

Paul refers to four of the many results of Spirit filling in vv. 19-20. What are these results? What are the common features of these results? What characteristics of a Spirit-filled Christian are implied by these verses?

What is the fourth result of fullness with (control by) the Spirit in us according to v. 21? What attitude is opposite to this fourth result?

Do you think that your life is characterized by the above-mentioned results in Questions 4 and 5? Is this a goal that you would like to strive towards? During prayer time, pray that these results would be true of each member of your cell group.

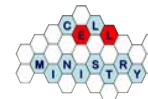
## SUMMARY

In this section, Paul has exhorted Christians to walk as those who are wise. He has repeated this command three times, seeking to show what is involved in walking as those who are wise. He has also provided us with those manifestations of the Spirit which bear witness to His presence and control in the life of the Christian.

# Ephesians

Week 11

[Cell-group Discussion]



## Ephesians 5 : 15 - 21

In our text, Paul exhorts the Ephesians to know and obey the will of God. He also speaks of the incompatibility between drunkenness and being filled with the Holy Spirit. While the ill informed and unsaved might confuse these two (as we see happening at Pentecost in Acts chap. 2), no Christian should confuse them.

### Careful Living

In v. 15, Paul advises the Ephesians that they live carefully. Careful living is essential to being wise (skillful) and to pleasing the Lord (v. 10). The wise person is one who views and sees things the way God does. We live wisely when we use every opportunity to please and glorify the Lord (v. 16). Every day and every hour provides opportunities, and we should seize them for these purposes. This is important because we live in days that evil influences and evil individuals dominate.

Time is a precious gift from God. Ephesians reminds us to that we should be good stewards of time. Evil days also seem to present the Christian with many distractions and diversions. While we have more free time than any previous culture, look how many “time eaters” our culture has produced. It is no wonder that someone wrote these words on a card, which he attached to his television: “Redeeming the time.” Do you consider yourself to have made good use of time in the past month? If your answer is “no”, why? What are the things that distract you? And what changes do you need to make?

The unwise (v. 15) simply lack wisdom, but the foolish behave contrary to what they know to be right. In v. 16, wise people make the most of their time among other things. What characteristic of a wise person is highlighted by Paul in v. 17? Why do you think this is important? Do you have this characteristic? Give reasons for your answer.

## Walking with God in Ephesians

At many points in the Book of Ephesians, Paul uses the term “walk”. Let us summarize how he has used it:

In Eph. 4:1-16, Paul calls us to walk in a manner worthy of our calling.

In 4:17-32 Paul calls us to walk in a way that differs dramatically from our walk as Gentile pagans.

In 5:1-6 Paul urges us to walk in love.

In 5:7-14 we are instructed to walk as children of light.

In 5:15-6:9 we are called upon to walk as those who are wise.

Paul’s final command to walk wisely is stated in terms of being “filled with the Spirit” (v. 18).

### Be Filled with the Spirit

We should not let wine control us but God’s Spirit (v. 18). It amounts to letting the Holy Spirit who indwells us to control us completely. Wine represents something that controls a person’s life resulting in darkness (drunkenness). But the believer who allows the Spirit to influence and direct his thinking and behavior will experience His control as long as he maintains that relationship to the Spirit. The Spirit produces a genuine exhilaration others vainly seek from alcohol or any other form of excesses. The control of the Spirit produces clear thinking, a wisdom which is beyond human abilities, and conduct which benefits those with whom we associate. Further note that the command to be filled with the Spirit is in the present tense. It is our ongoing responsibility to seek to be filled by the Spirit. This directive is obligatory for every Christian, not optional.

Can you think of other things besides wine that can go beyond our control? Is there something in your life that controls you? Pray to God for the Holy Spirit to fill you and strengthen you to be an overcomer. Only the Holy Spirit can restrain us but we must “want” Him to fill us.