

# "Wisely Under the Influence. Not Wine - the Spirit!"

## [Ephesians 5:15-21](#)

*Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, <sup>16</sup> making the best use of the time, because the days are evil. <sup>17</sup> Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. <sup>18</sup> And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit, <sup>19</sup> addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with your heart, <sup>20</sup> giving thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, <sup>21</sup> submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ.*

The sermon slides are available [HERE](#).

Video of Sermon is available [HERE](#).

Transcript:

Pastor Thom Rittichier

This morning we are going to be talking about some characteristics that are evident. Most of us, if not all of us, have seen, or I would even dare to say experienced, this thing. Let me put the pictures up here. So, what is this, what is happening here? These people are inebriated. Yeah, and the characteristics of someone that is inebriated, intoxicated, under the influence are kind of evident. These are some pictures that were posted about celebrities, of which celebrities I do not know. But the other day, before New Year's Eve, I was going to the hospital to do some rounding. And I saw this kind of thing going on. (more pictures) And that kind of gives an indication that there are some evident characteristics of being under the influence, DUI, driving under the influence. And so what are some of the characteristics? What are some of the things the police do in the sobriety test, to be an indicator of whether a person is under the influence or not? A breathalyzer, that's a big one. They make you walk a straight line, touch your finger to your nose, observe your fine motor skill control. Okay, good. So what are some other characteristics where you might recognize as being under the influence? A person might have slurred speech, rapid eye movements or dilated eyes. Well, this thing that I've pictured up here, the scriptures have us look at, evident characteristics, which God has the Apostle Paul talk to us about, something not only that God expects but God directs to be in our life.

Turn with me to Ephesians chapter five, where we take this up this thing about being wisely under the influence, not wine, but this Spirit. There are some clear parallels. There are some clear comparisons here, that God has the Apostle Paul record in Scripture for us. And it expresses not only what God expects, but what God directs to be happening in our lives. If you're with me, in Ephesians chapter five, we're going to read verses 15-21, "Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, making the

best use of the time, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the will of The Lord is. And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery/dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit, addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, 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." In Ephesians, we started a series that is specifically directed to believers, it speaks to believers. It speaks to them of some things they need to know, some teaching that God has given to us, and then how this teaching operates in our life. And in both of those two sections of Ephesians, what we need to know and how it operates in our life, it tells us as believers, what we're into. This is what we're into. For example, Ephesians chapter one, we're into being chosen by God before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him in love, through the redemption, through the salvation that He's given us as a free gift in Jesus Christ. It's what we're into. It's what we have. Now, we are not going to review all that, but there's several things that he builds. And here he talks to what believers are into, what God expects them to be into. And quite frankly, what he directs them to be into. The passage we look at this morning has 11 imperatives in it. What's an imperative? It's a command, it's a direction, God is giving us the direction, this is the direction of what I want you to be into. And there are 11 of them, that are given in this section. This is what I want you to be into.

So I need to add that I love this passage. This passage take something, for many believers even, which is nebulous to them, something that is not clear and it makes it crystal clear, very clear. What this is, to be filled with the Spirit. The Spirit is not a nebulous thing. The world doesn't know him. They can't, they don't get it. But the believer knows him. Because Jesus says, he not only is with you, but he will be in you. And the whole thing about this Spirit filling your life is made crystal clear here for us. So clear, as a matter of fact, that you can look at the evidence that is characteristic of being filled, under the influence of the Spirit, and come to a clear conclusion that you are or that you're not. Maybe I better put it this way, when you are and when you're not. Because it's clear. It's not nebulous. It's not hard to discern. Father, I pray to you for grace to help us. You say come boldly to find this grace to help in a time of need, and Father in the days in which we live, this is the time of need. In Jesus name, amen.

The days that we live in. Last week, Bob talked about the Christmas stories, and not even hearing the mention of what this thing is about, the visitation of God and earth..."Hark the herald angels sing", "veiled in flesh, the Godhead see", "God is pleased to dwell with men", "Jesus, our Emmanuel"...all of that, the days that we live in. The times that we live in. This past week, I saw a lot of to do about Kamala Harris. Do you know who she is? She happens to be the Vice President of the United States. And she made a comment about the malaise, the conditions of our country being in that state and boy has that made an interesting impact. The country is in this state of malaise. And then they talked about it relative to COVID and the Omicron, and how the Omicron is different and how it's more contagious. And then of course, the other side of the aisle of this, makes a big deal about how that's the decrepid state of the country that we have now come into under "this administration". So the days, are they deteriorating, are they dark? They are. Moral wise, according to biblical standards here, male/female, one marriage, the days

that we are in. I want you to know, specifically in this passage, these days and times are recognized by the New Testament as being what they are and what they were then, the days are evil. The days that we live in are evil. Just look at it right here, verse 16, "making the best use of the time", that's the aim of this thing, to make the "best use of the time, because the days are evil". Don't be surprised, don't be shocked, be believers. This is what we are facing. And the evident characteristics of what he's going after here is not only expected by God, but it's directed by God for these days, these days that you and I are in. That is the significance and the importance of what we're looking at here. And I love this passage. Because it's so clear. It takes what many believers struggle with as being unclear and makes it clear. This is it. This is what we know.

So there are two things we're going to talk about here this morning. First, relative to your time in these days. Wisely under the influence, not of wine but of the Spirit, relative to your time in these days. And it's very clear what he has here for us. And then secondly, relative to your demeanor, always/in all things, this demeanor. I was really debating with myself, back and forth, as to whether I should use that word demeanor. It's a 15th century word. And the word means the way that you are and come across, the bearing that you have. As a matter of fact, I looked up this chart, even as I debated about this word. This is the use of the word demeanor. And it looks at back in the 1800's, then 1850's, then 1900's, as it declined in usage. And then in 2010, this word began to climb dramatically, so much so that it's even in the lyrics of popular music. So I thought, okay, that is a good word. This is a word for us to use. It's a word that talks about the manner that you have. Not only the manner, but the attitude and appearance, the way you look, the way you come across. One of the words that I heard as a synonym of this was the word mien. Have you ever heard that? If you look it up, be careful that you spell it correctly, because when I put it in, it took me to chow mein. Okay, that's not it. Mien is an idea that expresses mood and character in the way your coming across. So demeanor is what we're going with, relative to your demeanor, the way that you are and come across characteristically, the mood, the attitude, the personal being, as it's being expressed. That's what God is talking about here, relative to your demeanor.

So we're going to talk about this, this morning. And it's part of our series on "Believers/What You're Into". First of all, Paul says emphatically right up front, verse 15 is in the position that is emphatic, he's emphasizing this. And he says, "Look" with intentional effort. Take a look at this, don't let this slide by as being inconsequential. No, take a look at this. See it as important, with intentional effort to be accurate about it. Be careful is the translation that sometimes is used here. "Look carefully" at this. I have the opportunity of teaching my grandkids math. So we're kind of in this algebra state of mind, and the pre algebra coming across. And one of the things my grandson said to me the other day was, "there's no number there, I don't know what to do. There's no number there". And so I had the privilege of explaining to him the whole thing of how math operates. And now you have to use what we've been operating and use it as if there's no number there. But what would happen if a number were there? So that was an interesting concept for him because he said again, "but there's no number there". Yeah, okay. This is the idea. We're getting it. We're getting it. All right. So sometimes he does this stuff, the absolute value, and I say, "hey, wait a minute, how did you get there?" And then he has to, with intentional effort, go through with me explaining the steps, because

something is off here. Paul is saying to us, concerning your life, not all the time, but be sure that you have looked carefully, intentionally at your life to make sure this is accurate with what he's about to tell us. So he says, "Look carefully" at how your life is going, the way that you're living, "not as unwise". This is the first of the 11 imperatives that he gives us here. It's the first one. It's telling us, as an imperative, not only is this expected, but it's directed because God is directing this, "not as unwise but as wise", someone who is skilled with a plan and then taking that plan and putting it into action.

Did I did I happen to mention to you that we are getting close to NFL football play offs this coming week? I have I mentioned that to you, haven't I? I mentioned that right? Yeah. You know, this is kind of big deal around the nation, it takes up some time, it keeps us entertained. Also a lot of money goes into this. There's a lot that goes on with this. As a matter of fact, there are some people who actually have a game plan. Do you realize when Minnesota plays Chicago, sometimes there's a game plan. Sometimes there's a game plan, because Minnesota has this strength in the running game, but not their passing game, and because then Chicago will do these things because...that goes into this whole thing, the whole plan of how they are going to do this and go after this. And there are some people that are highly skilled at this. Some that are highly skilled, so much so that they rise to the top, year after year after year after year, in being professional. Even if they lose a star quarterback, they'll rise to the top, year after year. Paul's talking to us about having a plan. And to carry that plan into action as someone who is skilled here. And this passage gives you that skill. It gives it to you about the more important thing, not the game, but your life! As you walk, pay attention here, attention with effort to be accurate so that you're skilled in how you handle it. That's the first thing he has to say.

Then immediately he says this, again an imperative, redeem the time, buying up the time, with its opportunities in it. You know, all of us here, all of us here, have opportunity. Opportunity with kids, grandkids, parents, friends, neighbors, situations, settings and circumstances, we all have an opportunity in situations. And the direction is that you pay, you invest, to buy up those opportunities. He translates it as making the most, "making the best use of the time", verse 16. You know, I'd like to challenge us at Heartland Bible Chapel and those who are joining us over livestream that this would be a good theme for your life for 2022. Yes, we have to trust I AM, always and forever, what we need in our circumstances, and then making the best use of the time...during the malice of the pandemic and what they say is the state of the country...making the best use of the time because God has given us this time and he expects us to do that. And he directs us to do that. Now to do that you have to pay a price. There's a price involved, there is a cost to you. It's a cost to you to invest in those opportunities that come, in the time. They're here. God has given them to us. And he says this because, verse 16, "the days are evil". This verse was quoted that last week, we've just talked about what went on in the media this week, about the difficulty, the hardship, the hurt that's in these days. So there is opportunity, buy it up. It's how to plan your game skillfully. There's going to be opportunity, you have opportunity, there is opportunity. So invest, to buy it up, time with its opportunity.

Then he adds the last one concerning your time, verse 17, understanding, comprehending so that you put this together, don't let time just roll on, look at it intentionally with effort to be accurate about it. And buy up the opportunities that are present, even in evil days, by comprehending, putting this together. Putting what together? What the will of the Lord is, what he wants, what he directs. That's what we're looking at here. This is not only expected, it is directed, what the will of the Lord wants. What is it that the will of the Lord wants? You know, that's not left in a subjective feeling...do I get it or do I not get it...the will of the Lord is very clear, what the will of the Lord is.

There are some very clear statements about what the will of the Lord is. The will of the Lord clearly expressed, the will of the Lord clearly expressed is that he wants people to be saved, 1 Timothy 2:3-4. God is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. He wants people to know that Jesus Christ is the way to heaven. It's not you being good enough, he doesn't weigh your good and your bad deeds. What he wants them to know is that if they trust Jesus Christ, His death, burial and resurrection, if they trust Jesus Christ with their life, they'll be saved. They'll be rescued by God. He wants people to know that he's not willing that any should perish. But that all come to the knowledge of the truth, and to trust Christ. That's the will of God, invest in that. Invest in that going on in Israel, invest in that going on in Asia, we have the opportunity of our missionaries, there's the missionary offering box, there is opportunity to invest in that internationally. And personally, in prayer time. Is there a prayer list that you have for people who need to come to know Jesus Christ personally? And you know, none of us can make that happen. They have to be born of the Spirit of God, God must open their heart to the truth of this, and they trust their life to Jesus Christ. He says, comprehend, put this together, invest in this. He wants believers and their families to be sanctified. Which means this, that more and more and more they learn to go God's way in their life, 1 Thessalonians 4:3. Believing parents do that to unbelieving children. They bring them to the place where they grow and they know more and more and more of God's way for life. The way that it works, how to be saved, they do that. This is the will of God, your sanctification, that you become more and more and more in God's image. Is that happening for you? It's the will of God. Spirit filled lives in action, Ephesians 5:18, that's what we are looking at today. Submission on display, 1 Peter 2:13-15 and Ephesians 5:21, a sweet spirit of placing yourself under rather than raising yourself up. It doesn't mean we don't solve problems, we do, there are problems. But rather than a contemptuous, cantankerous, fighting spirit, which is so prominent on social media. Have you noticed that? Have you noticed? Social media is about that. And also having thanksgiving in everything, 1 Thessalonians 5:18 and 20. This is all expressed as the will of God.

So he says to us here, understanding, putting this together, that this is the will of God for you in Christ Jesus. Brothers and sisters, this is the best use of our time, no matter what goes on, no matter who's in political office, whether you agree or you disagree, this is the best use of our time and our energy and the opportunity. And by the way, if there's somebody in office that you disagree with, what is the opportunity for you as a believer? Pray for them. Wow, amazing. Pray for them, and then go talk to your neighbor about what a crook that political figure is! No! We're not to go there, not to engage in that.

Now, relative to your demeanor. And by the way, what was demeanor again? What was it about? Yeah, the way that you are, concerning your attitude and your mood and your actions, the appearance that you then give, that's your demeanor. And by the way, there is not an "on time", and then "off time" for this, the way this is presented. It's an imperative again, and it's a present imperative, meaning it's to be present. And it's to be ongoing, always. As a matter of fact, verse 20 says, in "everything", "always". Is it really possible? Well, for us, who are fallen, it is a thing that we grow in. And the way I explain this, a lot of times in counseling to folks, when I'm helping them deal with a snag or a catch that's going on in their life. The way I explained this is growth is that you get quicker at discovering when you're not where God wants you to be. And you start shortening the time it takes for you to get back to where God wants you to be in this. That's how I explain it. Because we have a fallen nature, and we're always going to have things in us contrary to him. It's just the sooner that you discover it, and you begin to turn from it, that's growth. That's maturity. Amen. Amen. That's it. That's it. That's where we go. That's how we do this. So Paul is saying to us, this is always to be going on here. We are always to be filled. This also is an imperative.

As a matter of fact, there are two of them here in verse 18. It says don't be filled...and then it says do be filled... Don't be, that's the imperative, drunk with wine. Do be filled with the Spirit. Now I want you to watch something. Look at that corner up there (picture of female drunk, taking a sobriety test). "Don't be drunk with wine, that's dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit." This is expected and directed. Now look at that corner there again. Do you see the change there? (picture of sail boat with wind filling up the sail) That is being filled. That sail is being filled. It's being filled with "pneuma". Pneuma is the word wind, translated Spirit in our New Testament. This sail is filled with the Spirit. As a result, there are evident characteristics of that sail being filled with the Spirit. That sail is moved along, forward. And if you know how to use correct tacking, you can get the direction exactly the way you want. That's what the lexicon uses is the illustration of Spirit filling. It's the sail, open to the wind that is filled and then moved with power and strength as it harnesses that wind in a direction so that it makes progress. It accomplishes, it goes somewhere. That's being filled with the Spirit. Often in the New Testament, this thing, to be filled with the Spirit, talks about being controlled, directed by this.

Let me give you some examples from the scriptures. In the book of Luke chapter four, Jesus went into the synagogue. The synagogue was much like the assembly of the church, the temple was very different. But the synagogue was much like the assembly of the church. They would come together and someone would take a passage of scripture, and they would stand up and they would talk about this. That's what's happening with Jesus in the synagogue in Luke chapter four. He comes in, he gets the scroll, he opens and he reads the passage, The Spirit of the Lord is upon me. Because he has anointed me. And he goes on and talks about bringing liberty to the captives and freedom and to preach the gospel and to make it known. And then Jesus closes the book and says, Today, in this preaching, these words are fulfilled in your hearing. And he quotes that about it being him who's coming to do those things. The Spirit of the Lord is upon him. And they knew what he was saying. They knew this was about the Messiah. They heard what he were saying. Now listen to what happens. Luke 4:28, When they heard these

things, all in the synagogue were filled with rage. They're filled with wrath. They're filled with anger. And they rose up and they drove him out of the synagogue and they took him to the place where there is a cliff and they were ready to throw him off. Filled, they were filled. Some spirit had filled them and driven them along in a direction. They were controlled by their anger towards him. Here's another, Acts 13:45, Barnabas and Paul come into Antioch at Pisidia. They come in there and they start talking to people about Jesus. And as they're talking to them about Jesus, the people in the city are like, Whoa! Whoa! And the next Sabbath day, the next time of the assembly, when they went in together, the Jews, when they saw the crowd, were filled with jealousy and began to contradict what was being spoken by Paul, and to ridicule him. You see what the filling was here? They're filled, this spirit that fills them and moves them along to contradict and to ridicule what Paul is saying about Jesus as the Messiah was jealousy! One more, Acts 2, it's the day of Pentecost. And suddenly, these people begin to speak about Jesus and they're speaking in all these different languages and dialects and everything. And people saw this and said, These men are filled with new wine, wine has intoxicated them, therefore they're speaking this Jibberish. And Paul and Peter stands up and said, These men are not drunk, like you suppose. But this is the fulfilling and then he goes on and quotes Joel, about what's happening here. They were filled, not with wine, they were filled with the Spirit and went in a direction of presenting from their lives, Jesus...sanctification, thanksgiving, submission.

This idea of being filled is being controlled and taken in a direction. And it has characteristics, there are evident characteristics to being filled, to be controlled by the Spirit. Look with me at verse 19, addressing one another, speaking in a manner, with an attitude, to one another, to other people. Here is the evidence. You begin to speak to other people with intentional effort to convey to them psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. Psalms are what we have in our Bible. They talk about our relationship with God, living with him. And you begin to speak about them....from the ends of the earth I call to you when my heart is sad. Ever interact with somebody whose heart is sad? Do you? And another psalm...My heart overflows with a good theme. Is there times of this good theme rolling? There are psalms about experiencing life with God and we speak them. Hymns, these are our compositions, where we express to God, in sacred songs, and also to one another. And then spiritual songs are the experiences of life that we just put together in praise to God. This is an evident characteristic of the Spirit filling you and moving you along, that you thoughtfully speak with these. And this is what God expects and directs. It's an imperative, addressing other people with this.

Now we do it in the assembly. And by the way, what we do in the assembly is intended to go home with us. Our music director will interact with me, and she'll say, Any thoughts about music on Sunday? And repeatedly, I do the same thing. (pastor asks her) "What do I do?" (she responds) "Use last weeks songs." Isn't that amazing? Isn't that amazing? Because guess what's going through my heart? I've been singing these songs as we sang it in the assembly. And this is what it is, it's going on there. So as soon as it comes up, boom, that's where I go. Guess what we're going to end with this week? Last weeks song! Yep! Isn't that wonderful? And this is the intention. And you know, I challenge believers on this. So do you have this going on? Because he says it's not only to one another like we do in the assembly. It's to the Lord. He says in verse 19, with your heart to the Lord,

you make melody, you sing this thing, you strum it, you make melody, singing and making melody to the Lord in your heart. And so I interact and I say, are you doing this? Is this going on in your life? And I've had this said to me, especially by guys, they say to this repeatedly, But I'm not musical. Hey, Heartland, you all know how musical I am, right? I mean, anytime I start to sing, it goes flat, and it stays there. My wife looks at me and says, It's unbelievable that somebody can be that flat! But I am, I am. And I've got a kid, not all of them, but I've got a kid who is just as flat as I am. It's rough to listen to, sounds like music to my ears, but to our music director, it's rough to listen to. But here's the thing. It's not the native ability. It's the Spirit moving that brings the song.

This is so important that I brought with me something I would like to make available to whoever wants it. I only brought a couple but I'll bring more next week. (holds up CD's) This is on audio. And it talks about song, melody, worship, coming into your heart to flow out. It talks about the importance of the assembly and the music that we have here. And this going with you so that when the music director calls you and asked you what song you'd like to sing on Sunday, you'll have it right on the top of your heart what you just did last week, amen! In the assembly. I want this for you, I earnestly do...but I'm not musical. Our native ability is not the issue, the issue is the Spirit filling. This stuff of the Spirit is not intellect, it's not ability. It's Supernatural. It's the Spirit of God. I am so grateful. Have you heard of those things that can change whatever sound comes into it? It can take what's so flat and offbeat, and make it sound great. You ever heard of one of those? Yeah, guess what? That's the Spirit. The Spirit does this. I want to make these CD's available. Somebody needed it today, take them. I'm gonna bring a bunch next week, I didn't bring them all. I've got a lot of these, because this is vital. For your spirit. It's your heart making melody to the Lord. It's the evident characteristic. But you've got to look intentionally and choose it, to the Lord.

And this, giving thanks always in everything, verse 20. How about that? Always and everything? How about if you're in jail for doing what God wants? And you're in an uncomfortable jail, a dungeon of a jail and your feet are in stocks? Can you give thanks, singing and making melody to the Lord with your heart? Can you do that? The Apostle Paul did, Silas did. And you know what, a lot of us have a lot less than dungeons in our life, and we're having a hard time doing it. Amen. This can happen. This can happen, Giving thanks always in all things and everything. And look at this, submitting to one another, out of reverent respect to the Lord. You know, let me say this, my idea isn't so all fired good, right and important. And neither is yours. And neither is anyone else's, because everybody is exactly equal at the cross. Some have gone further in following Jesus. And as much as they reflect the scriptures, we need to take their input, but everybody is exactly equal at the cross, everybody, everybody. What needs to be given the weight is what the Lord has to say. What he directs. And can I tell you, folks, churches even in our locality, our ripped apart because people think their idea is so all fired good and right and important. And the evident characteristic of the Spirit filling you and moving them, like a beautiful sailboat, isn't there? Because there's not the voluntarily lining up with someone else's idea. This is the evident characteristic of being filled, under the influence of the Spirit. Are we always there? No. But here's how we grow. We recognize it, and we shorten the time that it takes for me to get there.



Conclusion of the matter is this. How evident are the characteristics of being under the influence of the Spirit in you? So if I were to come up to your wife, and I were to say, Hey, how evident is the characteristics of your husband being filled with the Spirit? What would I hear? How about this? What if I went up to your kids? And I asked them, What are the evident characteristics in your parents of them being filled with the Spirit? Addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, making melody to the Lord, from your heart. Thanksgiving, submitting to one another. Is there a place for submitting to kids question? Yeah, as a matter of fact, this whole thing, of that coming into the family, comes up in the next verse. Isn't that wonderful? That's where he goes with this. This is the wonder of knowing Jesus, it transforms everything. Absolutely everything is changed. And if a person is not changed, they are not in Christ. Finish this with me, "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away, behold, the new has come.", 2Corinthians 5:17. That's the wonder of being in Jesus. Don't lose it. Let the Spirit fill you and advance you in this.

Father in heaven, thank you for this work of grace, that no matter how much we get off course sometimes, it still goes on by your Spirit. Because knowing you, knowing you Jesus, there is no greater thing. It's in Your name I pray. Amen.