

Parents are given a responsibility toward their children (6:4). When these various "roles" of the family are played under the direction of the Spirit, the home is a joy in which to live!

c. Socially 6:5-9

1) Servants These are called upon to "obedience" (v. 6:5). All is done respecting one's employer as if the servant were actually doing it unto the Lord (cf. 5:22). When people take their jobs as employment unto the Lord, what a difference it makes. This can only be done as controlled by the Spirit.

2) Masters Here is a word for the employer. The one who hires other persons must do so as one who sees his role under the Lord. He will give account to God, so he is to take care how he conducts himself (Ruth 2:4).

d. Cosmically 6:10-17. This concerns one's spiritual life. There is no covering for the back. It means that the child of God is expected to be on offensive warfare all the time. The battle engaged by the believer is "spiritual" (6:12) and therefore demands the filling with the Spirit. You cannot fight on your own. The enemy is to great. The world view of offense is possible only through the Spirit.

e. Devotionally 6:18, 19. The four times in which the word "all" is found (v. 18) is significant. It shows that total concern is involved here. Prayer is the big thrust. Such prayer as mentioned here is only possible through the Spirit's control.

Conclusion There is no question that the greatest imperative for a child of God redeemed by blood is the control of the Spirit. God has commanded it. It is up to us to be obedient. Let the Spirit control you today, tomorrow, and until He comes.

THE WORK OF THE SPIRIT
"An Imperative for Every Believer"
Ephesians 5:18

Introduction

1. To talk about an imperative for every child of God is a pretentious subject. Yet, since we are in a death and life struggle, there is nothing more important than this study.

2. Old truths need renewed emphasis. Some verses by their very familiarity lose their force. God grant that this will not be the case with this important passage of the word.

3. It is addressed to believers. The unsaved have other injunctions which relate to personal faith on Christ. The only response of an unbeliever is belief! When he does this he will be saved. Then an entirely new arrangement between that person and God is established. Look at this verse three ways: --

1. IT'S SETTING (Position).

a. Relatively. In relation to other books of the Bible, there is a marked indifference. Ephesians is obviously for the child of God (Eph 1:3). One is already inside the fold of the Lord and yet deep and precious truths are presented there. Romans is a tract on "God's Righteousness." It is good for the non-believer to read and digest. Once saved, bring a man to Ephesians and he will appreciate what God has done for him.

b. Structurally. There are two main sections to this book. The first speak about doctrine or theology (1 - 3). The emphasis is one's belief. The last three chapters (note "therefore" in 4:1) drive on the practical or ethical aspects of the Gospel. This is life truth. Hence, first belief, then behavior!

c. Contextually. This verse heads the list of all that remains to the Book of Ephesians. The Scofield Bible has so indicated and it is probably the best outline to be followed. All else stems from this one verse! Without it, one is lost for a good understanding of the rest of Ephesians.

2. IT'S STRUCTURE (Condition). The thrust here is in the verb which is the principal item of the verse. Mark these items about it: --

a. It's mode. Here is an imperatival mode employed by the Holy Spirit. This means that there are no options. It is a command. Those who disregard commands within the scope of God's grace have difficulty with this verse. It is there and we cannot argue the point. There are no limitations or qualifications. There stands a bold command of God!

b. It's tense. The tense of this verb is present. This means something which is linear in action. It is repetitive. To say that one is filled and that settles it is entirely destroyed by this one grammatical item. This is exactly what does happen. One may be filled with the Spirit and then be unfilled. Filling is not something received once and for all. The residence of the Spirit in the believer is a once for all event, but not His ministry of filling.

c. It's voice. The use of the passive voice is unique. It means that the work of filling is not the action of the subject. A believer does not fill himself. He is filled by an outside Agent. God does the work in Him (cf. Phil. 2:13). It is not that you get more of the Spirit, but the Spirit gets more of you. The word "fill" probably translates the Greek verb all right, but it leaves the theological implications moving in a wrong direction. A better word for this would be "control". To be filled with the Spirit is to be controlled by the Spirit. This points to the Spirit's action and the believer's passiveness in the transaction!

3. IT'S SUGGESTIONS (Intentions).

Note: The filling with the Spirit in the Book of Acts seems to be in connection with power for witness. The emphasis there is on preaching and testifying to the person and work of our Lord Jesus. Here, however, the filling with the Spirit relates to the mundane every day life of the believer. In Acts, the miraculous is on the line. Here moral and ethical items gain dominance. Since Acts is obviously a book of history and points the development of doctrine between the two dispensations of law and grace, it is

obvious that the N.T. believer would direct his attention to the pistles for doctrine. Look at the areas in which the filling with the Spirit is concerned: --

a. Personally vv. 19, 20.

1) Speaking. Here the voice is involved. Three sorts of music are highlighted: psalms which is music sung to an accompaniment. Then comes hymns which are festal songs of praise for a hero. For the believers the matter would concern the Lord Jesus. Finally, there is the word songs which is a generic term. Would to God there were more who had the new song in their hearts unto the Lord (Psa. 40:3).

2) Singing. Whereas the previous verb suggests the idea of communicating with oneself in music which is of a spiritual nature, here there is singing "in the heart" as unto the Lord. The heart notes deep and meaningful musical words. The object of it all is "the Lord." Too much of today's music is not alone fleshly, but it is unto men!

3) Thanking. The word here means "eucharist." It suggests one's being and shows good favour toward someone. Here it points to praising the Lord for "all things" and saying so to the Lord. This is putting Romans 8:28 into action and not just having it as a memory verse!

NOTE: The net gain here is that the filling with the Spirit effects something in one's person. Then it moves out in every widening orbits.

b. Domestically 5:21-6:4.

1) Wives The key thrust for the wives is that they are to be "subject" to their own husbands "in all things." This is their order from the Lord.

2) Husbands They are to "love" their husbands and two specific standards are given: a) as Christ loved the church (v. 25) and b) as they do their own bodies (v. 28). The latter is because they are "one flesh" (v.31).

3) Children The third section of the home concerns the children and they are called to "obey." (6:1) This word means to "put the ear under." Actually, "listening" is "obeying."