

Series on the Whys of Worship – sermon 4 – 8/11/09 am

Why should we sing Psalms, Hymns & Spiritual Songs in Public Worship?

Ephesians 5:18-21

Theme: Christians filled with the Spirit express their heart joy by singing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs.

A. Preliminaries

Paul is writing to a predominantly
Gentile church.

At the beginning of the passage he
gives two commands;

Do not get drunk on wine... (5:18a).

*... Instead be filled with the Spirit.
(5:18c).*

B. Filled with the Holy Spirit— The Command (5:18)

Scripture appears to distinguish between:

- a one-off Baptism by the Spirit, *cf.* 1 Cor. 12:13;
- special fillings of the Spirit, *cf.* Acts 2:1-4; 4:8, 31;
- continually being filled with the Spirit, *cf.* Eph. 5:18.

Christians are commanded to be **continually** filled with the Spirit.

In essence this means being continually stimulated and controlled by the Spirit.

How does this happen?

It happens when Christians:

- do not grieve the Spirit, *cf.* Eph. 4:30;
- do not quench the Spirit, *cf.* 1 Thess. 5:19;
- are found regularly in the Spirit's Word, studying and meditating, *cf.* Col. 3:16.

The Holy Spirit must not be thought
of as a liquid!

To be drunk is to be under the
influence of alcohol.

To be filled with the Spirit is to be
under the influence of the Spirit.

C. Filled with the Holy Spirit—An Expression (5:19a)

The Apostle Paul gives three expressions:

1. singing,
2. thankfulness,
3. mutual submission.

We will focus on the first.

What do the terms *psalms*, *hymns*,
spiritual songs all refer to?

Not the Biblical book, *Psalms*!

Why not?

Context. Paul wrote to a *Gentile* Church.

Scriptures. Spirit-inspired hymns and songs are recorded in both the Old and the New Testaments.

(Ex. 15:1-18; 1 Sam. 2:1-10; Lk. 1:46-55; Lk. 1:67-79; Phil. 2:6-11; 1 Tim. 3:16; Rev. 5:9-14.)

History. Pliny (111 AD), Tertullian (2nd century) and Eusebius (3rd Century) all spoke of Christians singing Psalms other than those in the Old Testament book.

If only those Psalms were sung then there would never be mention of the Name *Jesus* in song!

Psalm: a sacred song sung to the accompaniment of a musical instrument.

Hymn: a song of praise to God or to Christ.

Spiritual Song: a Spirit-inspired lyric.

D. Filled with the Holy Spirit— The Well-Spring (5:19b)

The well-spring is the heart.

We must *understand* what we sing
but our *emotions* should also be
affected.

E. Filled with the Holy Spirit— The Focus (5:19b)

The focus is the Lord Jesus Christ!

The Spirit always hides behind the
Saviour.

Conclusion

May God give us grace, and may we execute our responsibility to be continually filled (influenced by) the Holy Spirit.