What Must We Do?

A message delivered to
MAYER COMMUNITY CHURCH

June 13, 1999

TITLE: "What must we do?"

TEXT: Ephesians 5:18-21

THEME: Staying full in a draining environment

THRUST: We *must* follow the *Law of the Spirit*

INTRODUCTION:

We have been seeking to answer questions
that will give us greater insight into Christian Living.
Each question and its corresponding answer has focused
on the Holy Spirit and His unique role
in the ministry of His people.
Last Sunday we continued with the question:
"Where are you?"
"Where are you in your Christian walk?"
"Is your relationship with Jesus up to date?"
"Have you prepared, with all your might,
for the house of God?"
"Are you ready?"
In the last two messages,
we have been challenged to be filled~! with the Spirit.
We understand the Holy Spirit's activity in our conversion.
He is the One who, through the Law,
draws us to Christ and reveals Jesus as our needed Savior.
We have also come to understand,
that there is depth to the Christian life
that we cannot experience on our own,
therefore, we have a need for the *continued* ministry
of the Holy Spirit in our lives.
Hopefully, we realize the importance of the command given
in Ephesians 5:18 concerning
being *continually* filled with the Spirit.
We know that initially He comes by invitation,
but muse we ask Him all the time? **No!**
The Holy Spirit takes up residence within us.
He has moved in at our invitation.
This is a command to us to allow Him to continue His ministry
of filling us with Himself.
Last week we spent some time on the fact that we are vessels.
We have the responsibility to make sure
that we are vessels of honor, fit for the Master's use.

We do *that* by being continually emptied of ourselves
and filled with the Spirit!

Ephesians 5:18-21

In this passage there are three words
that speak of Spirit-filled living.
One is personal; Two have to do with our relationships.
All are ultimately focused on giving glory to God.
All begin with "S".
These three words speak not only of the results
of being filled with the Spirit,
but also speak of the *means* of maintaining that fullness.

I. Speaking to One Another

Psalms ... Hymns ... Spiritual songs.

· Psalms: A sacred ode accompanied by voice,
and stringed instrument.

· Hymns: Appropriate songs of Praise to God,
God is in view here.

· Spiritual songs: Odes — Sung in places of festivity.
The emphasis here is that *these* songs
should be *spiritual* rather than worldly.

Martin Luther once said that "The devil should not be allowed to
keep all the best tunes for himself."
One commentator remarked that these were too similar in nature
to try to differentiate between them!
That is part of our problem!
That is one of the reasons why so many of God's people
have not put a priority on this command
to be continually filled with His Spirit.
We are too busy passing over one passage
in order to deal with another.
We are in too big of a hurry
to get to the popular "finger shaking" passage!
Wives shake their fingers at their husbands
because they are not loving them as Jesus loves!
Husbands are shaking their fingers at their wives
because they are not submitting
(whatever their personal understanding of that is.)
Through it all, God is probably shaking His head
at the absurdity of it all, because He knows
that *husbands* ***can't*** love their wives as Jesus loves
without being continually filled with His Spirit;

and, *wives* ***can't*** submit to their husbands
in the true biblical manner
without being continually filled with His Spirit!
Any and all attempts to do so, on both parts,
either end in disaster, or, present a gross caricature
of God's truth to the world.
What we miss is that the way we maintain our fullness
in order to meet these further requirements is through
Psalms ... Hymns ... Spiritual songs.
But there is something more in view here than *types* of music!

- Psalms: Appropriate words (Biblical) for specific situations.
- Hymns: Have stood the test of time and are part of our history.
- Spiritual Songs: Spontaneous outbursts of song
inspired by the Holy Spirit.
Some believe that this is referring to "singing in the Spirit"
i.e. like speaking in tongues only singing in tongues.
I can see that possibility here, but there is more.
This is not limited to *tongues speakers*.
This is available to all!

This is the ministry of edification through music.
That is what it means by *speaking to one another*
In other words, we are to communicate not only with God
by our music in worship, but also with each other!
How many times has a particular song
touched a heart or met a specific need?
These forms of edification can either be one-on-one
or to the whole body.
This is the reason why *music* plays such an important part
in our worship to God
and in our relationships with each other.
This is also the reason why *music*
in one of the most controversial areas of ministry.
If the enemy can keep God's people from singing
and better yet, get them to squabble over music
or undermine the music director
or be disruptive in any way
where the ministry of music is concerned,
then he has gained a significant foothold
in the total ministry of that church.
Follow the reasoning here,
if God really does inhabit the praises of His people,
and His people are not praising ... where is God?

II. Singing and Making Melody in Your Heart

Proverbs 4:23 Watch over your heart with all diligence, for from it {flow} the springs of life. (NAS)

The heart is the source, therefore,
the source must be rooted in thanksgiving to God
and then the lips will be able
to give forth the sacrifice of praise.

The writer to the Hebrews says in Hebrews 13:15

"Through Him then, let us *continually* offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is the fruit of lips that give thanks to His name." (NAS)

Continually offer up a sacrifice of praise
... doesn't that sound like the criteria
for being filled with the Spirit?

The *fruit of our lips* is the result of what is rooted in our heart.
"Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks."

But, in the natural, our hearts are deceitful and wicked.

Therefore, our hearts *must* be trained to focus on Him.
That is what thanksgiving does!
We are also instructed to do that *continually*!
See 1 Thessalonians 5:18.

III. Subject to One Another

The basis of submission is submitting ourselves to one another,
or 'giving way' to one another.
Submission then is giving way to somebody else.

"Anne Atkins, in her excellent book Split Image, says: 'Before we can hope to be good husbands or wives, we must learn to be good Christians. We must all become self-sacrificial and submissive.'" ~Jill Briscoe

Most of us stumble over the words of Ephesians 5:21 because we're concentrating on what's fair. But if we insist on playing out our marriage that way, we only bring pain to our spouses and ourselves. To paraphrase Tevye in *Fiddler on the Roof*, 'If you insist on an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth, you'll both end up blind and toothless.' God wants to spare us that pain, so he gives us a better way: 'Submit to one another.' That doesn't come naturally. Scripture has to remind me: Exaltation comes after humility. You have to descend into greatness." ~Kevin Miller, and editor in Chicago

Jesus said in Mark 9:35,

"If any man desire to be first, the same shall be last of all, and servant of all." (KJV)

"Let no man be so tenacious of his own will or his opinion in matters indifferent,
as to disturb the peace of the church; in all such matters give way to each other
and let love rule."

Our motivation for submission *cannot* be other than
out of reverence for Christ!
There are too many with personal agendas
and, as a result there are too few who are continually filled!

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CONCLUSION:

Speaking to one another in Psalms, Hymns & Spiritual songs!
Singing and making melody in our hearts to the Lord!
Submitting to one another in reverence to the Lord Jesus Christ!
These are the things we *must* do
in order to be *continually* filled with His Spirit!
When we do, we will be *Living for Jesus* ...
When we don't, we will be living for self!
Who are you living for?

"*Living for Jesus*" Thomas O. Chisholm ~1917

1
Living for Jesus a life that is true,
striving to please him in all that I do,
yielding allegiance glad hearted and free
this is the pathway of blessing for me.

Refrain
O Jesus, Lord and Savior,
I give myself to you,
for you in your atonement
did give yourself for me.
I own no other master
my heart shall be your throne:
my life I give, henceforth to live,
O Christ, for you alone.

2
Living for Jesus, who died in my place,
bearing on Calvary my sin and disgrace:
such love constrains me to answer his call,
follow his leading, and give him my all. Refrain

3
Living for Jesus wherever I am,
doing each duty in his holy name,
seeking the lost ones he died to redeem,
bringing the weary to find rest in him. Refrain