

**Valley Bible Church**  
**Sermon Notes for February 17, 2019**

**The Spirit Filled Life**  
**Ephesians 5:19-21**

Review:

- Ephesians 5:18 “And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit”
- Verses 19-21 are 4 results of one who is Spirit-filled

I. Speaking songs to one another (5:19)

*addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs,*

- “Addressing”
  - Literally “speaking”—not singing necessarily
    - Or not limited to singing
  - Why?
    - There is an instructive element in the psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs
  - Paul has modeled this already in Ephesians
    - Ephesians 3:20-21 “Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, 21 to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen.”
  - Paul teaches this in a parallel passage
    - Colossians 3:16 “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God.”
- “One another”
  - Paul is highlighting a horizontal indicator of someone who is Spirit-filled
  - This is a “one another”
- “In psalms and hymns and spiritual songs”
  - Paul gives three examples of the types of songs that we might speak to one another
    - This shows the variety and diversity that is allowed or even expected in the way that we speak “spiritual songs” to one another
  - Paul gives two obvious examples
    - Psalms - Scripture, straight from the Old Testament
    - Hymns - Songs written by the early church to proclaim biblical truth
  - “Spiritual songs” probably encompasses all of the above

- Including other variations of spiritual songs that might be spoken
  - Paul says a Spirit-filled person will be “addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs”
    - A Spirit-filled person should be elated if he or she had the chance to speak spiritual songs on any given Sunday morning.
    - We should not simply be elated because the song choices and quality were on point for our preferences
    - “It’s very important to have your preferences accommodated in the worship service... if you’re the one being worshipped.”
    - God allows a variety of displays of these spiritual songs
    - God expects us to be encouraging one another as we engage in the speaking of these spiritual songs containing wonderful doctrinal truths

## II. Singing to the Lord (5:19)

*singing and making melody to the Lord with your heart,*

- “Singing and making melody”
  - “The main point is the verbalizing of praise through singing. Literally, it would be translated ‘psalming,’ rendering it ‘singing and psalming,’ which does not work well in English. More properly, it should be translated ‘singing songs and psalms.’”<sup>1</sup>
- “To the Lord”
  - Probably referring specifically to Jesus
    - Every reference to “Lord” in Ephesians has been Jesus, thus far
  - “This focus on the praise of Christ in early Christian worship did not escape the notice of Pliny, the governor of Bithynia in Asia Minor, when he observed in a letter to the Emperor Trajan in AD 109 that the Christians ‘met regularly before dawn on a fixed day to chant verses alternately amongst themselves in honor of Christ as if to a god.’”<sup>2</sup>
  - Christ is the focus of our “singing and making melody”
- “With your heart”
  - Isaiah 29:13 “This people draw near with their mouth and honor me with their lips, while their hearts are far from me...”
    - Jesus quotes this verse in Matthew 15 and Mark 7 because the worship of the Pharisees had become meaningless

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<sup>1</sup> Harold W. Hoehner, *Ephesians: An Exegetical Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2002), 712.

<sup>2</sup> Clinton E. Arnold, *Ephesians, Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI:

<sup>2</sup> Clinton E. Arnold, *Ephesians, Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2010), 354.

- Psalm 51:16-17 “For you will not delight in sacrifice, or I would give it; you will not be pleased with a burnt offering. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.”

### III. Staying thankful at all times (5:20)

*20 giving thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ,*

- “Giving thanks always and for everything”
  - Two qualifications for our gratitude
    - “Always”
    - “And for everything”
  - Consider the alternatives
    - Most popular alternative is probably grumbling and complaining
  - The book of Numbers
    - “The grumbling spirit is not compatible with the Holy Spirit. Grumbling was one of the besetting sins of the people of Israel; they were always ‘murmuring’ against the Lord and against Moses. But the Spirit-filled believer is full not of complaining, but of thanksgiving.”<sup>3</sup>
  - 1 Thessalonians 5:18 “give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.”
    - “We represent the one group on earth who do not need to let our worries consume us, and for that we at all times should be grateful.”<sup>4</sup>
- “[Giving thanks] to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ”
  - Miracles, preaching and prayer all were to take place in the name of Jesus Christ
    - “Thus, the name, used as a channel of power in many instances, should also be used as a channel for prayer and thanksgiving, as portrayed in this text. Bietenhard asserts, ‘The whole life of the Christian stands under the name of Jesus.’”<sup>5</sup>
  - We *can* talk to God and we *can* give thanks to God only because of what Christ has done and is still doing
    - We can and should always give thanks because of Christ’s work in salvation

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<sup>3</sup> John R. W. Stott, *God’s New Society: The Message of Ephesians, The Bible Speaks Today* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1979), 207.

<sup>4</sup> Grant R. Osborne, *Ephesians: Verse by Verse, Osborne New Testament Commentaries* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2017), 184.

<sup>5</sup> Harold W. Hoehner, *Ephesians: An Exegetical Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2002), 715.

- We can and should always give thanks because of Christ’s work in intercession
- Our thankfulness must be directed toward the proper source
  - A Spirit-filled believer will give thanks to God for all things at all times knowing that God is good and God does good
  - Psalm 136:1 “Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good, for his steadfast love endures forever.”
  - Psalm 119:68 “You are good and do good”

#### IV. Submitting to one another (5:21)

*21 submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ.*

- “Submitting”
  - “In general, the verb (ὑποτάσσω) is widely used for the proper social ordering of people, as, for example, warriors giving their allegiance to their commander (e.g., 1 Chronicles 29:24). Similarly, people living in a certain political jurisdiction are obliged to respect the authority of (ὑποτάσσεσθαι) their local governor. This carries with it the responsibility to live in an orderly manner and not to be seditious or rebellious (Josephus, Ant. 17.314).”<sup>6</sup>
  - Examples of this might be found in the passages following our current one
    - Wives submitting to husbands
    - Children submitting to parents
    - Slaves submitting to masters
    - In fact, NIV places this verse in the next section of verses
  - But is this the way that this word is functioning here in verse 21?
    - The answer seems to be no
    - Practically, how do two believers submit themselves to one another in the body of Christ?
      - Who leads who? And how do you know? There is no hierarchy!
    - Contextually, the placement of this word as a participle connects back to a Spirit-filled believer
      - Since all believers are to be Spirit-filled, it appears that all believers will be submitting in some way to one another
    - Additionally, the next phrase confirms this idea of mutual submission even more so

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<sup>6</sup> Clinton E. Arnold, Ephesians, Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2010), 356.

- “To one another”
  - Since Paul says “one another” we know that this is something for all believers to do
  - Rather than speaking of hierarchy and authority structure, Paul is speaking of one’s attitude
  - All Spirit-filled believers will possess an attitude and disposition of submission or lowliness
  - This is not different from Jesus’ teaching
    - Mark 10:42-45 “And Jesus called them to him and said to them, ‘You know that those who are considered rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. But it shall not be so among you. But whoever would be great among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you must be slave of all. For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.’”
  - This is also similar to what Paul has already described in Ephesians
    - Ephesians 4:1-3 “I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.”
  - “The hierarchical structure of the relations described is tempered by a comprehensive vision of the church as a people living in humility and mutual submission.”<sup>7</sup>
  - “Over four hundred years ago, Calvin summed it up well:
    - ‘God has so bound us to each other, that no man ought to avoid subjection. And where love reigns, there is mutual servitude. I do not except even kings and governors, for they rule that they may serve. Therefore it is very right that he should exhort all to be subject to each other.’”<sup>8</sup>
- “Out of reverence for Christ”
  - NKJV and NASB - “in the fear of God/Christ”
    - Greek word is *phobos* from which we get our English word phobia
  - You can respect someone but remain unaffected by them
  - You can be terrified of someone doing you harm but that’s not Paul’s point here

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<sup>7</sup> Clinton E. Arnold quoting Richard Hays, Ephesians, Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2010), 356–357.

<sup>8</sup> Clinton E. Arnold, Ephesians, Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2010), 356–357.

- The word “reverence” can capture the meaning if we attach it to legitimate awe of Christ
- “In a sense phobos is the fear engendered by the very reality of the incredible love Christ has shown us. This “fear” produces a solemn sense of responsibility: he has loved us totally, and we want to express that to the best of our ability in our own relationships. Yes, we do have a sense of awe and reverence for all that Christ has done for us, but Paul’s point here goes deeper.”<sup>9</sup>
- The example of Christ’s submission to His Father and lowliness ought to present before us a weighty responsibility

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<sup>9</sup> Grant R. Osborne, *Ephesians: Verse by Verse*, Osborne New Testament Commentaries (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2017), 187.