

This is a Great Mystery

A Study of Ephesians

Week 23b – Ephesians 5:18 - 5:20

Shortened session due to 10/24/21 call meeting

Prayer – Lord God, you have given us psalms and hymns and songs to praise you in various ways for all your various gifts. Help us to use them to your glory. Fill us with your Spirit, that our hearts may always be directed to you, our one and only Redeemer. Amen.

Introduction

- Repeat introduction question: what’s the overarching theme of Ephesians 5?

- How do we best accomplish that feat? *Hint: think of today’s worship theme, if you attending early service.*

Ephesians 5:18 – καὶ μὴ μεθύσκεσθε οἴνῳ, ἐν ᾧ ἐστὶν ἀσωτία, ἀλλὰ πληροῦσθε ἐν πνεύματι,

And do not become drunk on wine, in which there is debauchery; rather, be filled by the Spirit

1. Another trip to Proverbs! Turn to **Proverbs 20:1**. It’s obvious that Paul is not making a new law.
 - a. What examples does God share with us in his Word about alcohol being misused?

 - b. When has God used wine or alcohol as a blessing for his people?

 - c. So, as we often do, we need to make the distinction between a substance itself being bad vs. the manner in which it is consumed.

2. The word “debauchery” speaks to wastefulness and, more seriously, reckless abandon.

3. While being filled with wine brings reckless abandon, what behaviors or mindsets does being filled with the Spirit bring?

Ephesians 5:19 – λαλοῦντες ἑαυτοῖς [ἐν] ψαλμοῖς καὶ ὕμνοις καὶ ᾠδαῖς πνευματικαῖς, ᾄδοντες καὶ ψάλλοντες τῇ καρδίᾳ ὑμῶν τῷ κυρίῳ,

Speaking to one another [with] psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making music with your heart to the Lord

4. The behaviors and mindsets mentioned above then lead to praise to God, which is appropriate when we are under the Spirit's influence (not Pentecostal; the Spirit lives in us through the means of grace).
5. Let's talk about the types of musical settings mentioned here:
 - a. Psalms – we have all 150 of them in the Bible. Plus, we now have a resource that sets each one of them to music for public or private use (the Psalter). These are Old Testament texts which retell the story of salvation, highlighting God's power, wisdom, and love.
 - b. Hymns are also familiar to us. It's improbable that the New Testament Church had a hymnal; still, they must have had songs that became used regularly and were poetic in format.
 - i. It didn't take long for hymns to be written down, as we have a hymn from about AD 200 in our hymnal. Does anyone know what hymn that is?
 - c. Spiritual songs – I'll be honest, from a grammatical standpoint, I don't know what the difference is between these and hymns. They both indicate sacred songs; songs of praise; or songs used in worship settings.
 - i. One commentator suggested that hymns (ὕμνοις) are songs of praise directed to God or to Christ, while spiritual songs (ᾠδαῖς πνευματικαῖς) are songs that dwell on themes other than direct praise to God or to Christ. But then, in the next sentence, the same commentator admits that there could be some overlap between the two terms.
 - ii. The NIV84 Study Bible footnote suggests that all three terms could refer to the Psalms, since there are definite hymns and songs of praise included there.
6. These songs are not just meant to praise God; they are also a form of speaking to one another. When we sing songs (whether chanted psalms, beloved hymns, or something we've never sung before), we are not just singing to sound good; we are singing to teach the truths of God's Word to ourselves and to others. What added insight does that give to the songs we use in worship (liturgy, psalms, hymns, or other)?

7. “Singing and making music with your heart” – We not only make audible sounds; we mean what we sing; it comes from the heart. It’s not just an empty going through the motions.
 - a. During what parts of the service might going through the motions of singing happen most easily?
 - b. What helpful tips do you have to stay focused, to mean what you sing and sing what you mean?

Ephesians 5:20 – εὐχαριστοῦντες πάντοτε ὑπὲρ πάντων ἐν ὀνόματι τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ τῷ θεῷ καὶ πατρί.

Always giving thanks for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

8. Even as we speak to one another through our worship, this is our main purpose. We give thanks for everything to the Lord, for he is good, and his mercy endures forever. What kinds of things might be more difficult to give thanks for when God allows them to happen in our lives?
 - a. And yet, according to **Hebrews 12:11**, what reason does God give us to still give thanks for these things?

What comments and questions do you have?

Closing Prayer CW 234 Praise to the Lord, the Almighty

Praise to the Lord, the Almighty, the King of creation!

O my soul, praise him, for he is your health and salvation!

Let all who hear Now to his temple draw near, Joining in glad adoration! Amen.

Looking ahead (by the way, thank you for being so flexible with all the changes in schedule and adjustments we make from week to week; it truly is appreciated) – On November 7, to accommodate the Craft and Bake Sale in the cafeteria, we will still have Bible class, but it will take place in the sanctuary. I’ll encourage all of us to sit close enough to make conversation and sharing thoughts an easier feat than normal.