4 Walking by the Spirit…. Gal 5:16-25 and Ephesians 5:15-20

On March 17, of every year we celebrate St. Patrick's Day.
Patrick was the patron Saint of Ireland.
On St. Patrick's Day, we wear green, the bars and restaurants serve green beer, and the rivers in Chicago are dyed green in honor of St. Patrick. He was an evangelist, a preacher, and a teacher.

Legend says Saint Patrick used a shamrock with the three leaves, joined at the stem, as a visual representation to teach the Irish about the Holy Trinity (God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit) existing as one God, three persons, co-equal and co-eternal.

When we think about Walking in the Presence and Power of Jesus, we also need to be conscious of the Holy Trinity, one God in three persons.

One of the reasons we named this series, Walking in the Presence and Power of Jesus, instead of in the power of the Holy Spirit, or in the power of the Father, or in the power of the Trinity, was because I believe it is easier as humans to get our arms around Jesus.

But when we get Jesus, we get the Father and the Holy Spirit as well. We will see this again next week when we talk about what it means to Abide in Christ.

So when we read Psalm 105:4 "Look to the Lord and his strength; seek his face always," it is not a separate thing to walk in the presence and power of Jesus. Or similarly, to walk by the Spirit or be filled with the Spirit.

Notice how Paul describes the Holy Spirit in Galatians 4:6–7…

"Because you are his sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, 'Abba, Father." Galatians

Each of these ideas represents power flowing from God. To seek his face, is not a different concept than walking in the light as he is in the light, or walking in the presence and power of Jesus, or walking by the Spirit. They are all doors to the same room, --intimacy with God and extraordinary power flowing to us!

I. Walk by the Spirit

Today when we examine what it means to Walk By the Spirit, we need to grab a hold of what Paul was trying to teach the church in Galatia (modern day Turkey).
It is here we begin to see most clearly what walking in the Spirit is all about.

The Galatians were in the midst of a potential church split.

- One side holding to what Paul and others previously taught them about the gospel, the Jesus Only Gospel.
- The other side, the Judaizers, promoted a hybrid gospel, --A Jesus 'Plus' selected portions of the Law.

Anytime we get Jesus 'plus,' there should be an alarm that goes off in our heads.
("Danger Will Robinson, Danger!")

In Galatians 3:1-5, Paul levels both barrels at this "Splinter Faction."

"You foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you? Before your very eyes Jesus Christ was clearly portrayed as crucified. I would like to learn just one thing from you: did you receive the Spirit by the works of the law, or by believing what you heard?

Are you so foolish? After beginning by means of the Spirit, are you now trying to finish by means of the flesh? Have you experienced so much in vain – if it really was in vain?

So again I ask, does God give you his Spirit and work miracles among you by the works of the law, or by your believing what you heard?" Galatians

A. The Foolishness of Jesus "Plus"

They were adding Jesus 'Plus' works of the Law.

They wanted to add some legalistic rules like circumcision to their Christian faith.

5:2 "Mark my words! I, Paul, tell you that if you let yourselves be circumcised, Christ will be of no value to you at all."

5:6 "For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision has any value. The only thing that counts is faith expressing itself through love." Galatians

Again, He says to them…

"You were running a good race. Who cut in on you to keep you from obeying the truth? That kind of persuasion does not come from the one who calls you. 'A little yeast works through the whole batch of dough.'" Galatians

These Judaizers were the yeast poisoning the whole church with their extra rules. Jesus 'plus' rules.

There are many in the Christian church today, without the label "Judaizers," but have the same contents inside.

They want Jesus 'Plus' their special teaching, their special author, preacher, teacher…

To walk in the presence and power of Jesus is not an easy road. We have enemies that seek to push us off that path. That seek to distract us, to spin the truth about Jesus and his Presence and Power.

These enemies want us to abandon the Grace of God and live the Christian life under our own human strength. The Bible calls this living by the flesh, not by the Spirit. Following a bunch of human-made rules.

5:13 *you, my brothers and sisters, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the flesh; rather, serve one another in love.*

5:14 *For the entire law is fulfilled in keeping this one command: "Love your neighbor as yourself."*

Now, where does the power to love like that come from?

B. Walk by and Led by the Spirit.

Let's look at what Paul writes in 5:16…

[16] So I say, **walk by the Spirit**, and
(Peripateo: imp pres act)

you will not gratify (fulfill) *the desires of the flesh.*

Live consciously choosing the Holy Spirit to influence your life.
Not the Flesh, or the old you, but "Spirit lead me today!"

[17] For the flesh desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and
the Spirit what is contrary to the flesh.

*They are in conflict with each other, **so that** you are not to do whatever you want.*

*[18] But if you are **led by the Spirit,** you are not under the law.*

*[18] But if you are **led by the Spirit,*** (Ago: ind pres pass) = like a person leading an animal.

*[2] saying to them, "Go to the village ahead of you, and at once you will find a donkey tied there, with her colt by her. Untie them and **bring (ago)** them to me. Matthew 21:2*

*Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, left the Jordan and was **led (ago)** by the Spirit into the wilderness, [2] where for forty days he was tempted by the devil… Luke 4:1*

This is a beautiful picture he is painting. We are to be "Led" by holding his hand.

But Walking by the Spirit, being Led by the Spirit, --the Holy Spirit is going to lead you places that you might not have thought of, to say things you might not have considered before.

How can we tell if we are "Led" by the Spirit or by the Flesh? Or by the bad pizza we had last night!

[19] The acts of the flesh are obvious:

sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery;
[20] idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord,
jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions[21] and envy; drunkenness,

orgies, and the like.

I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God.

C. The Fruit of the Spirit

What is Good Evidence that we are being "Led" by the Spirit?

In a very real sense, being under the influence of the Spirit, there's no breathalyzer test you can take for this, but there is character evidence.

[22] But the fruit of the Spirit is

love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,
[23] gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.

These are qualities the Spirit brings out in us. "Lord, help me to bear more Fruit of the Spirit."

The Spirit produces these in our hearts!

D. Keeping in Step with the Spirit

*[24] Those who belong to Christ Jesus **have crucified** the flesh with its passions and desires.*
(You don't have to live the old way anymore!)

*[25] Since we **live** by the Spirit, **let us keep in step with the Spirit**.*

Since we live by the Spirit. (**Zoe:** ind pres act) or *'Because'* we live by the Spirit,

Then he says: *let us **keep in step** with the Spirit.*

(**Stoixeo:** subj pres act = soldiers or band members, marching in a row, walking orderly side-by-side).

Keeping in step with the Spirit, Keeping in Rhythm to the Spirit… A strong alignment with the Spirit!
To sum up Paul's response to this potential church split he says:

[16] …Walk by the Spirit…
[18] …Led by the Spirit…
[25] …Keep in step with the Spirit.

Actively drawing power from the Spirit. Keeping aligned with the Spirit.

When we do, we can *serve one another in love*. *"Love your neighbor as yourself."*

Experiencing the Spirit's love, joy, and peace flowing through us.

II. A New Command: Be Filled with the Spirit

Now, in addition to these, in Eph 5 Paul now commands us to Be Filled with the Spirit!

Eph 5:18 "Do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, instead be filled with the Spirit."

Paul here, issues a sobering (no pun intended) and eye-opening command to the Church in Ancient Ephesus, a command to *Be Filled with the Spirit.*

To be under the Influence of the Spirit!

The Filling of the Holy Spirit is one of the most significant ways God Empowers US to live purposefully and boldly in the face of adversity and life!

To really get our arms around this command,
we need to back up the truck a few verses in chapter 5…

[15] Be very careful, then, how you live,
not as unwise but as wise,
[16] making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil.

[17] Therefore do not be foolish,
but understand what the Lord's will is.

Now notice v.18…
He gets us to his main point: First, Don't be Unwise, Don't be Foolish, and Don't get Drunk

How are we supposed to actually do that?

If they sold Anti-Stupid pills I would take them! But they don't, so I'll stick with Paul's advice.

He says: Instead, *Be Filled With The Spirit!*

[18] Do not get drunk on wine,
which leads to debauchery.
Instead, be filled with the Spirit,

He starts this verse with an interesting command…

Don't Get Drunk…

[18] Do not get drunk on wine…

Some of you might be thinking…

"He said 'wine.' He didn't say beer or bourbon so I'm good with that!"

What does he mean by *"Do not get drunk with wine?"*

At the heart of drunkenness is surrendering your self-control over to a substance.

Your mind, your convictions, and your values are no longer in the driver seat.
You have surrendered them to another. Which Paul says can lead to big trouble.

Be filled with, be under the influence of the Spirit

So now what is Paul getting at?
What does it mean to be Filled with the Spirit?

Let's look at the word "Filled" first…

The Greek verb for "Filled" is the word "Pleroma" and it is **a present passive imperative**.
The 'passive' meaning here tells us there is another force acting on us and that is the person of the Holy Spirit.

Paul doesn't tell us go be full of the Spirit he says I want you to continually allow yourself to be filled with the Holy Spirit. That's the passive sense of this verb.

This is continuous replenishment, literally "go on being filled"

The new English Bible says *"Let the Holy Spirit fill you."*

The practical implication is that the Christian is to leave his or her life open to be filled constantly and repeatedly by the Divine Spirit of God.

What if the gas tank in your car only held a half a gallon?
You would have to go station to station just to be able to get somewhere, --putting gas in all the time.

We don't get a Giant Holy Spirit Gas Tank.
We have to be *continually filled* with him.

Walking in the Presence and Power of Jesus, requires continual filling of the Spirit.

This is not a one-time occurrence. This is to be our New Normal!

This Greek word for Filled, "Pleroma" is really critical for us to understand.

Let's look first at some examples How the word "Filled" is used elsewhere

Some POSITIVE Examples of Filled:

- In John 12:3 it says *"And the house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume…"*
  It permeated the whole house!
- The Jewish leaders said this about the Apostles, in Acts 5:28 "*you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching…"* **A massive citywide influence!**
- Paul said in 2 Tim 1:4 *"I long to see you so that I may be filled with joy…"*

Some NEGATIVE Examples

- **Jesus said in John 16:6** *"Because I have said these things to you, sorrow has filled your heart"*
- **Acts 5:3 Peter said** *"Ananias, how is it that Satan has so filled your heart"*
  When he lied to the Holy Spirit

Pleroma is a Fully Saturated Influence!

And When we are Filled with the Holy Spirit He brings about the many Positive Effects…

In Acts 4:31 it says

"And when they had prayed, the place where they had gathered together was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak the word of God with boldness."

Stephen's Example: In Acts 6:5 it describes Stephen, a man of great courage as
"A man full of faith and the Holy Spirit"

In Acts 11:24 it says of Barnabus, the encourager: *"for he was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and of faith."* **The Holy Spirit fueled his ability to Encourage Others.**

Acts 13:52 *"And the disciples were continually filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit."*

So How Does this Filling of the Spirit Work for Us Today?

The Sailboat:
When I was a freshman in high school, a couple of buddies and I used to go to one of the housing developments next to where we lived that had a large man-made lake with a beach and boat club.

At the boat club you could rent little sailboats, called Sabots. This is where I first learned how to sail. Now, as freshmen guys can do, we would get ourselves into trouble with those boats. Each of us would get our own boat and we would sail around the bend, out of sight from the boat club.

We would then have our own little naval battles and try to sink each other's boat by sailing up next to each other and shoving the others boat hull down under the water, then get away before they can sink your boat.

Now kids don't try this on your own. We weren't actually successful in sinking any of each other's boats but we did have a lot of fun trying.

The key to sailing a sabot is that you have to position the sail <u>at just the right angle to catch the wind to push your boat forward.</u> If you have it at the wrong angle it starts luffing or fluttering in the wind, and you'll stop dead in the water. You won't go anywhere.

You have to position the sail to gain the maximum force of wind to propel your boat forward.

It's the same with positioning yourself to be filled with the Holy Spirit…

You have to position YOURSELF to catch the Wind of the Spirit!

It's not about you propelling *YOURSELF* forward on your own power.
It's about aligning yourself to catch the wind of the Spirit's Power.

<u>The Downhill Bike Run</u>:

In 2018, Kirsten and I met our oldest son and daughter-in-law, in Moab, Utah to do some mountain biking. One day, Kirsten and Brenna dropped Hunter and I off at the trailhead of the Porcupine Rim Trail. After we said goodbye we headed out on the trail.

Now where we were catching <u>Porcupine Rim Trail,</u> we had to do about a 1200 foot vertical climb over the next 2 miles to reach the crest of the trail.

But then what followed was not only the most unbelievable views of the Colorado River and the red rock formations but we had a 4000 foot elevation drop down to the Colorado River that we got to ride down over the next 15 miles.
It was an amazing ride down! Much more fun than the 1200 foot climb up!

In many ways that ride down is <u>like being filled with the Holy Spirit, carried along by his power</u>. In our case, it was the power of gravity pulling us along and we didn't have to peddle, like on the way up.
But make no mistake, even with a downhill ride it takes a lot of your own effort and energy to hold onto that bike as you're navigating the boulders and the drops in extremely rugged terrain.

Just because we are going downhill doesn't mean there is not work involved.

When we are filled with the Spirit and we experience his power flowing through us, much like the force of gravity pulling us downhill on a bike, we don't remain neutral but have to exert ourselves <u>in partnership with the Holy Spirit.</u>

A. How to be Filled with the Spirit

So How DO We Begin To Allow The Holy Spirit To Fill Us?

How do we get in position for the Spirit to fill our sails?
Are you ready for the formula? 1 2 3!

#1. There is no Formula!

You can't use formula's and incantations with a personal relationship!

The Holy Spirit is a "He" not an "It"!

#2. This is all about Faith & Trust, Not a Transaction…

Where if I do this, then the Spirit does that.

If I go to church, if I read my Bible, If I pray, If I drop a $20 tip in the offering,
THEN the Holy Spirit will fill me. THEN God will answer my prayers…

That's Transactional Faith. Not the Christian Faith of the Bible.

We need Faith and Trust to Believe He will fill us! Because of who He is & Not what we do

#3. This is all about a Relationship! Staying close to the Spirit of God.

It's all about our personal relationship with him! Day by day, moment by moment.

Remember, He is a "person," not a 'Force", He is not a Jedi Knight kind of force.

He, the Holy Spirit, is a person. It's about our friendship with Him.

#4. Believe Prayer Matters

Jesus said: Until now you have not asked for anything in my name.
Ask and you will receive, and your joy will be complete.
--John 16:24

Ray Stedman says "The filling of the Holy Spirit is the momentary taking from him of the resources you need for the situation in which you are. It has nothing to do with an experience, or a feeling or a crisis; it is a quiet drinking again and again of an inner supply of strength."

It is Drinking the Holy Spirit again and again through prayer!
Pray and ask the Holy Spirit to Fill You! This is not one-time, but continually!

RECAP:

1. **There is no Formula.**
2. **This is all about Faith and Trust, not a Transaction!**
3. **This is all about a Relationship.**
4. **Believe Prayer Matters.**

So if we are Spirit-Filled, What Happens?

What is the filling of the Holy Spirit supposed to do through us?

III. The Unmistakable Impact Of Spirit-Filled Living

There are many results from Spirit-Filling, but here in Ephesians <u>he focuses on Worship.</u>

<u>Instead,</u> *Be Filled With The Spirit…*

[19] <u>speaking</u> to one another with psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit.
<u>Sing</u> and <u>make music</u> from your heart to the Lord,
[20] always <u>giving thanks</u> to God the Father for everything,
in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

God desires Spirit-Fueled Worship!

When you and I are filled with the Spirit, worshiping the Lord,
we are fulfilling a colossal piece of why we were created!

You want to know God's will for your life? Then allow the Spirit to fuel your worship!
Not just on Sunday, but everyday!

Notice, A Final Result of Spirit-Filling in v.20 is Gratitude.

[20] always <u>giving thanks</u> to God the Father for everything,
in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

When we are filled with the Spirit We give thanks to God the Father

A Grateful Person, is most often a joyful, happy person!

Holy Spirit inspired gratitude is a massive producer of inward joy!

Spirit-Filled Worship and Spirit-Fueled Gratitude.
Two powerful examples of being Filled with the Holy Spirit.
<u>Walk by, Led by, Keep in Step with, and Be Filled with the Spirit!</u>

As we close this morning: I want to invite you to Align Your Heart to catch the wind of the Spirit, As we worship the Lord in Spirit and in Truth.