

Ephesians Chapter 5 v 1 - 20

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[0 : 00] I think that's a subtle hint that we should start. Maybe my watch is a minute slow, but I like to give folk plenty of time to come in before we begin.

I'd like you to turn with me briefly to Titus in chapter 3. We usually read a psalm or another portion of scripture on a Sunday evening. And I'd like us to read from Titus in chapter 3.

That's page 1199 if you've got the church Bible. And hopefully as I read it, it will become clear as to why I've chosen it on this Pentecost Sunday.

And though we were engaged with the Whitby Gospel Music Convention this morning and taken up with that, we need to remember and think seriously about the work of the Holy Spirit.

And so Titus chapter 3, we're going to read from verse 3 to verse 7. Verse 3 to verse 7.

[1 : 07] At one time we too were foolish, disobedient, deceived and enslaved by all kinds of passions and pleasures. We lived in malice and envy, being hated and hating one another.

But when the kindness and love of God our Saviour appeared, He saved us, not because of righteous things we have done, but because of His mercy.

He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, whom He poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Saviour, so that having been justified by His grace, we might become heirs, having the hope of eternal life.

In those few verses, we have really the whole of history, of the whole of our salvation experience particularly. But especially in verses 4 to 6, we have the three persons of the Trinity, the triune God being spoken of as being engaged in our salvation.

First of all, there's the love of God our Saviour. That love which we can think of and we know is a love which is everlasting love. It's electing love, a planning and choosing love, love that appeared, that acted in history.

[2 : 34] Then we have, of course, the wonderful work of the Holy Spirit in our lives. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit. That's what it is to be born again, to receive newness of life, rebirth and cleansing from sin.

And how has the Holy Spirit come to us? He's come through Jesus Christ our Saviour, who died for our sins, suffered in our place, purchased full forgiveness and rose again, conquering sin and death.

If we have faith in God, then we have faith in God, the Father, the Son and the Spirit. And we need not be afraid. We have the assurance, the confidence that we are heirs.

That means we have an inheritance and a reward to come of eternal life. Let's continue to give immortal praise to our God.

Let us pray together. Whenever, O Lord our God, we stop from the busyness of our lives in this world, whenever we stop and lift our eyes heavenward and our thoughts and our hearts to you, the King of kings and Lord of lords, when we stop and consider who you are, what you are like and what you have done and what you have said, then, O Lord, again and again we are dumbfounded.

[4 : 09] Again and again we are amazed. Amazed, amazed at you, O Lord, amazed at what you have revealed of yourself to us in your word and by your Holy Spirit.

We confess, O Lord, that we are idiots, fools, ignorant, when it comes to understanding you, when it comes to grasping the width and the breadth and the height and the depth of who you are.

We just are still stumbling in the dark. And if it were not for your word, then we would be completely blind and completely lost. But we thank you that you have given us your word.

You have revealed yourself to us. You are not the God who hides from men and women, but you are the God who reveals himself. From the very start, from when sin entered the world, it wasn't you who hid from men and women, but it was Adam and Eve who hid themselves from you.

And hasn't that been, O Lord, the case throughout the whole of history? Men and women running from their true God. Men and women hiding themselves in all sorts of philosophies and false religions, in false gods, seeking in some way, as it were, to blot you out, seeking in some way to quieten your voice, to prevent you, O Lord, from speaking and being known.

[5 : 44] And, O Lord, we thank you that in spite of all man's efforts and our own individual efforts to walk contrary to you, to live lives away from you.

Lord, you drew near to us. Oh, how amazing it is that when we were on the run from you, Lord, you did not wait for us to return, but you came yourself in the person of your Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. You came to seek and to save what was lost. And we were of that number, just as we read, O Lord, a few moments ago. We were those who were foolish, disobedient, deceived and enslaved by all kinds of passions and pleasures.

Lord, we were those people. And yet, O Lord, you appeared to us. Your loving kindness made yourself known to us. Not only did you reveal yourself in creation and reveal yourself especially and wonderfully in your Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.

But, Lord, you revealed yourself by your Holy Spirit to us. There was that time, that moment in our lives when we were blind and somehow the light broke in.

[6 : 56] We were deaf, but, Lord, your voice was heard. We were dead, but you quickened us and brought us to life. O Lord, it was all of your grace, all of your goodness, all of your mercy.

We did not contribute a single thing. And how we thank you that this evening we come to the sovereign Saviour, the God of grace. O Lord, help us, we pray, to ever rejoice in you, to ever delight in you, to ever give thanks that we are counted amongst your people.

O Lord, how often we neglect to thank you. How often we find ourselves bemoaning our condition, the difficulties, the bills, the health, the family, the work.

Lord, these things seem to be all that there are. But we know that they aren't. They are but small things.

Yes, painful things at times and difficult things. But, Lord, you are all in all. You are everything. And when everything in this world is gone, when everything that we see and touch and feel and hear and smell in this world is gone, as it surely will be, you will be.

[8 : 23] And we shall be. O Lord, we pray, help us even this evening as we come to worship you. Draw near, give us hearts to praise and thanks, send your Holy Spirit amongst us, we ask.

Grant us to hear your voice. Lord, seek us out wherever we are and do us good. For we ask it in the name of Jesus Christ, our Saviour and King.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Let's turn together to Ephesians and chapter 5. Ephesians and chapter 5.

We're going to read from verse 1 to 20. And particularly thinking this evening, as it's Pentecost Sunday, upon the work of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer.

So Ephesians chapter 5, beginning at verse 1. If you have the Red Church Bible, that's page 1176. Page 1176.

[9 : 31] So chapter 5, verse 1, breaks into part of Paul's sentence, but we're going to pick up from where we've got verse 1 there. Follow God's example.

Therefore, as dearly loved children, and live a life of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

But among you there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality or of any kind of impurity or of greed, because these are improper for God's holy people.

Nor should there be obscenity, foolish talk, or coarse joking, which are out of place, but rather thanksgiving. For of this you can be sure, no immoral, impure, or greedy person, such a person is an idolater, has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.

Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of such things God's wrath comes on those who are disobedient. Therefore, do not be partners with them.

[10 : 52] For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light, for the fruit of the light consists in all goodness, righteousness, and truth.

And find out what pleases the Lord. Have nothing to do with the fruitless deeds of darkness, but rather expose them. It is shameful even to mention what the disobedient do in secret.

But everything exposed by the light becomes visible, and everything that is illuminated becomes a light. That is why it is said, wake up, sleeper, rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you.

Be very careful then how you live. Not as unwise, but as wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil.

Therefore, do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord's will is. Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit.

[12:04] Speak to one another with psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit. Sing and make music from your heart to the Lord, always giving thanks to God the Father for everything in the name of our Lord, Jesus Christ.

Christ. If you could turn back to Ephesians and chapter 5, and those first 20 verses, particularly the last paragraph, but all those verses in that chapter are important to us.

Some years ago, probably nearly 20 years ago or so, I was in Hungary on my way to Romania, and I was looking for a gift to buy for Ange.

Usually, if I go away, I'm duty-bound to buy presents for my wife and children. They have expectations of me, no matter what it is. So I thought, well, I didn't want something too big, because I didn't have a big suitcase.

I wanted something quite small, but something special. And so I bought a Russian doll. A Russian doll. It's properly called a Matryoshka. I'm sure you've seen them.

[13:19] They're usually about this sort of size, some are bigger. Made of wool. Wait, of wood. Made of wood. They're painted, beautifully painted on the outside. And what's special, of course, about them is that they separate in the middle, and as you take the top off, there's another doll inside.

And if that separates and you take that off, there's another doll inside. And so they get smaller and smaller all the way down to eventually in the last one there'll be a doll about this big, made of wood and painted, usually a baby, there.

And that's what I did. I bought one of those. And you can buy them in all sorts of places now. And they can have, you know, literally a dozen different dolls inside, each one revealing another one until finally the very centre is exposed.

I wonder if you and I were matrioshka dolls and the surface was taken off, what would be found on the inside? What would be the layer beneath the surface?

And what would be the layer beneath that and beneath that and beneath that? There would be all sorts of things that would come out, wouldn't there, in our lives? That David prayed, Lord, search me within, see if there'd be any wicked way within me.

[14:41] Things would be seen, wouldn't they, in our lives which we perhaps wouldn't want to be seen. There'd be pride and selfishness and jealousy, perhaps unforgiveness, perhaps resentment, bitterness, anger.

Well, we could go on. Each one would be revealed, yet another one, another one, another one. Yet Paul, when he writes to the believers here in Ephesians, he commands them in that sense and he urges them that rather than be filled, as it were, with the things of this world, the things of the sinful nature, the things of self, he urges them to be filled with the Spirit.

Be filled with the Spirit. As I said on this Pentecost, Sunday, it's vital again for us to think about the ministry and work of the Spirit and what it means to be filled with the Spirit and it's clear that he means the Holy Spirit of God, that third person of the Trinity of whom we thought at the very start of our service from Titus in chapter 3.

Now, we confess, I think all of us, that the Holy Spirit is the most mysterious of the three persons of the Trinity. We can associate with God the Father or God, we might call him, but God the Father, the Lord God as he is revealed throughout the Old Testament and speaks and ministers to his people and leads them through the wilderness and so on.

He, of course, speaks to the Lord Jesus on a number of occasions in the New Testament as well, at his baptism, his transfiguration and other times. So, we have a concept of God the Father also because, of course, we, each of us, whether good or bad, have had a father of some sort or other.

[16:33] And we can understand the Son because, in one sense, he comes alive to us, doesn't he, in the person of our Lord Jesus Christ. He comes to us. We identify with him.

We read of him experiencing the things that we experience, tiredness and weariness and thirstiness and hunger and so on. And, we have this sense of him being our older brother, one with us and walking where we've walked and understanding what it's like to be a human being living in this world.

But, when it comes to the Holy Spirit, he becomes more difficult. His voice is never heard. The voice of Jesus, the Son, is heard. The voice of God, the Father, is heard.

But, the Holy Spirit, his voice, is not heard. When he does manifest himself, it's in symbolic form, isn't it? He comes down as a dove upon the Lord Jesus.

He, on the day of Pentecost, is wind and fire. So, there's a certain mystery surrounding his personality and for that reason, of course, there are those cults and some of them that we'll learn about this week who do not consider the Holy Spirit to be a person but an it, a force, a power.

[17:49] And even as Christians, we can sometimes depersonalize the Holy Spirit in that way, wrongly, of course. He is very much a person as we shall see and as the Scripture teaches us.

But the Holy Spirit himself is the one that we utterly, completely depend upon.

For us to have become a Christian, for us to continue in the Christian life, for us to be in the place where we are now, for us to serve the Lord, for us to understand the Scriptures, for us to walk by faith, is all about the Holy Spirit who dwells within us and works for us.

And he is more important to our lives than we might ever realize. So when we come to Ephesians 5 and Paul's command here or his instruction here, however you want to put it, his encouragement, his urging here, be filled with the Spirit, in one sense we might say, well, it's almost out of place.

He's not been talking so much about the work of the Spirit. Romans 8 has a lot to say about the Spirit, about those who are led by the Spirit and walk with the Spirit. But the Holy Spirit himself has not been mentioned.

[19:16] Of course, Christ has and God has. Follow God's example as dearly children. Live a life of love as Christ loved. He's been talking about the sinful attitudes of those who are without Christ and do not live for him.

But he hasn't talked about the Spirit. He's talked about light, of course, and the fruit of light. And he's talked about these things and he's going to go on and talk about the importance of our relationships with one another and so on.

It's only here that God the Holy Spirit is mentioned and we need to be filled with him. And I think that in my understanding, therefore, that this verse 18 is almost like the pivot of a seesaw.

A seesaw which represents the positive and the negative aspects of living the Christian life. From chapter 4 and verse 17, if you go back there just for a moment, you'll see this is where Paul begins to talk about the negative aspects of living.

The things that we are to avoid, the things that we must not do. So I tell you this and insist upon it in the Lord. You must not live any longer as the Gentiles do in the futility of their thinking.

[20:28] So he goes on about what it means to be a Gentile. That means somebody who's godless, somebody who is without the Lord. He talks about how we're to avoid their behavior, their activity, their language, their attitudes and so on and so forth.

And then we find from verses 1 and 2 in chapter 5, they are in one sense the summary of how we are to live and then from verses 20 and following chapter 5 we have these very practical teachings about our relationship with one another in marriage and in family and in home and in workplace and in the world and so on.

And right in the middle is verse 18. And it's there because both, for both the negative, that is that which we avoid, that which we walk away from and that which we reject and for that which we embrace and we seek to endeavor to live for, both of these rely upon the work of the Holy Spirit within us.

We depend upon Him. Because as Paul has said in 4.17, we are not to live as the Gentiles do.

Well, how do we do that? How do we not live that way?

How do we not follow the crowd? How do we stand against the flow of peer pressure against us?

How do we live differently in a world which is so forcefully seeking to squeeze us into its own mold?

[22:03] Well, by being filled with the Holy Spirit. That's the only way we can do it. The only way we can resist. The only way we can say no to temptation. And how is it possible for us to be imitators of God who has given us such a perfect and wonderful example in His Son?

How do we imitate God in our relationships with our wives and our husbands, with our families and our children? How do we do that in our workplaces and in the world?

How can we imitate God when to imitate God we have no... it's so contrary to everything in the world about us and even contrary to our own sinful nature.

How do we live as imitators of God following His example by being filled with the Spirit? If we take seriously God's Word, if we take seriously God's Word as being our authority and His commands being our duty, then we will feel utterly helpless in the face of God's Word.

When we look at His commandments, when we look at the example set before us, when we look at those descriptions of what we shouldn't be and what we should be, we shall just throw up our arms in the air and say, Lord, I just can't do it.

[23 : 25] It's impossible. I just can't do it. I'm not strong enough. I'm not wise enough. I'm not godly enough. I'm not holy enough. I can't do it. There's none of us here, I'm sure, this evening who would be able to say, yes, all that God commands I can do in my own strength, in my own power, through my own faith, through my own ability.

I think all of us, I know all of us, would recognize our weakness. Paul says, be filled with the Spirit. What does that mean?

What does it mean then to be filled with the Spirit that we might live this double-sworded life? Well, it doesn't mean being born again.

To be filled with the Spirit is not the same as being born again of the Spirit or born of the Spirit, as Jesus spoke about in John chapter 3 and verse 8, or being a new creation, or as we read there in Titus chapter 3, a new birth and renewal of the Holy Spirit.

Now, that's the initial work of God in our lives. That's the work that regenerates. That's the work of the Holy Spirit that makes us alive when we're dead. That's the work of bringing us, it's a once-for-all work of God.

[24 : 43] You cannot be born again more than once. You are born again and you're born again. That's it. It's not something to be repeated over and over. It's not something that's to carry on.

It's once forever. And I do not believe that Paul's talking about what some might speak of or as Jesus speaks of, the baptism with the Holy Spirit or being baptised with the Spirit.

Remember when John the Baptist was pointing out and saying, here is the Lamb of God who's come and elsewhere, he spoke about the fact that I baptise with water but he will baptise with the Spirit.

He's not talking about that either. There's a sense in which this phrase be filled with the Spirit is what Greek scholars of which I am not one call a present continuous tense.

In other words, it's something that's ongoing. It's not a one-off experience or a here and now experience. It is an ongoing. In one sense, Paul is saying, don't be drunk on wine which leads to debauchery.

[25 : 47] Instead, keep on being filled with the Spirit. Be constantly filled with the Spirit. Be ongoingly filled with the Spirit. Paul uses other phrases throughout his letters which really have that similar sense and convey the same sort of command.

In Romans 8, verses 4 and 5, he talks about live according to the Spirit. In chapter 8, verse 9, about living in the realm of the Spirit.

8, 14, those who are led by the Spirit. In his letter to the Galatians, chapter 5, verse 16, again, live by the Spirit. In chapter 5, 25 of Galatians, keep in step with the Spirit.

We'll think about some of those descriptions in a moment or two. But let's think about this comparison that he has here in verse 18. When we want to understand what God's Word is saying, then of course we take it in the context, but also we take it as well in the example that's being given. Paul is using a very clear example of which we would all in some measure or way understand whether we've been drunk or we've seen somebody drunk or met somebody who's drunk with wine.

[27 : 04] He warns against it. So he counters it. Instead of being drunk with wine, be filled with the Spirit. There's some similarity and difference between them. When somebody is drunk, we talk about them being under the influence, don't we?

That the alcohol influences their thinking, their words, their actions. The sad truth is that somebody who is drunk is not in control of their own mind or will.

The drink has taken control of them. And for some, of course, that can make them extremely violent. Others, it can make them extremely depressed. For others, it can make them do things which are extremely dangerous that they wouldn't consider doing.

but in some way, they are under the influence of the alcohol rather than being controlled by themselves. We even may say when they're speaking and talking in a drunken state, we might say, don't listen to them, it's only the drink that's talking when they're being unpleasant or rude or

whatever it may be.

likewise, when a person finds a new interest, a hobby, a sport, when they find a boyfriend that they really like, we talk about them being full of it.

[28 : 22] They're full of this new hobby, they're full of this new person, they're full of this new interest. They're always talking about the subject. And so here, when Paul says, don't be drunk on wine but filled with the Spirit, he's talking about us being under the influence of the Holy Spirit, controlled by the Spirit.

That's another of his phrases used earlier. We are so full of the Spirit, we're so concerned with His ways and His thoughts that our whole life is affected and stimulated and yes, literally overpowered by the life of God within.

There's a sense of being given over to Him completely, willingly, gladly and allowing Him to direct our thoughts and our speech and our actions and our ways.

How does this happen? How are we to be filled with the Spirit? How are we to be such people who live as following God's example?

How are we to be such people who live not as the Gentiles, not as the world around about us but as the children of God that we are? How are we to be filled with, led by, controlled by, influenced by the Holy Spirit?

[29 : 50] Well, it must include and involve some action on our part. Do not get drunk, there's an action, you must take the glass or the cup or the bottle or whatever it is to your lips and indulge in it, there's an action and so it is, be filled with the Spirit is again an action on our part.

It is not for us to go along with some teaching which says just let go and let God. No, there's a decision of the will, there's an activity, there's something that we are meant to be doing by which we are filled with, led by, influenced by the Spirit.

Now remember, and this is important, the Holy Spirit is a person, he is not a sort of a robot if I can put it that way, he is not a machine, he is not some thing that can be ordered, he is not a pet who can be given commands and told to go here or do this or do that, he is freely, freely acts in his own will.

So it's not for us to fill ourselves with the Spirit, it's not for us to say, right, if I do this I shall fill myself or give myself the Spirit or make myself a Spirit-filled person, we've got to distinguish that, he is a person, he's not, one of my favourite comics is Asterix and Asterix to win the day is given superhuman power by a magic potion that he drinks, he takes it and he drinks it and suddenly he's got the strength of a hundred men and so on.

No, we need to recognise that this is a mystery in one sense but at the same time there is something that we must do.

[31 : 32] Remember that I read before from Romans 8, 14, if we are to be led by the Spirit as Paul tells us, well that requires following, doesn't it? An activity, if you're led by then you follow, there's obedience involved in that and if you're to keep in step with the Spirit, Galatians 5, 25, it must involve the cooperation of our feet.

It has to be something on our parts. So it is God himself who fills us, yes, but there is something that we must do to seek for and to desire and to know that filling.

And that's where I want us to see here what Paul says in Ephesians 4, 30. Holy Spirit's mentioned there, isn't he?

Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God. To be filled with the Holy Spirit is the opposite of grieving the Holy Spirit. And again, we have the context there which tells us what it means.

What does it mean to grieve the Holy Spirit? People come with all sorts of ideas about grieving the Holy Spirit. But it's clear, verse 29, do not let unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen.

[32 : 57] Verse 31, get rid of bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander among every form of malice. Sandwiched in between these two very negative and sinful actions, one is especially the action of the mouth, the other one is the action of the heart, do not grieve the Holy Spirit.

Holy Spirit of God is holy. That's why he's called the Holy Spirit. He hates sin, he hates iniquity, he hates falsehood, he hates lies, he hates and is upset, if I can use that phrase, with that which is wicked and impure and godless.

In Galatians 5, verse 17, we are told that the Holy Spirit desires what is contrary to our sinful nature, contrary to the flesh, and the flesh contrary to the spirit, they're in opposition to one another.

So if I give my sinful nature control, if I'm led to do those things and influenced in my thoughts, words and actions by the sinful nature, rather than the spirit, I'm quenching the spirit, sorry, I'm grieving the spirit.

I cannot be filled with him, I cannot be led by him, I cannot be influenced by him, I cannot walk in step with him, if sin is in my life.

[34 : 24] If I'm using language that I shouldn't be using, speaking, gossiping, putting people down, I'm grieving him and I'm therefore not filled with him.

If I'm allowing anger and rage and bitterness and slander and malice to live in my heart, then there is, if I can put it this way, no room for him to fill me.

And so there is that negative aspect, isn't there? If I want to be filled with the spirit, then I must get rid of those things which grieve him. I must positively seek to please him.

rather than the sinful nature. Galatians 6, verse 8, whoever sows to please the spirit. Romans 8, 13, by the spirit put to death the misdeeds of the body.

I wonder if, I don't know if any of you have got one nowadays, but if you ever had one of those oil lamps and you would put a glass, sort of a lens over the oil lamp, but the oil lamp lens always had a hole, didn't it, at the top to allow the air in to cause the flame to burn, do it with a candle, whatever it is.

[35 : 47] The Holy Spirit is likened to a flame of fire, isn't he? And if we starve that flame of oxygen by smothering it with sin, then that flame will die down and lose its brightness.

And so it is the same with the sinful nature. The sinful nature, if we feed it and encourage it and cause it to be built up, then it will grow brighter and it will overwhelm the Holy Spirit.

We are to starve the sinful nature of the air that it needs and in so doing we shall encourage and find the Holy Spirit himself filling us.

Do not grieve the Holy Spirit. It's my language, my attitudes, my actions. Are they pleasing my sinful nature?

Are they pleasing the Spirit of God within? It's a clear choice, isn't it, that we must make. A clear act that we must do.

[37 : 02] Be filled with the Spirit, says Paul, and don't grieve the Holy Spirit. And then also, not here, but in 1 Thessalonians in chapter 5 and verse 19, we're told something similar but not quite the same, where Paul writes to believers and he says, do not quench the Spirit.

Grieving speaks very much of his personality, doesn't it? He's a person. You can't grieve a thing. You may get frustrated with your computer but it's not going to get upset with you, even if it does shout at you occasionally, but it's not going to be grieved.

But a person is grieved. Quench, though. Do not quench the Spirit. Again, thinking of him as fire. In the older version of the NIV, it was do not put out his fire.

Again, the context here in 1 Thessalonians, if you turn there, chapter 5, helps us understand what it means to quench the Spirit. Verse 19 of 1 Thessalonians 5.

Do not quench the Spirit. Do not treat prophecy with contempt but test them all. Hold on to what is good. Reject every kind of evil.

[38 : 20] The Holy Spirit, it is our response to the Holy Spirit speaking to us through the Word, i.e. the preaching of the Word or the proclamation of the Word or the written Word that will determine whether we quench the Spirit.

So when God's Word speaks to us, we're reading the Word or we're hearing it preached or we're thinking upon the Word of God and we reject it, we put, as it were, a no-entry sign to our lives, we refuse to listen to, then what we are doing is we are quenching the Spirit.

And he is unable to fill us and he is unable to influence us. Now what do I mean by that? How can we understand that? The Holy Spirit can't be weakened, can he?

He's the almighty sovereign God. So I can't be talking about the Holy Spirit being weakened by being quenched or subdued or put, what do I mean? Well, this is an illustration that I hope will help. If my TV aerial on my roof is not pointing directly at the transmitter mast, the signal that my TV receives will be weak and the picture will be poor.

[39 : 40] Now the transmitter mast is sending out its signal powerfully and clearly to be received. The transmitter is not weakened in any way but the signal that I receive from it is weakened by the fact that I am not pointing in the right direction.

I am not receiving that signal as I should or could. When I line it up with that transmitter mass then I get the good reception.

And so when we quench the Spirit it's not that we are preventing Him or stopping Him from speaking but we are putting up as it were a barrier to prevent that message getting in.

We're quenching His effect. We're quenching His power to change in our lives. We are putting up a no entry a stop sign.

We are causing that message that work of the Spirit to be weakened in us not the Spirit Himself. So what's the opposite of quenching the Spirit?

[40 : 48] It's this it's being eager to hear God's Word and obey it. It's being hungry for God's Word. It's actively seeking to be led by Him actively pointing as it were our lives at Him in His Word and saying what is it you want to say to me here Lord?

What is it that you are telling me to do? How is it that you want me to live according to Your Word?

And we do that by prayer don't we? And we seek opportunities to receive from the Spirit reading God's Word fellowshipping with God people listening to the preaching reading helpful material hearts that are sensitive to His voice of course that's dangerous isn't it?

It's dangerous living being open to the Holy Spirit listening to and longing but notice that we're told that there is a way that we are to test the Holy Spirit's voice do not quench the Spirit no do not treat prophecies with contempt in other words do not put down God's Word or treat it as unimportant or neglected but test them all test everything that you hear hold on to what is good reject every kind of evil the Holy Spirit produces fruit in our lives the more that we are listening to Him the more we are filled with Him the more we shall live those lives which show that we are God's children and following His example and we know what the Holy Spirit's fruit is it's very similar to the fruit of light here isn't it goodness righteousness and truth we know the fruit of the Spirit because they're in Galatians chapter 5 love joy peace patience kindness goodness faithfulness self-control and so the way that we test everything is does this produce fruit or weeds does it spring up with life or throttle and choke where does this lead if God is speaking to me in His word and He's telling me that I should turn away from sin pretty sure that's going to be the word of God if I'm listening and I think God is saying to me no you should stop going to church that is not going to be the Spirit of God the fruit you shall know them by their fruit weeds or wheat so to be filled with the Holy Spirit is that we do not grieve Him but we seek those things that please Him that He might fill our lives we do not quench Him but we listen for His word and are attentive to obey what He says we are to be filled with the

Spirit and here in Ephesians 5 I think we see how the fruit of the filling of the Holy Spirit will have a distinct effect upon us first of all it will produce in us a life of holiness a life of holiness we no longer serve sinful desires we are set apart to be like Jesus so we've already seen follow God's example as dearly loved children live a life of love just as Christ loved us and gave Himself for us verse 25 husbands love your wives just as Christ loved the church we become more Christ like that's what holiness is it's not becoming more sanctimonious or pious or religious or legalistic or hard or judgmental it's becoming more like Jesus that's what holiness is the holiest man who ever lived do I want to be holy do I want people to see

[44 : 56] Jesus in me do I want to put sin to death oh Lord fill me with your Holy Spirit but also there's a personal blessing as well it's not here but it's in Romans and chapter 8 where we talked about the work of the Spirit in Romans chapter 8 and verse 6 we're told the mind governed by the Spirit is life and peace and later on in verse 16 the Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children we receive peace and assurance when we are filled with the Spirit we are assured that we are children of God the Spirit himself witnesses he encourages us he comforts us he tells us he whispers in our ear you're God's child and you're precious to him and he loves you this is all that he wants to do in that sense is to make himself known to us and the promises and the word of God known to us but also he tells us we have a mind governed by the

Spirit which is life and peace we know that we have peace with God but how many people have no peace within peace to know that my life is in the Lord's hands peace to know that the decisions and choices that I make he will overrule and bring about for his good and glory and surely finally we see here in Ephesians 5 that if we are people who are filled with the Spirit then our churches will be blessed as we submit to one another out of reverence for Christ as we speak to another verse 19 with psalms and hymns and songs always giving thanks our fellowship with one another will be blessed our churches will be blessed our families will be blessed as wives and husbands live as

people filled by the Holy Spirit as will our children as well who obey their parents and honour their father and mother and parents as they care for and instruct and train their children in the Lord these things have ripple effects we are filled we are not an island dear friends every single one of us as we live as Spirit filled people will have an effect of blessing upon those that we touch and reach just as

Jesus himself did we shall have an effect upon our community slaves and masters in our workplace yes in our supermarket in our street wherever we are there will be in effect a Spirit filled people so Paul urges us be filled with the Spirit and he prays for that prayer earlier on in chapter three where he says to them verse 19 to know this love that passes knowledge that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God dear friends we are not full we are to keep on being filled may God grant us that yearning desire hunger and prayerfulness to make every effort that we can to be men and women filled with the

Spirit may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ who suffered and died and rose again the love of God our Father whose love can never be taken away from us and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit who unites us with one another and with Christ be with you always forevermore Amen