

**Living In Resurrection Power  
(Week 9)  
Ephesians 5:15-21  
“Staying Power”**

**Introduction**

**“Get up, sleeper, and rise up from the dead, and Christ will shine on you. Pay careful attention, then, to how you live — not as unwise people but as wise — making the most of the time, because the days are evil. So don’t be foolish, but understand what The LORD’S will is.”** **Ephesians 5:14b-17**

In the book of *Ephesians*, we are taught just how to live in resurrection power, the very same power that rose Christ from the dead that is living within each and every believer. It is the power of The Holy Spirit, and in order for us to live in power, we must be fully surrendered to His will. To try and live the Christian life in our own flesh will not only be impossible, but it will cause us to burn out and fall into despair and frustration. We are commanded to imitate Christ (**Ephesians 5:1**). But, the life of Christ cannot be imitated, without the Spirit’s enabling. After telling the Ephesians that they are to live as children of light, and in order to do so, they must be “raised from darkness to light” (**vs. 6-14**), Paul reminds them that the children of light must be careful in how they conduct themselves for they are to truly be “the light of the world” (**Matthew 5:14**).

As we have seen in this study, the child of God has absolutely nothing in common with the children of this world. Those of this world are consumed with self, which in turn causes them to do whatever they deem necessary to gratify self. Some may even claim to believe in God, but it does not deter them from living in such a manner that glorifies self as god. The children of this world are themselves darkness, with no possible way of comprehending the spiritual. Every sin that has ever been committed in this darkened world was done in the spirit of this self-centered mentality.

**“For though they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God or show gratitude. Instead, their thinking became worthless, and their senseless hearts were darkened. Claiming to be wise, they became fools and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man, birds, four footed animals and reptiles.”**  
**Romans 1:21-23**

For you see, all idolatry is rooted in selfishness, when the heart of man denies the One True God, for a creation that is more to his own liking. The original sin in the Garden of Eden was due to the fact that Adam and Eve were ungrateful for all that they had been given and longed for more. God had graciously placed them in an absolute paradise, and yet, they coveted all the more! It is this selfish nature of man that not only led to his downfall, but to his living in a perpetual state of darkness, and still God longed to forgive and provide grace:

**“But God, Who is rich in mercy, because of His great love that He had for us, made us alive with Christ even though we were dead in trespasses. You are saved by GRACE!”** **Ephesians 2:4-5**

This is the great message of the gospel, that even while we were yet sinners, being held captive by our own selfish desires, Christ died to set us free (**Romans 5:8**)! And, as free children of God, we are commanded to live in such a way that others will see the love of Christ in us. To be a Christian is to walk in the light of Christ. Being a child of God is Being Shrewd, Being Spirit Filled, and Being Submissive to Christ and to one another. It isn’t just a “belief system”. It is a life changing, spiritual awakening that allows us to live in the light of God’s everlasting truth.

## **Being Shrewd**

***“Pay careful attention, then, to how you live — not as unwise people but as wise — making the most of the time, because the days are evil. So don’t be foolish, but understand what The LORD’S will is.”*** ***Ephesians 5:15-17***

When Sandi and I lived in Guatemala, we were introduced to a completely different type of “home security system”! The folks down there, in order to keep would-be thieves at bay, build walls of concrete block around their homes. On top of these walls, they pour a concrete “cap” and while the cement is still wet, they place hundreds of shards of broken glass in the concrete. These razor sharp “detractors” are strategically placed in the concrete so that when it dries it would be nearly impossible to climb across the wall without being sliced to ribbons! Pretty effective deterrent against thievery wouldn’t you agree?

Now, one of the most interesting sights you will ever see is to observe a cat as he walks along the top of these glass encrusted walls! The cat will carefully place his paws, one at a time ever so slowly between the multiple shards of glass as he walks atop the wall. By so doing, the wary cat is able to maneuver itself through the myriad of razor sharp obstacles that would deter it from its final destination. It is with this same kind of care, that the believer is to walk through this sinful old world. The perils and pitfalls are everywhere, and yet, we are to walk through them with our eyes wide open and our feet ever cautious of making a misstep that could cost us our witness. Satan would love to do each of us irreparable harm as we walk through this life, but The Spirit of God will enable us to “be careful how we live” (walk circumspectly in the KJV), so that we will not become entangled in the devils traps carefully laid in order to ensnare us.

Not only are we to be shrewd in how we conduct ourselves, constantly on our guard to avoid Satan’s traps, but we are to “make the most of our time, because the days are evil”. The Greek word that Paul uses here, translated *“Make the most of”* in the CSB, is actually a word meaning *“redeem or buy back”*. The thought being conveyed here is to use our time wisely, “buying” back any that could be wasted on things that lead to evil. For example, what if we “bought back” the time that we spent in front of the television and spent it in The Word of God? What if we were to “buy back” the time we spend on entertaining ourselves and used it to serve others instead? Would we all agree that our lives would be better spent in pursuit of spiritual things rather than our own selfish pursuits? We should be shrewd in just how we spend the bulk of our time.

It is a matter of simple truth, that our days on this earth are limited. As a pastor, I have spent a great deal of my time by the hospital beds of those who lay dying. I have never heard a single person say “I wish I had spent more time at the office.” or “I wish I had made more money.” What I do often hear are the regrets of those who wish they had done more in the service of The LORD. Sadly, a deathbed is not a suitable place to make alterations in the spending of ones lifetime. These decisions can only be made as the day lies before us. Sunsets always come at the end, when its too late to get any more work done. So examine the way you are living. Be Shrewd in how you live, and even shrewder in how you spend your time, for the days are filled with evil. Don’t be foolish.

*The Bible* uses the term “fool” for someone who lives like there is no God:

***“The fool says in his heart, ‘There is no God.’ They are corrupt; they do vile deeds. There is no one who does good. The LORD looks down from heaven on the human race to see if there is one who is wise, one who seeks God.”*** ***Psalms 14:1-2***

Even though many claim to believe in God, they live their lives as if there is no God. You may not be an atheist, but you can still live like one, if you live only to please yourself! Be shrewd in how you live, redeeming the time for the spiritual, rather than to be spent on sensual pleasures. Live like you believe in God! After all, nothing else really matters when the day is done and the sun sets on your life. Time is short, and once its gone... then, that’s that.

**Being Spirit Filled**

***“And don’t get drunk with wine, which leads to reckless living, but be filled by The Spirit: Speaking to one another in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, singing and making music with your heart to The LORD, giving thanks always for everything to God The Father in the Name of our LORD Jesus Christ...”*** **Ephesians 5:18-20a**

The Spirit of God often gives us stark contrasts in The Word in order for us to have clear illustrations of the difference between worldliness and Godliness. Here, being intoxicated with wine is juxtaposed against being intoxicated with The Spirit. The first leads to reckless abandon, while the latter leads to a joyous way of living. The drunk may have a party on Saturday night, but it leads to a hangover on Sunday morning. There is no real comparison between the temporal “joys” of drunken revelry and the lasting joy that is within the Spirit Filled child of God.

The Greek wording translated *“but be filled”* is actually a reference to being continuously filled, meaning that the Apostle is not speaking here of a “once and for all” experience, but rather an ongoing act of being filled over and over again. This leads some to confusion, for they do not fully comprehend the difference between being “indwelt” by The Spirit and being “Filled” by The Spirit. Please allow me to explain.

When you repented of your sins and surrendered your life to Christ you were “baptized in The Spirit”:

***“For we were all baptized by one Spirit into the body...”*** **1 Corinthians 12:13a**

You see, upon becoming a believer, when we are adopted by God as His own through the blood of Christ, we become a part of The Body of Christ (the Church). At that very instant, The Spirit of God enters into us and “indwells” each of us permanently. We do not receive Him in pieces or in shifts, but rather, we have all of the Holy Spirit living within us permanently. Nothing can ever change that. It is a once-and-for-all occurrence. There are, however, several “fillings of The Spirit”.

To be filled by the Spirit is an entirely different matter than being indwelt by The Spirit. As we have stated previously in this study, we become filled by The Spirit by yielding every portion of our lives over to His control, by giving Him full access to “every room of our house”, as it were. This is something that every believer must continuously make the effort to do in every aspect of his Christian walk. This is what it means to “walk circumspectly (wisely)”. We are constantly evaluating our lives while being sure that we are leaving everything to The Spirit for His control. We do this by staying in God’s Word and giving ourselves over to its directives. As we examine ourselves in the light of God’s truth, we see by studying His Word where we fall short of God’s perfect standards. We agree with God, and we ask for His forgiveness and wisdom so that we can fully trust and obey His commands. In so doing, we are continuously yielding ourselves over to The Spirit’s control, thereby, being “filled” by Him. The best way that I have heard this described is this: When we are born again, we become part of the body **of Christ**, but when we are Spirit filled, we are giving our body **over to Christ**. While being indwelt by The Spirit is a once and for all occurrence, surrendering ourselves to Him and being filled by Him should be our daily practice, being ever mindful that the devil has placed many obstacles in our path that would cause us to fall back into our old selfish ways.

Being filled with The Spirit will make us joyful. No matter our external circumstances, we will have joy on the inside, even in the midst of extreme turmoil all around us. Paul tells the Ephesians that if they are filled with The Spirit, it will lead to joyful singing, and thanksgiving.

***“...speaking to one another in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, singing and making music with your heart to The LORD, giving thanks always for everything to God The Father in the name of our LORD Jesus Christ...”*** **Ephesians 5:19-20**

The problem with many “Christians” today is that they often attempt to obey these two verses apart from yielding themselves over to The Spirit **first**. If you try to go around singing praises to God and being thankful in your flesh, my friends, every true believer will see it for exactly what it is; a contrived, and counterfeit version of the genuine article.

I once had a good friend who constantly hounded me to help him become a worship leader in the church. Thinking that I was doing The LORD'S work by encouraging him, I gave him a worship leader position. To my dismay, it was an absolute disaster! Oh, he had more than enough talent, as well as, ability. But, when he stood before the congregation, he came off as disingenuous and received very little in the way of a spiritual response from the people. This grim reality, rather than causing the young man to fall on his knees in humility, simply angered and frustrated him all the more. For you see, talented as he was, he was not Spirit filled, and that my friends is something that a worship leader must be in order to bring genuine worship to the body. Simply put, you cannot "fake it till you make it", when dealing with spiritual things my friends. If you want to have real and lasting results, or as Jesus put it, **"bear fruit that lasts" (John 15)**, then you had better be abiding in Christ. Being Spirit filled will lead us to be filled with sincere praise and thanksgiving, and our worship will then, and only then, draw others to Christ.

**"He put a new song in my mouth, a hymn of praise to our God. Many will see it and fear, and they will trust in The LORD."** **Psalms 40:3**

Did you catch that? **HE** put a new song in my mouth. You know what the church needs a lot more of (and a lot less of for that matter)? We need a lot less entertainment, and a lot more psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs being sung and played from regular folks, who are being filled with the Spirit of The Living God!

### **Being Submissive**

**"...submitting to one another in the fear of Christ."**

**Ephesians 5:21**

In this last part of the verse, Paul is beginning his closing argument for the way that all Christians should live... in reverent submission to Christ, and to one another. He will go on to speak of husbands and wives, parents and children, and even servants and masters. In every relationship, the child of God, who is walking in the light, will be a servant to those around them. Eradicated from every fiber of our being should be the need to glorify and elevate "self". Instead, we should be living to lift others up. We are motivated by the love of Christ, longing to see God's best for those around us, if we are genuinely being filled with The Spirit of God.

Christ Himself gave us the perfect example of this at The LORD'S supper. His disciples had been arguing among themselves as to whom among them was the most spiritual and of the highest worth. Jesus, The Only Begotten Son of God, arose from the table and took a water basin and towel and began to wash their feet! Here was The Alpha and The Omega, The First and The Last, The Everlasting God, humbling Himself in their midst and washing their dirty feet! He could have scolded them for their incredible selfishness in the face of His soon coming torture and death. He could have reminded them that not a single one of them was worthy to even untie His sandals, and yet, He humbled Himself to perform a task that had been reserved only for slaves to perform. He served them, because He genuinely loved them. In spite of their flaws, in spite of their ignorant pride, in spite of every argument to the contrary you could possibly imagine... He loved. That, my friends, is the very essence of submission. To lower oneself... to lift others up. We need look no further than to Christ Who demonstrated what true love is:

**"No one has greater love than this: to lay down His life for His friends."** **John 15:13**

Many these days would attempt to "water down" these truths of Christianity to make it more palatable to the masses. However, the standard, for the true saints of God, has never changed. This is the reason that Christ Himself warned us that the way is narrow, and few there be that find it (**Matthew 7:14**). The child of God lives by a higher calling and can only be what God has commanded by Being Shrewd, Being Spirit Filled, and Being Submissive. In our own flesh, we can never hope to live in such selflessness, but we have been empowered to do so, **BY THE SPIRIT**. The same power that rose Jesus from the dead... lives within us and will be with us every step of the way.

And let all those empowered by The Spirit say... TRUTH!!!