornication and all uncleanness or covetousness, let it not even be named among you, as is fitting for saints;*

4 *neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks.*

5 *For this you know, that no fornicator, unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God.*

Surely if actual drunkenness was a regular problem at Ephesus, as the original construction here indicates, would one not think that he would have addressed that in these verses as well? It seems to me that drunkenness is so serious he would not have mentioned it as a sideline to teach something else, as he does in our verse.

So let me suggest an alternative view. Before I do that, let us begin by considering the word 'excess.' We have sometimes seen words in the original language which mean the opposite when you put an a in front of it. For example, believing in millennialism means there will be a thousand year reign of Christ in the future. Amillennialism reverses that and means there will be no millennium.

The word translated *excess* or *debauchery* here is *asotia*. It comes from the word 'sozo' which generally means *to save*. This word occurs 110 times in the NT. The KJV translates it as "to save" 93, make whole 9, heal 3, be whole 2. What we have in our text means the opposite. Rather than to save it means something like wastefulness, abandonment, dissolution, or debauchery.

Now the word translated drunk here means, as I understand it, to be drunk from drinking to the full. So when one drinks



alcoholic wine until one is full, one is drunk and so it was called that. To drink to the full is no doubt meant here as the opposite of what the verse says next, that the Christian is to 'be filled with the Spirit.'

Why then does Paul bring up drunkenness, and in the construction he uses here, which means, "Stop being drunk with wine"? I want to recommend that he is not speaking about drunkenness from drinking alcohol. He would have dealt with that much more severely and in the earlier verses.

I think he is comparing the senselessness, and unthinking manner of the Ephesians and their falling for empty words, with physical drunkenness. I think he is likening their spiritual senselessness to what happens to those who drink too much wine. Lange's commentary says, "The general notion is 'not senseless but understanding..'" Senselessness is being contrasted to understanding.

So let me take us back to the verses 15-17, the immediate context. It says:

*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.*

In verse 17 we have the same construction as in verse 18. We could read verse 17 and 18 like this: "Therefore, stop being unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is; and stop being drunk with wine in which is excess, but be filled with the Spirit." They were being thoughtless, unthinking and senseless. The actual fact is that they were being unwise, so Paul

tells them to stop being unwise. Remember that the word translated 'unwise' is *aphron*, meaning non-thinking.

So I am recommending that Paul, by metonymy, likens being drunk with wine, in which is excess, to the fact that they were non-thinking. The empty words they are swallowing is making them spiritually non-thinking, as alcohol does literally. And he likens understanding the will of the Lord to being filled with the spirit.

Between when I first worked on this message and when I completed it now, I spoke to you on 2 Timothy 2:24-26. Verses 25-26 say this:

*25 in humility correcting those who are in opposition, if God perhaps will grant them repentance, so that they may know the truth,*

*26 and that they may come to their senses and escape the snare of the devil, having been taken captive by him to do his will.*

Of the word translated, "...that they may come to their senses..." Albert Barnes says this:

"It properly means, to become sober again, as from inebriation; to awake from a deep sleep; and then, to come to a right mind, as one does who is aroused from a state of inebriety, or from sleep. The representation in this part of the verse implies that while under the influence of error, they were like a man intoxicated, or like one in deep slumber. From this state they were to be roused, as one is from sleep, or as a man is recovered from the stupor and dullness of intoxication" end quote.

In the context of Ephesians 5:18, if the Ephesian believers accept the teaching of empty words, it is like being drunk with

wine. And when one is drunk with wine, in that, there is excess. Wine leads to excess. And what is this word, excess? This word comes from the word 'to save'. But it is made negative by putting an a to the beginning. So instead of sozo, to save, it is asotia, not to save or to be wasteful.

You will remember the prodigal son. The word *prodigal* comes from this word as well. The prodigal son went with his pouch of money from his part of the inheritance and there he wasted his inheritance with prodigal, wasteful living. Here is what I am recommending. If Christians are non-thinking, they will soon be led away by empty words and it will lead to a wasted, excessive, or prodigal life.

So Paul says, "Stop being non-thinking! Stop being like someone who is drunk with wine!" A non-thinking Christian will be led into a wasted life!

So I recommend that Ephesians 5:18 is another way of stating verse 17. He has said, "Stop being non-thinking" and then he illustrates with verse 18 by adding, "and stop being drunk with wine." I think he may be showing in picture form what non-thinking Christians are like. They are like those who are drunk with wine.

So I am recommending that the instruction to "stop being drunk with wine" corresponds "to stop being unwise" or non-thinking of the previous verse. To be non-thinking as Christians has the same effect as alcohol has on people. It renders their thinking processes not only useless, but debauched, spiritually speaking.

To be unwise in a spiritual sense is the same as being drunk with wine physically. That is why Paul had to give this instruction. The word 'unwise' was *aphron*, non-thinking. To drink too the full is

asotia, prodigal thinking. By the fact that they were troubled with non-thinking they were showing themselves to be spiritually, senseless or drunk. No wonder Paul said earlier, "Awake, you who sleep, and arise from the dead."

Drunkenness causes one to be non-thinking, and Paul has encouraged them to not be non-thinking. In drunkenness there is excess, or debauchery of mind physically. In non-thinking, there is debauchery of mind, spiritually. In non-thinking one cannot know the will of the Lord. It is not possible. Knowing the will of the Lord takes a lot of thinking. It demands all one has.

Why did Paul use this illustration of drunkenness here? How familiar would the Ephesians have been with drunkenness? When you do any amount of study on wine you will become familiar with the Roman god, Bacchus. He was the god of agriculture, wine and fertility. The equivalent of Bacchus to the Greeks was Dionysus. One of the Greek Lexicons I read speaking on our verse says, "The religious aspects of drunkenness were seen in the Bacchus festivals in the worship of Dionysus." Then they say, "The indwelling Spirit of God is the one who should continually control and dominate the life of the believer. This stands in marked contrast to the worshippers of Dionysis... (The new Linguistic and Exegetical Key to the Greek NT pg. 444).

Beyond all doubt many if not most of the Ephesian believers knew what it was like to be drunk with wine and be filled and controlled by god Dionysis. To come under the sway of this god, they had to be filled with wine.

And I recommend that knowing the will of the Lord requires being filled with the

Spirit. As drunkenness leads one to be non-thinking so being filled with the Spirit leads one to know the will of the Lord.

Does alcohol render one non-thinking? True, useful, accurate thinking cannot be found in the drunk.

Listen to Proverbs 23:29-35:

*29 Who has woe? Who has sorrow? Who has contentions? Who has complaints? Who has wounds without cause? Who has redness of eyes?*

*30 Those who linger long at the wine,  
Those who go in search of mixed wine.*

*31 Do not look on the wine when it is red,  
When it sparkles in the cup, When it swirls  
around smoothly;*

*32 At the last it bites like a serpent,  
And stings like a viper.*

*33 Your eyes will see strange things, And  
your heart will utter perverse things.*

*34 Yes, you will be like one who lies down  
in the midst of the sea, Or like one who  
lies at the top of the mast, saying:*

*35 "They have struck me, but I was not  
hurt; They have beaten me, but I did not  
feel it. When shall I awake, that I may  
seek another drink?"*

Now there is a non-thinker for you. He says, "I don't care what happens to me when I am drunk, when I am sober, I'm getting drunk again!"

So go back now to the beginning of Ephesians 5 and let us put this in context. We begin at verse 6, "Let no one deceive you with empty words." Deception is what

non-thinkers are always in danger of. Then follows a whole list of dangers if one gets deceived by empty words. The dangers of some of the sleeping Ephesian believers was to fall for empty words.

Verse 14, "Awake, you who sleep, arise from the dead, and Christ will give you light." So it seems that Paul was aware that mentally, some or many of them were asleep. They were falling for empty words. They were not thinking. So, verse 15 instructs them not to be unwise, but wise.

And because the days were evil, they were to stop being unwise, that is they were to stop being non-thinking. Instead, they were to understand what the will of the Lord is. That takes a lot of discernment and thinking. So they were not to be spiritually drunk, that is their minds needed to be sober and awake and aware.

Drunkenness leads to debauchery. Within a minute of drinking, the alcohol affects the brain. As a matter of fact, in that time it already had begun to attack every organ in the body. Inhibitions are almost immediately lowered. When you have these stressful family gatherings, the best way to handle that is to have some alcohol at the gathering. Well, at least that is the advice of the non-Christian. But today drinking alcohol is entering Christian circles as well. You need something to put some life into a wedding reception? Use that which lowers the inhibitions and thinking abilities. That will loosen up your crowd.

Do you want the spiritual battle to be less stressful? Don't think too much. Don't think things through logically. Relax. Let go. Don't be too serious. Be a non-thinker. Go along with whatever comes along. Soon you will be susceptible to empty words. You will think you are still a fine Christian

and you are doing right. These Ephesian believers show that. But they have been, or are being misled by empty words.

Now you may not agree with this as a possible explanation for Paul's command to stop being drunk with wine in our passage and I would be happy to hear other possibilities. But most certainly, this application of verse 18 to the immediate context is fitting. The context has nothing to do with literal alcohol, and everything to do with being wise and objectively thinking.

2) Positively - do (5:18b-21)

a) What to do

We come then next to the positive command. The Christian is to be filled with the Spirit. I have recommended that to be spiritually non-thinking is likened to being physically drunk. And now, to know the will of the Lord one must be filled with the Spirit. Now here is an interesting command. To be drunk with wine renders one to be non-thinking. To be filled with the Spirit enables one to know the will of the Lord.

So we want to look at this command a little closer. Look first at the command to stop being drunk. It is a passive command. If it said, "Stop drinking alcohol," that would be an active command. But this command is passive. Stop being drunk. How do you stop being drunk? Since it is passive, that means something else is making you drunk. So how can you stop letting something else make you drunk? Well, it is very simple. Stop drinking wine! If you will stop drinking wine, it will stop making you drunk! To obey this passive command you have to do

something positive. Stop drinking!

Now look at the command to be filled with the Spirit. The verb, 'be filled' is a present, passive and imperitive verb. We note first that it is present tense. Someone has said of the idea of the present in this verse, it could be said like this: "Be being filled with the Spirit." That is, be continually filled with the Spirit. It is to be an ongoing experience.

Second, the verb is an imperitive. The verb to stop being unthinking gives a command and to stop being drunk is a command as well. And to be being filled with the Spirit is also a command. It is not a suggestion. It is a command. This is what the Christian is to be experiencing continually.

Third, once again, this verb is passive. Paul says, "Be filled with the Spirit." The command to not be drunk with wine can be fulfilled by not drinking wine. You have to stop doing something. One has to stay away from drinking wine. If one does that, it will not make one drunk. But what can one do to be filled with the Spirit? How can I be filled with the Spirit? I cannot fill myself with the Spirit. I must do something so that it can happen to me. What can I do to be filled?

Let me illustrate. Let us say I have a brain tumor. And someone says, "You have to have the tumor removed." But you cannot remove the tumor yourself. To have the tumor removed, you have to go to a doctor and go through the process of having it removed by someone else. You cannot do it yourself. Someone else has to do it for you, but you have to do something in order for that to be able to happen.



Let me mention one other matter by asking a question. What does it mean to be filled with the Spirit? How is one filled with the Spirit? E.W. Bullinger's book on figures of speech says this is the figure of metonymy. To be filled with the Spirit one is filled with the things of the Spirit.

Let me illustrate. Maybe you have some young lady, who loves horses. There are such. And we say, "She is full of horses." We, of course, do not mean that literally. Everything she does or wears or talks about has to do with horses. So we say she is full of horses. That is metonymy. She dreams horses. She talks horses. She is full of them.

Or maybe some young man is full of cars or trucks, or quads or motorbikes. He dreams cars or trucks. He talks cars or trucks. We say he is full of it. Some of us men are full of fishing. We dream fish and we talk fish. When we get together with somebody we don't know and we find out they like fishing, soon you know we are full of fish.

Now let me share how I understand the filling of the Spirit. Before I do that let me explain that there is a difference between being baptized with the Holy Spirit and being filled with the Holy Spirit. Turn to Mark 1:8. John the Baptist baptized with the baptism of repentance. But he said in Mark 1:8:

*8 "I indeed baptized you with water, but He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."*

It is Jesus Christ that baptizes the believer with or in the Holy Spirit. Now go to 1 Corinthians 12. We'll read

verses 12-13:

*12 For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ.*

*13 For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit.*

This is my understanding, when a person repents from sin and puts his or her faith in Jesus Christ, the Lord Jesus Christ baptizes them into the one body, which is the Church universal. The Church universal is the body of Christ. So Romans 8 says if anyone does not have the Spirit he does not belong to Christ.

The baptism of the Holy Spirit happens only one time, and that is when a person is truly converted. But the filling of the Holy Spirit happens again and again. I believe that when one is initially baptized into the body of Christ in the Holy Spirit, one is also filled with the Holy Spirit. When the Holy Spirit first came on believers after the Church began, they were all filled with the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:4).

But if you study on, you find that they were filled again at other occasions. Now these fillings were fillings the Lord did to them at His choice. But our passage, I see, as being filled all the time by our obedience to continually be filled. So let me now ask, how does one get full of the Holy Spirit? Well, how do we get full of anything else? Well, maybe someone interests us in something, or we have a personal interest in something and the interest grows. And then we want to experience

some of this. And maybe we read up on it and we watch others. And we get together with others who have the same interest and soon we are full of it.

Now to stay full of it you have to nurture your interest and keep it going. And if you don't, it may begin to fade and one may lose interest altogether.

Have you ever seen someone full of something, and then after a while it went away? But when this person met up with someone else who was full of that same thing, suddenly this person is full of it again. How do you get full of it?

So let me ask, how does a person who is a Christian obey the command to be being filled with the Holy Spirit? This person has been baptized with the Holy Spirit and been filled with the Spirit, but how does he or she keep on being full?

I remember when I first saved. I grew up in a traditional church. Another young man was also saved and he was on fire. He was full of the Spirit. And then he had an interest to go to a more evangelical church and he did. And one of the older married couples from that church invited him and his wife for lunch and now he was sure they would talk about spiritual things and it would be refreshing and exciting. And he went home a very discouraged young man. Yes, this other man was in a sound evangelical church, but there was no fire, no fullness.

Now if one is into horses or cars or machinery or houses or lands, and one's interest changes; that is no big deal. But when one is born again and the

spiritual life gets old, that is a big deal. Now we are involved in the most important thing in life. When we die, all of eternity will depend on what we did with our spiritual lives.

Have you noticed this about those who drink alcohol? They do it again, and again, and again. Some get totally addicted. That is what we have to do spiritually. We have to get addicted to spiritual things. We have to do it again and again.

I propose that to keep on being filled with the Spirit we have to exercise the spiritual disciplines such as Bible reading, prayer, church, and talking to others about the Lord. You have to keep on keeping on.

So how do you know when you are not filled with the Spirit? You know you are not filled with the Spirit when you can cheat or lie or pull shady deals. You know you are not filled with the Spirit when you lose your temper on a regular basis. You know you are not filled with the Spirit when you conform to the world. You know you are not filled with the Spirit when prayer is very minimal in your life. You know you are not filled with the Spirit when you talk to the lost and their spiritual condition is not on your mind.

You know you are not filled with the Spirit when you can leave your Bible somewhere for a number of days and not miss it. You know you are not filled with the spirit when you have free time and you hum or sing in your mind the songs of the world. You know you are not filled with the Spirit when most of your idle time is taken up with other things than the things of God. You know you are not very filled with the Spirit

when you meet others and you don't think how you might talk to them about the most important thing in life.

CONCL: Well, let me conclude with this command: Stop being unwise! Don't be swayed by empty words! Sober up! Stop being drunk with wine, in which is debauchery! If you don't do this, you will be misled. But be being filled with the Spirit. Constantly be being filled with the Spirit. If you do this, you will understand the will of God for your life.

I want to remind us this morning that we are in a war. The world, the flesh and the devil will all seek to draw us off the path. If once we walk close to the Lord in a Spirit filled life, the devil will put before us those things that can subtly draw us off the path. We may not even notice what is happening. The way to avoid this is to be constantly filled with the Holy Spirit of God.