

# Ephesians 5 (Part 2): 3-21 • Living as Children of the Light

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Ephesians chapter 5. Open your Bible there, please, Ephesians chapter 5. When we were last in Ephesians, which already feels like a long time ago, we covered just the first 2 verses of the chapter. And those verses said,

*“<sup>1</sup> Therefore be imitators of God as beloved children. <sup>2</sup> And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.” (ESV)*

We continue today now with verses 3 and following. It says,

*“<sup>3</sup> But sexual immorality and all impurity or covetousness must not even be named among you, as is proper among saints. <sup>4</sup> Let there be no filthiness nor foolish talk nor crude joking, which are out of place, but instead let there be thanksgiving. <sup>5</sup> For you may be sure of this, that everyone who is sexually immoral or impure, or who is covetous (that is, an idolater), has no inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. <sup>6</sup> Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience.*

*<sup>7</sup> Therefore do not become partners with them; <sup>8</sup> for at one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light <sup>9</sup> (for the fruit of light is found in all that is good and right and true), <sup>10</sup> and try to discern what is pleasing to the Lord. <sup>11</sup> Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them. <sup>12</sup> For it is shameful even to speak of the things that they do in secret. <sup>13</sup> But when anything is exposed by the light, it becomes visible, <sup>14</sup> for anything that becomes visible is light. Therefore it says,*

*“Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you.”*

*<sup>15</sup> Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, <sup>16</sup> making the best use of the time, because the days are evil. <sup>17</sup> Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. <sup>18</sup> And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit, <sup>19</sup> addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord*

*with your heart, <sup>20</sup> giving thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, <sup>21</sup> submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ.” (ESV)*

Let's stop there, and let's pray.

Lord, as always, we completely depend upon you to open our hearts to what we need to hear today out of these verses. And Lord, these are some hard verses. And as passages go, probably not the most devotional in content, but Lord, these are the instructions you've given to your body, and we need to hear them.

We need to hear what these verses are saying and how you are speaking through them, Lord, to our lives, and I pray that we would be open to hear even a word of warning, maybe even a word of rebuke, if necessary, and that we would apply these things to our lives and accept what they have to say to us.

We thank you, Father, for your word, and we ask that you would cause it to touch each and every heart. We ask it in Jesus' precious name, amen.

I recently started reading another book by one of my favorite authors, A.W. Tozer. And the book that I started is called, Faith Beyond Reason. And I've actually put a couple of quotes of it already on my Facebook page.

And it's a hard-hitting book. I mean, it's like, you can tell as you read it that the body of Christ in his day, and which is very similar to today, was going through a period of time where it was— they were talking about coming to Christ in very simple sort of ways without really telling people what is required of their lives.

Let me explain what I mean by that. We talk to people about accepting Jesus Christ as their Savior, and that's all good and fine. But many times we create this easy believability sort of an idea where all you have to do is just believe in Jesus, and that's true. That's all you have to do to be saved.

The salvation that is offered to us through Jesus Christ is free. It is a gift of God, it's wonderful, and there's nothing we have to do to earn it. We get that. Beyond that, however, to convey or to infer to people that walking with Jesus has no cost is a misnomer. That is incorrect.

The fact of the matter is Jesus had some very strong things to say to people who wanted to be followers of his. It almost sounds in the Gospels like He was even trying to discourage people from following Him. But He would say things to the

people that were very hard to hear. Very hard like—things like, unless you love me more than father, mother, sister, brother family, unless you love me more, you're not worthy of being mine, things like that. (Matthew 10:37)

Things that we read, and we cock our head, and we're like, wow that's hard, that's challenging. In other words, the life of Christ, the life that we're called to, this life of living for Christ, is a challenging life.

It comes with great sacrifices, huge challenges as it relates to the things that many times we have to give up in order to truly live for Him. And this whole idea that I can be a Christian called by the name of Christ and just live like the world is a fallacy.

That brings us here to Ephesians chapter 5, in this particular section about where Paul is talking about this new life that we have. And the thing about Tozer's book that has really been an encouragement to me, and it reminds me that we are not only saved from, but we are saved to. Right?

We are saved from the penalty of our sin, but we are also saved to a life of obedience, a life that is lived to honor the Lord. And that's what Paul is talking about really here in the second half of the Book of Ephesians. We've been in the second half for some time now.

Ephesians is essentially divided into two halves. Chapters 1 through 3, where Paul talks about all that we are and have in Christ, the wonderful blessings that are ours in Him.

And then the latter 3 chapters of Ephesians really talk about walking that out, taking all that we have and putting it into practice. And this is where the rubber meets the road. And that's why it's challenging.

Because you see, the apostle Paul had an expectation. And I think we should too. But he had an expectation that those who were called by the name of Jesus were going to live and walk in a manner that is consistent with that calling. You with me? Let me say that again.

The apostle Paul had an expectation that those who are called to Jesus Christ, that they would live in a manner that is consistent with that calling. Let me show you another passage on the screen where he outlines this, and it was an earlier chapter of Ephesians. He said,

### **Ephesians 4:1 (ESV)**

*I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called,*

*I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called,*

And when we covered that chapter and verse, we talked about what that meant. But that particular single verse I bring out once again because it becomes a theme, if you will, of really the last half of Ephesians, chapters 4, 5 and 6. Walking, living in a manner that is worthy of the calling which we have received.

And I want to remind you that the first two verses of the chapter, which we read and dealt with last time we were here at Ephesians, told you and I to imitate God. We talked about what that meant. And it said that we are to imitate His love, which He gives sacrificially. And we're told to do the same, to love, to serve, sacrificially, and so forth.

And of course, whenever you're doing something sacrificially, that means I'm living for somebody else, not for myself. And that takes us out of our natural comfort zone because our flesh wants to live for itself. It wants to feed itself. It wants to satisfy itself and so forth. And you and I are called to live not for self, but for God.

Wow, that's easy to say. I mean, it's rolling off my tongue. But to live it out is a completely different thing altogether. And now, as we get into verses 3 and following, Paul begins with some very difficult words that warn us about doing the opposite of living for the Lord, which is living for self.

And you'll notice that he begins to describe the fruit of living for self. He says in verse 3, *“But sexual immorality and all impurity or covetousness must not even be named among you, as is proper among saints.”* And he begins by talking about things like sexual immorality, which covers a wide range of sins, including physical relations outside of marriage, adultery, pornography, and so forth.

In fact, this word in the Greek that we translate as sexual immorality is the word, *pornea*. And it speaks of a whole host of missing the mark as it relates to sex which, by the way, God created. But he created it to function within the creative order of marriage. We've taken it and we've just made it something that is of our own personal gratification and pleasure.

And we've missed the mark, and so it has become a sinful lifestyle for the world in which we live, and so forth. And Paul says, that sort of thing should not be among you, should not even be named among you. He talks about impurity, that's an interesting word, which is another broad word describing things, again, where we have violated God's order.

Impure basically means polluted. So it means, when you talk about impurity, you're talking about something that started good and we messed it up. Because we added the impurities by using things, again, like sex, for our own personal self-gratification outside of the guidelines for which God created it.

We just decided we were going to possess it. It's mine. I'm going to have it. I'm going to enjoy it. It's going to be my source of pleasure. And we have caused it to become impure. And Paul says all such impurity should not even be named among you.

And of course, remember Paul is writing this letter to the Ephesians, who are living in the center of great pagan idolatry, much like we're living around here in the United States of America today. We may not have temples dedicated to pagan idols like they did in Ephesus but paganism is alive and well.

Idolatry is alive and well. Idolatry is anything we put above God, anything we idolize. I love that song, by the way, that we sang today that we haven't sung it for quite some time about not having idols. I thought, wow, how perfect that is.

And you'll notice that finally Paul talks about covetousness, which your Bible may translate as greed. He says even greed shouldn't even be named among you. I like greed, frankly, better than covetousness because I don't use the word covetousness on a regular basis, unless I'm joking, but I do use greed fairly often. It's a word we're familiar with. Let me show you the definition on the screen here.

**(def) greed (grēd)**

noun

intense and selfish desire for something, especially wealth or power.

Greed is essentially an intense and selfish desire for something usually related to wealth or power. Something that I want desperately.

Sexual immorality, impurity, greed—these dark passions of the flesh—Paul says don't even name them among you. What does he mean by that? I actually

looked that up in my Greek dictionary. The word in Greek literally means that these things shouldn't be given a name among believers.

And Paul is basically saying that they shouldn't even be spoken. And yet, they are. We talk about them a lot. And not only do we talk about them a lot, we watch them. We observe them in movies, read about them in books and magazines, and so forth. And worst of all, too often, there are many of us as believers who fall into these things—these very things that we are told not to even speak of. We fall headlong into them. But these are sins of action, or sins of deed, if you will.

As Paul goes on, verse 4, he begins to speak of sins of word or sins of the mouth. Look what he says here in verse 4: “*Let there be no filthiness nor foolish talk* (the Greek literally means stupid words. How do you like that?) *nor crude joking...*” I think we all know what that is; don't need to explain that. Which he says, are out of place among believers, instead he says, there ought to be thanksgiving.

He says when it comes to inappropriate language, those things don't fit when we get together as the body of Christ. Why don't they fit? Well, they're not consistent with the character of God. His character, in us—the Spirit, His Spirit who resides within us—is not encouraging us to use filthy language, crude joking, or something like that, or inappropriate words. His Spirit within us is encouraging us to instead build one another up with words of thanksgiving and so forth.

And since we're talking about inappropriate language, allow me to show you another passage from Philippians on the screen. Paul says,

**Philippians 2:14 (NIV)**

*Do everything without complaining or arguing,*

*Do everything without complaining or arguing,*

There's another misuse of our words—complaining, bickering with one another. They're out of place. They're out of place for us. Paul says, knock it off. Don't do it. Don't live that way, right? What does fit with God's character? Well, thanksgiving. And Paul's going to repeat that in just a little bit.

Can you imagine? Can you imagine what the body of Christ would be like if we followed these verses? Wow, what a treat that would be—to hang out with a bunch of people who really watch their words and whose hearts long to speak

words of encouragement and thanksgiving to one another, you know? Anyway, we'll talk more about thanksgiving in just a little bit.

And then Paul gives a solemn warning in verses 5 and 6: *“For you may be sure of this, that everyone who is sexually immoral or impure, or who is covetous (and he basically says, that is the same thing as idolatry), has no inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. <sup>6</sup> Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things (in other words, these behaviors), the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience.”*

Now, these are a couple of really just in-your-face verses. But I want us to be careful to understand what the Apostle Paul is saying in these two verses. He is explaining why you and I, as children of God, should avoid these kinds of behaviors. And the reason is, well, there's actually several, but they are inconsistent with God's character. They're the kind of lifestyle that is lived by those who have rejected God and all that He is. And thirdly, because of these things, the wrath of God is coming. So there you go.

But I want to be careful to explain to you what Paul is not saying by this passage. He is not saying that if you are a believer and if you ever fall into one of these areas that is proof positive that you have no inheritance in the kingdom of God and you are under God's wrath. He's not saying that.

But I bring that out because I have often heard this passage read and applied that way. If any, if you fall into any of these areas, well, that shows right there, you have no inheritance with the saints and the wrath of God is upon you and so on and so on and so on.

Let me just explain something very carefully here and I'm not in any way justifying sin, please understand. But there are two kinds of people in this world.

First, there are unbelievers, I'm talking about those who have rejected Christ, His work on the cross and so forth. And they are slaves, according to the Bible, of their flesh and they live a life habitually marked by the things that Paul describes in these verses. Their life is marked with these things.

The other people in this world are those who have come to Christ, who have found forgiveness for their sins. They've received the indwelling presence of God's Holy Spirit. And this second group of people have been set free from their slavery to the flesh, and because of that, their lives are no longer habitually marked by the kind of sinful behavior Paul is describing here.

But they may and even sometimes do fail in some of these areas. Does it mean they're not saved? Doesn't mean they're not going to heaven. Doesn't mean they're not a child of God. It just means they're human. And they fail from time to time. But what marks the real difference for that second group of people is that when they do fail, they are grieved by their failure.

They hate the idea of falling into sin, and they turn to the one who saved them out of their sinful lifestyle. They cry out to Him to cleanse them and He does just that. And then they pray that God would strengthen them so that they can say no to such temptations in the future. That's the difference. It's very important that we see that. Because otherwise, you're going to read passages like this and walk away condemned.

And believe me, there are plenty of people who are willing to agree with you in that condemnation. And they're essentially going to say to you, if you fall in any of these areas, you have just proven the point that you are not a child of God, you are not destined for heaven, and you are under the wrath of God.

Well, I take issue with that, as you obviously can see. Because I believe that even though we are saved and even though God has done a great work in our hearts, we still face challenges and temptations of many kinds. And I'm sad to say that occasionally we fall to those temptations. And we begin to walk in some of the very same things that this world wallows in.

But again, our response is very different from theirs. I see in the hearts of God's people a broken-heartedness, a brokenness when they fall into that kind of sin. They're devastated. They wonder how in the world they could have let their Savior down. They hate it. They hate it with a passion, and they want nothing more but to be cleansed and to start over again, new and afresh. The wonderful thing about our God is He gives them that chance every single time and enables them to walk uprightly.

And that's why Paul says in verse 7 here, don't be partners with them, speaking of unbelievers. We're not going to walk that way because we've been cleansed. We've been washed. We've been renewed from that kind of a lifestyle and so forth. Don't walk as they walk, he's saying.

Verse 8, for look at this: “...*at one time, you were darkness...*” That was your m.o., that was your lifestyle. You lived in that in a perpetual sort of a way. But look at what he says now at the end of here in verse 8: “...*but now you are light in the Lord.* (What's his exhortation?) *Walk as children of light* (and he says),



*(for the fruit of light is found in all that is good and right and true)...*” So walk it out. You're now a child of the light.

Do you understand, Christians, that if walking in the light was just this perfectly automatic thing in our lives, if we got saved and we just naturally always walked in the light, Paul wouldn't even have to exhort us here, saying, walk in the light. We would already be doing it.

But he knows that we fail. He knows that there are temptations coming in from every side. He knows that there's an enemy of our souls who's constantly trying to trip us up. He knows the weakness of our flesh. He knows, he knows, he knows, he understands. And so the exhortation to you and I is, okay, you are a child of the light. I know you just got out of the darkness. But you're still a child of the light. Now walk it out. Walk out that reality of who you are in Christ Jesus.

He says you're going to see that fruit. It's found in all that is good and right and true good means morally excellent. Right means upright in all of your dealings with God and man. And true means no deception, no lies, genuine. That's the fruit of the light that we walk in.

Look at verse 10, he goes on: “...*and try to discern* (that means to find out) *what is pleasing to the Lord.*” That idea of discerning, it literally is a verb that has to do with the testing of metals. And it means to discover by examination. So discover by examination what is pleasing to the Lord.

He says, as children of light, we should be constantly trying to find out what God's will is related to a particular action or activity that we're doing in our lives. We want to make sure the way I'm living is pleasing in His sight. Lord, I want to be pleasing. May my life, may my actions, may my words be pleasing in Your sight.

And then Paul repeats the exhortation in verse 11. Look what he says there, “*Take no part* (and that of course just means have nothing to do with) *the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them.*” What does that mean? You're instead supposed to expose darkness.

Well, I want you to remember that you are a child of the light, that's what he called you. We are children of the light. That means that when you and I live for Christ, when we live differently, when we live differently from the world, which is what we're called to do, we're going to naturally expose the darkness.

Because as children of the light, when you reflect the light well, good grief, you guys understand this. What happens when you walk into a dark room and you turn on the light? It isn't dark anymore. It dispels the darkness. That's what light does so you are a child of the light, so live it out. He's saying, walk it out, and in so doing, you will expose darkness. You're not here to be involved in darkness, to wallow in darkness, you're here to expose it by living the light, by shining the light that is Christ in you.

He says in verse 12, *“For it is shameful even to speak of the things they do in secret (meaning in the dark). But (he says in verse 13) when anything is exposed by the light (what happens?), it becomes visible, for anything that becomes visible is light. Therefore it says, “Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you.”*” Exposing the darkness happens as we live out the light that we are.

Do you remember what Jesus said about being the light and just letting the light shine? Let me show you this on the screen from Matthew chapter 5. He said to you and I,

**Matthew 5:14-16 (ESV)**

*“You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.”*

*“You are the light of the world. (He says, it's kind of like) A city set on a hill (it's impossible for it to) cannot be hidden. Nor do people light a lamp and (then immediately) put it under a basket, but (rather they put it) on a stand, (so it can give) and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.”*

This is what Jesus told you and I about our light. Let it shine. So what is that going to do as you let it shine? It's going to expose darkness, isn't it? Naturally. It's going to expose darkness.

Well, there's another side to this equation, though, of shining the light in the darkness. Remember, Jesus came as the best light. The best possible example of light. How did the world treat Him? That's probably the way they're going to treat us, too. Check this out, from John chapter 3:

**John 3:19-20 (NIV-1984)**

*This is the verdict: Light has come into the world, but men loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil. Everyone who does evil hates the light, and will not come into the light for fear that his deeds will be exposed.*

*This is the verdict: (he writes) Light has come into the world, but men loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil. (And) everyone who does evil hates the light, and will not come into the light for fear that his deeds will be exposed.*

So this is the other side of that same coin. I could sit here all day long just say, shine your light, shine your light, shine your light.

We used to sing that as kids, this little light of mine. Do you guys do that when you're a kid? I'm going to let it shine. And won't let Satan blow it out. I'm going to let it shine. You guys do remember that, right? Okay. I swear I didn't make it up.

And I could sit and talk about that all day long, but the fact of the matter is the Bible also tells us the world hates it. The world hates it, and it's going to hate you for shining it. So that's the reality of the situation. We're called to live this Christian life, which is a shining of the light of Christ, but there are a lot of people that aren't going to like it, but you know what? We're told to shine it nonetheless. Come what may. Life could get hard for you, but you are to shine nonetheless.

He goes on, verse 15: *“Look carefully then (which just means be careful how you walk), not as unwise but as wise,<sup>16</sup> making the best use of the time (the NIV says, making the most of every opportunity), because the days are evil.”*

So Paul tells us to be wise about how we live and to make the best use of our time understanding the days. And the idea behind making the best use of our time is like a businessman who is making good decisions or good investments. Do you understand that's what you're doing? You're making good investments that will have a return later on.

So he says you only have so much time in this life. And if you're young you might feel like you have all the time in the world, but you don't. And there's only so much time and so Paul says make the most of what you have. In other words, so that you have the best return so that you can make the most of every opportunity that the Lord gives you.

Verse 17: *“Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is.”* This is so important. This is so important in this world. You and I are constantly being told particularly by the young people but even those of us who are older we’re constantly hearing their message to do what you want to do, do what your heart wants to do, follow your heart and all these other sorts of messages.

And Paul says that you and I as believers in Christ are to do with the Lord wants us to do. That’s a different message isn’t than follow your heart? The message to you and I is to follow the Lord. And I’m telling you right now, right here and right now, following the Lord is not always fun nor is it always easy, and many times it involves great sacrifices that you, and I flat-out don’t want to make, and will even argue with God about it. I don’t want to do that. I don’t want to go there. I don’t want to give that up. And our flesh is going to fight hard.

But Paul says that’s foolish. He says, don’t be foolish but understand the will of the Lord. And I think most of you, if not all of you know that understanding the will of the Lord comes from a good knowledge of his word, amen. Knowing His Word that’s why we study through the scriptures.

Finally he says, verse 18, *“And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery...”* I don’t use debauchery as a regular word. It basically means living for sensual pleasure just living to meet my sensual needs. He says, don’t get drunk with wine, instead he says, *“...be filled with the Spirit..”* So what he’s kind of saying is don’t be filled with wine but be filled with the Spirit.

And then begins to talk about the life of the Spirit and that characterizes it: *“...<sup>19</sup> addressing one another in Psalms, hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with your heart, <sup>20</sup> giving thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ...”*

I want you just to see this for just a moment here, he says, don’t be filled with wine instead be filled with the Spirit. Now some of you are thinking this, you’re thinking, okay, be filled with the Spirit. Okay, I guess when I came to Christ and I accepted Him as Savior, I received His Spirit to live inside of me, so I’m, I guess I’m filled with the Spirit. That’s not what Paul is saying. And you need to understand that. You’re right and you’re wrong in the sense that you’re right that when you came to Christ, yes, you received the indwelling Holy Spirit into your life to take up residence and so forth.

But when Paul says to you and I in the Scripture, be filled with the Spirit, he’s not talking about getting saved all over again. He’s talking about a different

function of the Holy Spirit in our lives. Because the indwelling of the Spirit and the filling of the Spirit are two different works of the Spirit. And the reason we know this is because we see in the scripture that when someone gets saved, they receive the Holy Spirit as a once for all event.

You do not receive the Spirit for salvation 2, 3, 10, or 20 times. It's once. You are born again, regenerated, made a child of God when the Spirit comes to indwell you.

But what we see, particularly in the Book of Acts, is that the disciples were filled with the Holy Spirit repeatedly. And the Greek language makes it sound like this is a new thing. They, and it will say, and Paul, filled with the Holy Spirit, said da, da, da. Or, and Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, did this. And it speaks of a work going on at that time. This filling of the Holy Spirit. So we're filled repeatedly. Okay? That's what Paul is telling you and I to do.

Now that you're saved, now that the Spirit lives within you, now be filled repeatedly. You say, well, I don't get that, pastor Paul. Why would we have to be filled repeatedly? Did I leak? I mean, why do I need to keep getting filled with the Holy Spirit? Because you have to understand the purpose of being filled with the Holy Spirit. Again, receiving the Holy Spirit for indwelling is for salvation. Being filled with the Holy Spirit is for empowering. It's a different function.

When, and Jesus talked about this in Acts chapter 1, when He told the disciples, don't run off, stay in Jerusalem, because you're about to receive this promise that we made of the coming Holy Spirit. And Jesus referred to it as the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Here's what he said about it, and you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you, okay? (Acts 1:8) He didn't say, and you will be saved.

Remember, they'd already gotten saved on the Resurrection night, when Jesus breathed on them and said, "*Receive the Holy Spirit.*" (John 20:22) They had already become children of God. They were saved, born again, on their way to Heaven. But Jesus said, there's something else you need, and it's power. You need power. Power to live this life. Power to serve me. Supernatural power to go beyond your human ability and so on and so on.

And this is the baptism of the Spirit and you will receive power. *Dunamis*, is the Greek word. Power when the Holy Spirit comes on you. Do you see the differences in the prepositions? The Spirit comes in to indwell. The Spirit comes on to fill and to empower. Different functions. That's what Paul is

encouraging for you and I, be filled, be continuously filled with the Holy Spirit so that you might be empowered to live this life that you are called to live.

And he says then there will be this overflowing thanksgiving and so on and so forth. But you know I've learned something about thanksgiving. It's not automatic. It's something I have to choose. Isn't it something about the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives? He is such a gentleman. Have you noticed that? The Holy Spirit is a gentleman. He doesn't just, Satan will do that. He'll crank you around and push you around and so forth. The Holy Spirit never does that. And He's so gentle and He waits for you and I to invite Him in. He waits for you and I to ask for His power and presence in our lives. He waits for you.

And when it comes to things like having a heart of thanksgiving. If you and I choose to grumble and complain and just be thankless, then that's the way you're going to be. Even as a believer, you're going to be grieving the Holy Spirit, but you can still do it. You can walk around, grumbling about everything, complaining.... I have found that when it comes to Thanksgiving, it's something that I need to choose. I need to choose to be thankful. And sometimes, I'll be honest with you, I don't feel very thankful. But I have to choose it nonetheless.

And choose to say, 'Lord, I give you thanks. I give you thanks for this new day. I thank you for the salvation that is mine in Jesus. I thank you for your love for me. I thank you that you hear my prayer.' We've been going through this in psalms on Wednesday nights. If you've been missing psalms, catch up. This is really good stuff.

David repeatedly came to the Lord and gave thanks and spoke words of faith, even when he didn't feel it. And that's part of the life of the Spirit. Verse 21 ends the section by saying, “...submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ.” And again, this is another unmistakable mark of a Spirit-filled believer. Because we don't like submitting to anybody, do we?

Remember, we live in that generation that says, question authority. And we think we're cool because of it. And I don't, nobody tells me what to do. And we sing songs like, I did it my way. Right? Cause that's rough and tough and mature. And the Spirit-filled life says “...submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.”

In other words, out of the fear of God. Submit to Him? Are you kidding? But God, He's an idiot. That's about the time God says, so are you. No, I'm being funny here.

But we're to submit to one another, which is a walk of humility, which is my willingness to let others lead without chafing. To appreciate the spiritual gifts of other people, even when they eclipse mine. To appreciate what God is doing in your life, and to let you function in that role. To submit to you, and let you be who God has called you to be, without getting all upset about it, and so forth.