

## MESSAGE TRANSCRIPTS

Series: Deconstruction / Reconstruction of *the Disciples' Life* Part 10

Walk in the SPIRIT

Ephesians 5:18-21

Tim Armstrong, Senior Pastor

Weekend 03.20-21.10

Take your bible. Turn to Ephesians 5. Ephesians, chapter 5, verse 18. If you don't have a bible there's one in the chair back in front of you. Turn to Ephesians 5:18. We are coming to the apex of our study this morning. We started way back in chapter 4, verse 1 where Paul urges us with that pastoral urging, desire to walk in a manner worthy of our calling. We learned exactly what it meant. Over the last ten weeks we've been deconstructing this old life; this life before Christ; this life of the flesh. Reconstructing the new life; what it means to be a follower of Christ and to walk after Him. In fact, when Paul says we're now to walk in a manner worthy of our calling we see that we've been given a power source of our calling; of our redemption through Christ so that we now might walk in Him. As we've been deconstructing and reconstructing we've been learning that but nothing encapsulates that more than what we're going to be studying this morning in these four final verses of this section of what it means to be filled with the Holy Spirit. What does that mean? How are we to apply this text to our lives? That's what we're going to work through exegetically, verse by verse today. Let's look at the text.

We're going to look at 18, 19, 20 and end with verse 21. Let's back up. Let's start with verse 17 – gives us a running sense of the context. Paul writes, therefore, do not be foolish but understand what the will of the Lord is. We studied that last week but the thought continues. Verse 18. And do not get drunk with wine for that is debauchery but be filled with the spirit addressing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs and singing and making melody to the Lord with your heart, giving thanks always and for everything to God, the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ; submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ. Now, clearly, the admonishment is not to drunk with wine. The imperative, the command is to be filled with the Spirit. We understand that's the primary command of this section. We are to be people who are Spirit filled people. But before we get to that we just really to question the text. Why does Paul start with a negative? What is this influence of wine in our life that we should avoid so that it does not lead us to debauchery which is just another word for saying that you are outside the Kingdom of God or that you are living a life of unrighteousness or you're living a life of darkness. Why would we avoid that and replace it with being filled with the Spirit? Why the negative? Why start there?

Well, I want to take you back to the resources of your mind; all the way back to the first or second week when we were working through understanding the text and we were talking about the Ephesian culture. Do you remember that? Do you remember what was the center of that Ephesian culture? It was the temple of Artemis or also it's also called the Temple of Diana which was one of the seven great wonders of the ancient world – this huge temple complex that was built right there in the center of Ephesus. Not only the people who lived there, but people from Asia Minor would travel to worship in this temple because it was unlike any temple that we've ever probably experienced in our life. This was a temple that was dedicated to the worship of their god and the way they worshipped was through the practice of sexual intercourse with a temple prostitute. This was part of their culture. But the part of the culture that you need to understand at least to reveal this text is that here were

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these Ephesians and their real desire was not just the practice of their sexual lives with these prostitutes in a sense of worship but that they would rise to the level of great ecstasy; that they would be in this state of euphoria because they were thinking that what ever would help them gain that state of euphoria would help attach them to their deity or attach them to their god and so really, their sexual relations with these prostitutes was just a means to an end. But it was just one means.

Second, was the infusion of anything that would bring a state of a hallucinogenic in their life such as wine or such as alcohol or drink. What Paul was saying is you don't really need wine. That's not the answer to grow close to God. Now, we've seen this in our historic culture throughout the ages where people's thinking are in the same vein; that if there's something that they can do or something that they could ingest or some way that they could change their mindset that it would draw them into some kind of higher consciousness; elevate their consciousness and thereby get close to their figure of God. For example, in Latin America, which faded into Native Americans the use of peyote, the drug peyote – a hallucinogenic would often used in ritualism so that they might elevate themselves to a sense of god-like consciousness.

Just a few weeks ago I was watching cable channel net G-O. There's a group of people in South America that use a drug called Cherarri. It's the same kind of concept. They would use this hallucinogenic drug. What's interesting about this particular group of people – they actually have a Catholic background but the synchronism of their theology is to draw truth from others to bring in a new truth. That's what synchrotism is. It's the idea of I'm going to dab a little bit in this truth, take a little bit of this truth, I'm going to take a little bit of this truth. I'm going to bring it in and I'm going to bring all these truths together. I'm going to meld them together. That's exactly what they did and part of their synchrotistic thinking was that Christ alone does not stand but if we take this drug it might heighten our understanding of Christ; might bring us into the presence of Christ even more and that's really is an error that goes all the way back to the Ephesian culture.

Some of you kind of lived through this in the 1960's. Timothy Leery, as the guru, he would often say if you take the right kind of hallucinogenic drugs it could put you in a state of consciousness that reality would not give you. What Paul is saying if you want to walk with God; if you want to walk with the true God wine is not the answer. Anything that would substitute the Holy Spirit is not the answer. Now, I want to be careful to make this text clear. I don't want this text to say more than it is saying. It is not a prohibition against alcohol. That's not the thrust of the text. It's not the sense of the text. In fact, scripture itself in Psalm 104 says the Lord gave wine to gladden the heart of men. It was a gift from God. The problem is we have tainted that gift. We abuse that gift in replace of the giver and even scripture comes back and says you have to be careful not to allow to take control of your life. For example in Proverbs 21 it says wine is a mocker, strong drink is a brawler, whoever is lead astray by it is not wise. You shouldn't allow it to control your life. Isaiah 5:11 – woa to

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those who rise early in the morning that they may run after strong drink and tarry late into the evening and wine enflame them. Clearly this is an alcoholic mindset that it's on their mind from the moment they wake up in the morning until they go to bed at night. This is what the scriptures are saying you need to be careful of. This is what scriptures are placing a prohibition against.

Paul says in Galatians 5:21, the works of the flesh. And then he gives a whole list of the flesh but he stops and says part of the works of the flesh is drunkenness. You don't want to go there, why? That's of the old you. That's the old you we are deconstructing. This is not a part of your life. Of course you go through scripture you see illustration after illustration of men, women who have abused alcohol. Noah, for example, right after the flood had receded. He comes out. He worships his God. Shortly thereafter he is found intoxicated in his tent and the Lord says that was shameful. Lot became intoxicated and did shameful things – incestuous relationships with his daughter. Paul says to the Corinthian church, the believers there he scolded them for the abuse of alcohol. Peter warns against three things. He says warning you against drunkenness, carousing and drinking parties, why? Because the Holy Spirit is not the controlling factor. That's the force of this text. Not necessarily the prohibition against alcohol but rather, you should let anything fill you that could be a counterfeit or take control away from you as a believer submitting to the Holy Spirit. That's the issue.

It doesn't really matter what it is. It doesn't matter, like the Ephesian culture, the euphoria of the sexual activity or if it's wine or if it's some kind of hallucinogenic drug, it's anything across the board that removes you from being controlled by the spirit of God. What did Paul say? He gives a very clear command – don't get drunk get with wine but be filled. What is that? That's the command. That's the command of the text. That's the imperative command. But, what does it mean? And more so – how do we do it? If this is the command to us as believers to be filled with the Spirit of God we ought to be asking what does that entail?

Well, to help you understand this, wrap your mind around this let's start with what it does not mean. Let me help you to understand what it does not mean to be filled with the Spirit of God. Now, I want to tread lightly and carefully here because I know many of you come from different backgrounds. Some of you come out of a Pentecostal background or charismatic background and I want to help you understand what the text says in general. We're not going to get into details today but I'm just going to give you a general overview of how we and our Elders here understand how to divide this text and others in relation to the Spirit of God. Let me give you four things of what it is not.

Number one – it is not mysterious or a dramatic experience. It's not this mysterious, esoteric, dramatic experience of the Spirit in your life. It's not a spiritually charged second blessing. That really is a misunderstanding of the text to think that you are regenerated by the Spirit of Christ and then you ought to be seeking now a second step or a second blessing. There is not that sense through the didactic teachings of scripture through the Epistles. What we see is

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that we find that in the early stages of the church of Acts when the church really explodes on the scene and it's burst to the world in it's first stages and what do we find here? We find there that the, ultimately the Disciples and that later those first believers are being baptized by the Spirit and we'll talk about that in a moment. But, generally not a dramatic experience. Now, I'm not saying that there's anything wrong with dramatic experiences in our Christian walk. We've all probably had them. Paul had emotional experiences. There's nothing wrong with that either. God is a God of emotions but that does not necessarily reflect the experience of the Spirit.

Number two – being filled is not the same as indwelling, when the scriptures speak of the indwelling of the Spirit. If you are a believer you have the Spirit dwelling in you right now. That is the step of regeneration that when you become a person a faith you receive, you are given, you are gifted the Holy Spirit. In fact, if you don't have the Spirit then you are not a believer. Romans 8:9 says anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to Him. 1 Corinthians, chapter 6, verse 19. Your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit within you. Do you realize that? The Spirit of God takes up residence in you as a believer. In fact, your body is often called a vessel; not only a temple but a vessel. The residing inside of you is the controlling Spirit of God.

Number three – being filled does not mean getting more of the Spirit. Every believer possesses the fullness of the Spirit. John 3:34, he gives the Spirit without measure. You have all of the Holy Spirit; not just part or portion or is it portioned out to you but when you became a believer you received the full Spirit.

Number four – fulfilling of the Spirit is not the same as the baptism of the Spirit. I mentioned that a moment ago but let me help you understand that. The baptism of the Holy Spirit is only spoken of three or four times in scripture and it's a historic reference in and around Acts chapter 2. **The only time is the scene in Acts chapter 11 when there was this group of believers who had not yet received the Spirit but there is a number of translations difficult.** So again, this points back to a historic event. Not necessarily one that is a continual event. In fact, 1 Corinthians chapter 12, verse 13 says for in one Spirit we were all baptized into the body, Jews or Greeks, slaves or free. All were made to drink of one Spirit. Again, going back to what our main premise is that you have received all of the Spirit at salvation.

Alright, so if it does not mean that it's some mysterious, esoteric, dramatic experience or that it doesn't mean the same as indwelling; doesn't mean you need to get more of the Spirit; doesn't mean the baptism of the Spirit what does it mean to be filled with the Spirit? Exactly what does that mean? Look at the Greek word. The very simple Greek word – *plēroō*. It just means control. In it's simplest sense it means you are giving control over your desires, your wants, your life to the working of the Spirit of God through your life. If you break down the Greek construction it literally says be being kept filled or be being kept controlled. The idea

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here is a continual, dominating influence from the Holy Spirit in your life. It involves a day by day, moment by moment, yielding.

For example, when you go to get on the interstate and you're on the on ramp and in the on ramp often there is a yield sign. What is that yield sign for? It's to remind you to flow in with traffic not to lead traffic. So you get into flow of what is already going. Basically, what the Word of God is telling us is that we move our life, we yield our life into the controlling force of the Holy Spirit. That's that sense – that we are yielding. Plēroō also uses the idea, to help you round out the idea is described as the wind filling us – as the sail of a ship. Can you picture that? Have you ever seen that – a sailing ship attacks against the wind. Suddenly its sails enlarge, why? Because the wind has caught it, moves it, carries it along. 2 Peter 1:21 says they were carried along by the Holy Spirit. That's the idea. They were controlled. It's also used to permeate like spices permeate cooking. Like salt permeates meat. The Holy Spirit permeates every aspect of your life. That's what it means to be controlled.

Well, you say alright. How do I get that controlling? How do I make that happen? That is such an American, consumer mindset. How do I make this happen in my life? I want this. How do I get it? That's not necessarily the sense of the text. The reason is it's not something you ask for. The reason is because it's something that you already possess. Remember, you are the vessel, the temple of the Holy Spirit. People will say to me I want more of the Holy Spirit. I'm praying for the filling of the Holy Spirit. The issue is not how much of the Holy Spirit, how much more of it that you can get. The issue is how much does the Holy Spirit have of you? That's the issue. How much are you giving of your control over to the Spirit of God?

I'll give you an illustration of this. I was scurrying around this week in the church's lost and found and I found this brown glove. So if any of you are missing this brown glove – I have it. And I can hook you up with its sister or brother. It's just a glove. Now, if I told that glove I want you to go over there and play the piano. Go on. Go play the piano. The glove's not doing anything. Why is that? Or if I say, glove, why don't you go over here and play Milo's guitar or why don't you draw a picture for me. It won't do it, right? But, if I put the glove on my hand (if it doesn't fit you must acquit), now what is my glove doing? My glove is moving. It's got life. If I tell it to go and do something it can do it. It's actually functioning, why? Because it's moving with my hand. The glove is actually doing what my hand is doing. If I tell it to draw a picture or play the guitar it's going to be obedient. It's going to listen to me because I'm filling it and it's yielding to my control. You have to think of this glove as your life. As a believer you've been given the opportunity to receive the Spirit of God and now what do you do with it? You allow it to control your life. You allow it to guide your life. You allow it to take precedence over your wants, over your desire, over your will. That's the sense of yielding to the Spirit of God, of being filled with the Spirit. So, when Paul gives you a command – be filled. Do you know what he's saying? Be obedient. Listen to the Spirit. Put

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down the life of flesh. Live with that sense of anticipation of what God is going to be doing in and through and working by you.

Do you know one of the great examples of this in scripture is a character study of the Apostle Peter. If you really want to see someone who is filled with the spirit you get a sense of – have you ever done that, have you ever done a character study? That's a great study by the way. If you just decide you want to study someone in the Old Testament. I'm going to walk through Moses, Abraham. I'm going to walk through all these experiences. You learn so much from it. It's the same thing in the New Testament. You do this with Peter – absolutely fascinating. Do you know why? Because Peter is a lot like us. Peter is earthy. Peter is real. He lives in the moment. Jesus called him the rock. I like to call him the sand dune because he's blowing all through the pages of scripture. He's always taking his foot and inserting it in his mouth. And if there is an activity to be involved with he's the guy on the front line doing it. And you love it because he's impetuous and he's in the moment and he's right three. And you can tell Jesus has quite a bit of patience with him through his life.

One of my favorite examples is in Matthew chapter 14 when Jesus is walking on the water, invites Peter to come out to Him. Do you remember what's going on in the scenario? Jesus and the Disciples were all together ministering. Jesus just got done feeding the five thousand, five thousand men so who know how many – could have been fifteen thousand people in this area right beside the sea of Galilee. He tells the Disciples after working all day I want you to get in the boat. I want you to go across the sea and I'll meet you there. He dismisses the crowd. Jesus goes up on the hill and He sits down and He is praying. Now, this is later in the afternoon and if you know anything about the geography the area is very placid, almost glass-like early in the day. But as the day warms up and as the air flow comes over the Golan Heights it starts working up this sea, this lake-like area and the waves get somewhat dangerous and ferocious. Jesus was sitting on the edge of this hill and He was watching the Disciples try to make their way across and they're having some difficulty and so what does Jesus do? He gets up and He decides to go out to them so He comes walking on the water. Now, imagine that sight. Imagine Jesus walking to them? The Disciples don't know who it is. They think it's a ghost and they call out who is it? And Jesus says don't worry it's me. Now, Peter, who is probably the spokesman for all the Disciples, not really sure if it is Jesus says alright, if you're really Jesus have me come out of the boat to you. Now, think about this request. They just got done watching Jesus feed at least five thousand plus people, a miraculous event. Now Peter's almost taunting Him – if it's really you then have me come out there. You know what Jesus does? Jesus plays the hand out. Jesus calls his bluff and he says alright Peter. Get out of the boat and come on over to me.

Now, the normal, rational response at that point in the middle of this violent sea to see someone walking on it would be ok. I believe you are who you are. You come get in the boat – not me come to you. You come to me. But what does Peter do? Peter throws his legs over the boat and he goes out and he gets out on the water. I wish I could have seen this. Can

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you imagine that he's out there walking? They probably were only about three or four feet away from the boat when he looks back to the disciples and do you see what I'm doing? That's when he loses all control because he starts look around. He takes his eyes off Jesus and he's looking at the waves and the wind and the danger and what happens? He begins to sink.

Or if you turn over just a couple of pages over to chapter 16. We see Peter again. Peter in one of the most crucial aspects, roles, times of his life. There's all kinds of rumors circling around. Who is this Jesus? Is he John the Baptist, come back from the grave? Is he Elijah? Is he Jeremiah? Is he one of the prophets? And so Jesus gathers all the Disciples together and He point blank asks them – who do you say that I am? Now you have to think about this in a historical moment. Jesus, the Master is saying to His Disciples who do you think I am? They understand what He's asking. No one's stepping up to the plate answering the question. I think there's a little trepidation there because during that time, literally there were dozens, if not hundreds of people running around that area of Jerusalem, Asia Minor claiming to be the Messiah, having their own little band of followers and I think the Disciples were saying we're not quite sure if we want to go out on a limb and claim He is the Messiah. Not Peter. When given the opportunity – boom – Peter out of the shoot says you are the Christ, Son of the Living God.

You see another act of Peter more towards the end of Christ's life. Matthew chapter 26 he's in the Garden of Gethsemane. Jesus asking him just to pray; asking the others to spend the night praying with me. Of course, it's the night before His betrayal. It's the night before what would later become the most gruesome of hideous beginnings of His torture leading to the cross. Jesus is inviting them to pray but they can't stay awake. They fall asleep. Jesus goes back to them the first time, wakes them up. Can you just not pray with me? Leaves them, comes back in a little while and they had fallen asleep a second time. Wakes them up. Can you not just pray with me? Goes back to them a third time and as he's waking them up for the third time guess who shows up to the scene? Judas. Judas Iscariot. He's coming and he's going to do what? He kissed him. He's the traitor. Behind him is the servant of the High Priest and this band of, the best way to put it is thugs, temple thugs, temple police. They're coming to arrest Jesus and take Him back to Caiaphas. This is all happening in a moment. Peter is roused from his third time of sleep. He's waking up. There's this sense of unrest. Everything is falling down. What does Peter do? He gets up. He picks up a sword. He's a fisherman. He's not a soldier. He picks up a sword and he whacks off the ear of the servant of the high priest. Everything is chaos for a moment. Jesus stops it all. Pause. Picks up the ear of the servant, puts it back on. That would have been fun. Can you imagine that guy all day long kind of just (motion of feeling his ear)? How did that happen? Peter's right in the middle of it. Jesus turns his attention to Peter and He says what are you doin? If you are going to live by the sword you are going to die by the sword.

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Do you see the correlation here? Here's this man. Jesus says get out and walk on water. I'll get out and walk on water. Jesus asks him who do you say I am? I'll tell you who you are. Jesus needs defending – I'm going to risk my own life. He was right there. He's in the moment. He's beside Jesus.

In the next moment they cart Him away; Peter leading close behind. It's not a far walk over to the garden where the Pharisees were meeting; the Sadducees were gathering. This is called the Garden of Caiaphas. Peter's next seen warming his hands by a fire. Someone asked him aren't you with that man? What does Peter do? He denies Him. I don't know who that man is. He doesn't just deny Him once. He does exactly what Jesus said he would do. He denied Him three times. He says as the rooster crows, setting off that memory that Jesus set in his mind. He goes running off in tears and repentance knowing that he had let down the Lord. What was happening? Where was this courageous man that we were just talking about? How did he become so totally unlike the man we had just described?

What changed? He was no longer near Jesus. See, when he was close to Jesus he was a man of power, courage, forthright in the way that he lived his life. If you separate Jesus from him he falls apart.

Run the clock ahead after the crucifixion, before the ascension; before Jesus goes to be with the Father He finds Peter. Do you remember what He does? He forgives him; reinstates him; restores him; re-commissions him; calls him the rock. Now Jesus ascends and goes to be with the Father. Where do we see Peter next? Now he's without his Lord. All the Disciples are without their Lord. What do they do next? Turn to Acts, chapter 2. In Acts chapter 2 we see one of the most remarkable events lead by one of the most remarkable men. In Acts, chapter 2, verse 14 it says Peter stands with the eleven, lifted up his voice and addressed them. What is going on here? What is happening? This is called the Day of Pentecost. This is the birth of the church. This is the launch of what today we are still involved with all these years later – the Kingdom of Christ through the church and who is leading the charge? Peter. He's talking to all the people in the town, city square of Jerusalem and he gives this elaborate, passionate message; maybe one of the greatest messages of history. Go to verse 41. You see the end result. So those who received the Word, who's word? Peter's word in this message were baptized. They were added that day about three thousand souls; he birth of the church through the coward Peter. What transition – what happened?

The story keeps going. It gets better. Acts chapter 3, verse 6. What's going on here? Peter is walking into the temple. He sees a lame man. The lame man is also a beggar – begging for alms. He says I'm not going to give you gold or silver. I'm going to give you what you really need in the name of Jesus Christ get up and walk. He heals the man. This throws the Sanhedrins into disarray and they cart him off. This is the same, by the way, group of people who crucified Jesus. They are now carting Peter away. He stands before them. Do you know what Peter does? He doesn't back down. He stands toe to toe. He says you are the ones who

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crucified the Lord, the Savior. They say you can no longer preach in His name. That's what you say. I received a commission from my God. I'm not going to stop speaking. I'm not going to stop and he marches out.

What happened? I'll tell you what happened. Acts 2:4 – he was filled with Spirit of God. He was filled with the Spirit. You say, what's the connection? Don't you see the connection? Being filled with the Holy Spirit made Peter act as if he was standing before Jesus. Did you get that? Jesus is ascended. He's gone. But the Spirit and being filled with the Spirit, the one who's called the sealer; Jesus called the promised one; the helper. This one, who was given now takes up residence in Peter and Peter acts as if Jesus were standing right beside him. That's what it means to be filled with the Spirit of God. It means to be utterly and completely in control – giving control of your wants, your desires, your will as if Jesus were standing right next to you. Can you imagine living your life that way? Imagine living your life as if Jesus, the physical, real Jesus walked through life with you? Would that change the way you acted, how you talked? Would that change the way you looked at situations, circumstances, crisis? Would it change the way responded to temptation and to sin? See, being filled with the Holy Spirit is the exact same correlating event in your life as it is in Peter's life. Being filled with the Spirit of God is acting like Christ is living right next to you throughout your life – because He is. He is.

You're indwelt with His Spirit. So, what does that look like? What does it look like then if I'm a person indwelt with the Spirit? How do I measure that? Well, that's what Paul was saying in the last three verses back in Ephesians. He says this is what your life will look like. You'll address one another with psalms, hymns, spiritual songs. You'll be singing making melody in your heart. You'll be giving thanks to God. You'll be submitting. There's three things you'll be doing. Are you ready for these? There will be an inward joy in your life that you can't explain because you're submitting to the inward Spirit. There will be this upward gratitude that you'll be giving to God. Why? Because your life is being lead by the Spirit. There will be this willing, outward submission to those around you. Again, why? Because we're called to submit to one another out of reverence for Christ for the sake of the Spirit and unity and love for one another. It goes with the outpouring of the Spirit in your life. That's the example of the Spirit in your life.

I witnessed this this week. I was in my office and our computer tech guy had to do some work so I left and I went into one of the cubicles to do some work and one of our employees, Greg Rudrick was, I don't know what he was doing. He may have been emptying trash or moving some chairs around and setting everything up but he was singing. He was singing out loud to himself but others could hear him and he was just kind of in his own zone there. And I was listening as he was singing praises back to God. It was the work of the Spirit moving through his life. There was this inward joy that he could not contain. There's this sense of great gratitude to the God that we have and there's this sense of submission, joint submission so that we might so that we might demonstrate the love we have for one another. That's how

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you can tell if you're filled with the Spirit. You're releasing control of your desires, your flesh. You are deconstructing you so that Christ can live in you and reconstructing a Spirit filled life.

What does Paul tell us ending this section? Be filled. Be controlled by the Spirit of God. Now go do that. Let's pray together.