

“Under The Influence” - Ephesians 5:18-20 – July 1st, 2018

- The title of today's teaching is “Under The Influence.”

- Perhaps it goes without saying but the passage before us today is one for which there is much debate within the church today.
- I'm hoping that you'll bear with me as I do my best by the Holy Spirit to rightly divide God's word on this controversial matter.

- First, I think it's important that we understand what the Apostle Paul is not saying, which is a Christian should never drink wine.
- Rather, what Paul is saying is that a Christian should never get drunk on wine, because it leads to a wasted life of debauchery.
- I use the word wasted for a couple of reasons chief of which is that the word dissipation carries with it the idea of wasting away.

- Not only is a life wasted away by alcohol, but many lives are taken away by alcohol, and the statistics bear this out each year.
- As I was leaving the Fiftieth State Fair last week, where my daughter had performed, we were handed a card from the NHTSA.
- Each year, nearly 9,967 people die on our roads due to drunk driving, which is equal to about 19 jumbo jets crashing each year.

- I would suggest that the emphasis is not so much on drinking wine, as much as it is on being filled with the Holy Spirit instead.
- This because, Paul is comparing the constantly being filled with wine, as opposed to constantly being filled with the Holy Spirit.
- In the original text, the grammatical sentence structure that Paul uses is that of “be constantly, being filled with the Holy Spirit.

- I'll take it a step further and suggest the point of the passage is be constantly under the influence of the Holy Spirit not alcohol.
- In other words, instead of ever being under the influence of alcohol, we should be under the influence of the Holy Spirit instead.
- Just as someone becomes a different person under the influence of alcohol in a bad way, so too is this true with the Holy Spirit.

- Now this presupposes we're filled with and under the controlling influence of the Holy Spirit having been baptized with the Spirit.
- To be baptized with the Holy Spirit is to have the Holy Spirit come upon (epi) you and fill you to overflowing giving you power.
- There are three Greek pronouns describing the work of the Holy Spirit, the first of which is para/alongside, en/in, and epi/upon.

- While we have done an in-depth study of what the baptism with the Holy Spirit is and is not, I would like to briefly explain this.
- In order to do that I'll draw your attention to a few passages that uses the three Greek pronouns to have a better understanding.
- We'll start with “para,” which means, alongside as a helper. It's where we get words like paramedic, paralegal, and parachute.

John 14:16 - And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor (parakletos) to be with you forever

- The second Greek pronoun is “en,” which means, in or indwelling. The Holy Spirit indwells us when we give our lives to Christ.

John 14:17 - the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you.

- The third Greek pronoun is “epi,” which means, upon. This is the baptism with the Holy Spirit Who comes upon us and fills us.

Acts 1:8 But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

- An illustration of all 3-The pitcher of water is alongside, (para) the glass - The pitcher of water is being poured in, (en) the glass.
- The pitcher of water is being poured upon (epi) the glass to overflowing. An example of this subsequent work is in Acts 8:12-17.

Acts 8:14-17 - 14 When the apostles in Jerusalem heard that Samaria had accepted the word of God, they sent Peter and John to them. 15 When they arrived, they prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit, 16 because the Holy Spirit had not yet come upon any of them; they had simply been baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus. 17 Then Peter and John placed their hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit.

- The reason that I deemed it necessary to go into all this is because it's germane to our understanding of what Paul says next.
- Namely, that of what will be evidence a Christian is filled with and under the controlling influence of the Holy Spirit in their lives.
- First, in verse nineteen notice that Paul says those filled with the Spirit will speak with psalms, hymns and songs from the Spirit.

- Second, in verse 20, he says they'll always give thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.
- Simply put, those filled with the Holy Spirit have a song in their heart, and an attitude of gratitude and thanksgiving to the Lord.
- Perhaps we need look no further as to the reason we have no joy in our Christian lives is because we're filled with the Spirit.

Luke 11:9-13 - 9 "So I say to you: Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. 10 For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened. 11 "Which of you fathers, if your son asks for a fish, will give him a snake instead? 12 Or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion? 13 If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!"