



Unit 3: God's Power and Me

Sermon Series Title: When the Spirit Moves

Sermon 4: He Changes Me

Bible Passage: Ephesians 5:18-22, 6:1, 5

Background/Context

The first 3 chapters of the book of Ephesians are theological, and the last 3 chapters are practical as they focus on Christian conduct. This is a letter of encouragement, penned to remind believers of their infinite blessings found in Jesus Christ; and to live in a manner worthy of those blessings. Paul explains that Christ is Head of the body (church) and the Holy Spirit is its lifeblood. In chapter five, Paul begins by exhorting his readers to “be imitators of God, as dearly loved children, and walk in love, as Christ also loved us and gave himself for us, a sacrificial and fragrant offering to God” (vv. 1–2). These words set the tone of the chapter: Follow God. Paul explained the sinful actions that should not be a part of a believer’s life (5:3-7). We are redeemed from walking in darkness and are called to awaken from spiritual sleep (5:8-14). Paul further exhorts believers to walk wisely as followers of God and to submit our lives under control of the Holy Spirit (5:15-21). In the final chapter of Ephesians, Paul reminds believers of the spiritual armor supplied to us through God’s Word and by His Spirit, along with our need for continuous prayer (6:10–18).

A. Tunes Change (Eph. 5:18-19)

Paul makes it clear that one of the results of being filled with the Spirit is that believers start “speaking to one another in psalms, hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making music with your heart to the Lord...” (v.19). The singing of songs and hymns should not be done in a whisper, but with a loud voice. “Sing for joy to God our strength; shout in triumph to the God of Jacob” (Ps. 81:1). Believers sing to the Lord God Almighty—in public and private. We sing songs about who He is and what He has done. In response to God enabling the children of Israel to lay the foundation for the house of the Lord, “They sang with praise and thanksgiving to the LORD; ‘For he is good; his faithful love to Israel endures forever. Then all the people gave a great shout of praise to the LORD because the foundation of the LORD’s house had been laid” (Ezra 3:11). Rather than have an atmosphere of sorrow and sadness, believers are commanded to worship the Lord. “Hallelujah! Sing to the LORD a new song, his praise in the assembly of the faithful” (Ps. 149:1). Even in the midst of persecution the Spirit will cause a believer to sing praises to the Lord. Paul and Silas are great examples of saints singing through a tough situation (Acts 16:25).

Application Point: Many believers are boasting that they are saved, sanctified, and filled with the Holy Spirit. Yet, their actions do not match their witness. Spiritually, they lack the singing

and praising demonstrated by the early believers. How will you use the Bible to show these types of believers that it's okay to make a joyful noise and have a song in their heart?

B. Tones Change (Eph. 5:20)

Paul introduces another consequence of being filled with the Holy Spirit. “giving thanks always for everything to God the Father in the name of our LORD Jesus Christ.” Our thankfulness is for who God is and what He has done through His Son, our Savior and Lord. When in need, “Don’t worry about anything, but in everything, through prayer and petition with thanksgiving, present your requests to God” (Phil. 4:6). Rather than bemoan your situation, glorify God’s name. Rather than protest, praise the Lord. Rather than murmur about your troubles, magnify the Master. Rather than whine about what you don’t have, worship the One who will supply all of your needs. We are commanded to “give thanks in everything; for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus” (1 Thess. 5:18). We don’t thank God *for* the situation. We thank God *in* the situation.

Application Point: How have you allowed your circumstances to diminish your thankfulness towards God? In what ways does the thought of Christ’s death and resurrection for your sin change your tone? Being filled with the Holy Spirit changes a believer’s actions and attitude for the better.

C. Thoughts Change (Eph. 5:21-22, 6:1, 5)

It’s no secret that we are called to humble ourselves in the sight of the Lord. When we do, He will lift us up (Jas. 4:10). The believer’s continual reverence for God is the basis for his submission to other believers. Paul echoed this fact when he declared that every Spirit-filled Christian is to be a humble, submissive Christian. This is foundational for all relationships, God and man, husband and wife, parent and child, and employer and employee. Everyone is called to humble themselves. Why? No Christian is superior to another. In our standing before God, we are all equal in every way (Gal. 3:28).

Peter commanded younger generations to submit to older generations. “In the same way, you who are younger, be subject to the elders. All of you clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, because God resists the proud but gives grace to the humble” (1 Pet. 5:5). The writer of Hebrews declared that Christians should obey their leaders and submit to them, because they are accountable to God for caring for Christian souls. (13:17).

Application Point: Let’s face this truth: Sometimes it’s difficult to submit to your boss, your spouse, your friend, your public official, and even your God. But, submit we must. Make a commitment to memorize and meditate on Scriptures that can help you and others come to grips with submitting to one another.