

Eph. 2:10. We are God's workmanship created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that (hina) we would WALK in them. Because you have become a new man IN Christ, know the old walk that is to be laid aside and the new walk that is to be put on, be continually renewing your mind by responding to these 3 commands in 5:15-21: (1) Be careful how you walk. (2) Don't be foolish. (3) Be filled with the Spirit. Eph. 4:1-6:18 is a picture of life in the Spirit, how Jesus' life through ours will be revealed.

:15-17 Therefore see (be careful, look carefully) how you walk, not as unwise men but as wise, making the most of your time (redeeming the time), because the days are evil. So then do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. This is what the wise, understanding, Spirit-filled life looks like.

:15 Be constantly seeing, looking at, examining, observing, how you walk, not as unwise men but as wise. Wisdom is God's knowledge applied to life's problems, God's insight into known facts. Keep a close watch on the Biblical principles by which you are regulating your lives. Make sure they're good, righteous, and according to truth (5:9). **Read Ps. 90:12.**

God's wisdom involves the right use of time. **:16 Buying up THE time**, taking full advantage of every opportunity (season) to wisely walk as the new man you are. **Read Gal. 6:10.** Take time to reflect on: what is better and what is best, what are secure boundaries for you, how to love God and serve others.

In this context, **because the days are evil** (wickedness that causes pain). **Read Rom. 1:18-32 & 2 Tim. 3:1-7** for descriptions of evil days. It is evil days that especially give us opportunities to 'demonstrate' our new lives IN Christ.

:17 Stop being foolish (acting without thinking, playing the fool), but all the time understanding what the will of the Lord is. Stop being foolish, unwilling to apply God's revealed knowledge practically! **Read Ps. 14:1, Rom. 1:22.**

Biblically a person is called a fool because of unbelief and ignoring God's truth. The foolish person doesn't choose to believe and act on God's truth and determines right/wrong and truth/falsehood by the world around him/her or by the sinful flesh or by Satan's deceit. On the other hand, the wise Christian is careful how he/she walks, makes the most of every opportunity, and is comprehending the Lord's will. **The will of the Lord** for His people has been revealed in His Word. In **Eph. 5:15-18** God's will for us is to be careful how we walk, not be foolish, and be filled with the Holy Spirit. **Read 1 Pet. 4:1-2.** Wise people are discovering and doing the will of the Lord, giving your mind to God's truths so you comprehend, get hold of them! What is it God wants out of this situation? God's wisdom can be found by prayer, being in God's truth, seeking advice from mature believers, careful thought.

How can we 'live' such a wise, understanding walk? **:18 Be being filled with the Spirit!** Being strengthened with power through the Spirit is absolutely essential for 'walking' the Christian life (3:16, also see Gal. 5:16,18,25, Rom. 8:1-28)! God has provided 'Himself' as being the way to 'walk' the Christian walk. We are to be filled up to all the fullness of the Father (3:19); the fullness of Jesus who fills all in all (1:23); filled with the Spirit (5:18).

The Spirit is the key to the Christian walk. No Christian can use his/her time wisely, or fulfill God's will for his/her life apart from being filled with the Spirit. Only He can live the Christian life, in and through us. **Heb. 11:6:** a walk of faith.

Being filled with the Spirit is not the same as being indwelt by or baptized by or sealed by the Spirit. The one command concerning the Holy Spirit: Allow yourself to be filled with Him. Christianity is not a list of rules; the Christian walk is a life of being strengthened by the indwelling Holy Spirit.

:18-21 And do not get drunk with wine, for that is (in which is) dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another (yourselves) in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord; always giving thanks for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father [the God and Father, 1:2,3,17]; and being subject to one another in the fear (reverence) of Christ.

:18 Stop being soaked with wine! Stop practicing it! Why? **It is dissipation** (asotia): the essential meaning of sozo is 'to save', deliver. In **5:18** this has a 'negative' in front of it. There is absolutely nothing saving or redeeming about drunkenness; it's a wasted way of life! Today we could add 'drugs' or whatever causes us to lose control/balance. Drunkenness is part of the 'old-man' walk, a deed of the flesh (**Gal. 5:21**). In Ephesus, one of the gods was Bacchus, the god of wine and drunken partying. Drunkenness was often considered an act of worship. MacArthur has 3 messages on drunkenness (gtv.org **Eph. 5:18**)

Read Prov. 23:29-35. Drunkenness is a sin, needing to be confessed and dealt with as sin. When soaked with alcohol, we are not making the most of our time, living according to the Lord's will, filled with the Spirit. See stats!

But (a complete contrast to the old walk), **continually allow yourself to be being filled with the Spirit** (present passive imperative)! We are to be so carried along by Him (like a sail), so permeated with Him, so controlled by Him, that Jesus' life and the Spirit's fruit are evident. The filling of the Spirit is a continual drinking of Him for the resources we need in all situations. **Read Jn. 7:37-39.** Being filled is not something we 'do' but something we 'allow to be done' in us: by the indwelling Spirit. The filling is entirely the work of the Spirit Himself. The Spirit works through our willing trust and obedience. It doesn't have the idea of 'getting more' of Him, like filling up a cup. You are either filled or you aren't.

The Holy Spirit is a Person; He indwells the physical body of every Christian. **Read Rom. 8:9-11:** He gives life to our mortal bodies. Think about it: We can be strengthened with *God's power* (3:20) through the Spirit! Instead of letting alcohol or anything else control us, we're to be being filled continually, with HIM. Sin in our lives would be what would 'disrupt' the Spirit's filling.

When someone is under the influence of alcohol, we say "He's drunk!" It should be the same with someone filled with the Spirit, "He's Spirit-filled!" And when we're filled with Him, there's no bad hangover! Interesting, when filled with the Spirit, instead of losing control, there is self-control (**Gal. 5:23**).

For further study on being filled or walking by or led by the Spirit, read and meditate on **Gal. 5:16-25** and **Rom. 8:1-17a**. I use the acronyms 'ECRAT' or 'SCRAT': Examine/Search (**Ps. 139:23-24**), Confess (**1 Jn. 1:9, Ps. 32:1-5**),

Review (**Rom. 6:11, 8:9**), Allow (**Eph. 5:18, Gal. 5:16**), Thank (**1 Th. 5:18**).

:**19-21** There are clear results of following these 3 commands; they are given to us as participles: speaking, singing, making melody, giving thanks, being subject. These are similar to God's life/fruit seen in **Gal. 5:22-23, Rom. 7:4, Jn. 15:1-11**.

:**19** When with other Christians, **Spirit-filled believers speak to one another in music**, Spirit-inspired music. We celebrate life together in Jesus by corporate worship: OT psalms put to music, songs of praise, with the voice and/or instruments. See **Col. 3:16, Rev. 5:9, 14:3, 15:3, Ps. 95:1-3**. Whether with the voice or instruments, it should come from the new heart (most unmusical people love this!). The Lord Himself is the audience to whom we sing! It doesn't matter how beautiful or pitiful you may sound, sing out! You aren't auditioning for a choir; you're **making melody with your heart**.

One of the greatest distinctions of Christianity should be in its music. Every word of every Christian song should be Biblical: clearly & accurately reflecting the teaching of God's Word, whether from the OT or the NT. Whether through speaking or singing or instruments, our music should include songs of praise and teaching, focusing us on our great God and the Lord Jesus and the truths of His Word. Remember, these 3 responses are results of being filled.

:**20** **Always giving thanks** (present active participle) **for all things**. All we have is from Him (Paul himself a prisoner when he wrote this). See **Ps. 100:4, Rev. 7:12, 1 Th. 5:18**. Ingratitude is an indication of not being filled with the Spirit! Speaking, singing, making melody, giving thanks, being subject.

:**21** **And being subject** (present passive participle) **to one another**. Hupotasso a military term meaning to arrange or rank under. When we're filled with the Spirit and because we have a deep reverence for Christ and He is always present (meeting all our needs), we have the freedom to give up our own rights for the good of others. Jesus is the example for this kind of mindset (**Phil. 2:1-8**).

Out of deep reverence for Jesus. Phobos, at times translated flight, running away as a result of being startled. It also carries the idea of reverence/respect/awe for God or men. Context determines the meaning. The 'life' of the Spirit-filled Christian is governed by the presence of the Person of the Lord Jesus. HE is the 3rd party present in every relationship. Practice His presence.

Jesus is the central issue in marriage, parenting, work roles & responsibilities (**5:22,25, 6:1,4,5-9**). When dealing with a relationship with anyone, we first consider our Head, Jesus our Lord. Then we consider the other and his/her good. Jesus' life by the Spirit through ours! The walk of the new person in Christ and filled with the Spirit looks like different 'roles and responsibilities'.

Be careful how you walk. Don't be foolish. Be filled with the Spirit. The results of practicing these commands are speaking, singing, and making melody with our hearts to the Lord, always giving thanks for all things, and being subject to one another. What a beautiful description of an individual Christian or a local body of believers. We want to be joyful, thankful, and submissive. :**15-21** tell us God's way to these results. If not seeing these results, don't focus on the results. Focus on the cause! Cover Forgiveness & Victory Cycles. Include ECRAT handout.

Practical Ways to **Apply** God's Word:

1. Start with Jesus (**Mt. 11:28-30**) and fix your focus on Him (**Heb. 12:1-3**). Practice ECRAT: Examine, Confess, Review, Allow, and Thank.
2. As part of your immediate family, you have a responsible role to play. Husband: a loving head. Wife: a supportive companion. Parent: don't provoke your child to anger or exasperate him/her so they lose heart; do bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord. Child: obey and honor your parents.
3. Then as part of the Family of God, pray for, love, be hospitable to, and serve one another, using your Spirit-given gifts (**1 Pet. 4:7-11**). Also, consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds (**Heb. 10:24-25**). Do good to all (**Gal. 6:10**). Also see **Eph. 4:1-16** and **Rom. 12:3-13** which describe the 'walk' of the Church.
4. Then as an individual Christian: **Rom. 12:9-21, 1 Cor. 13:1-8a, Eph. 4:20-6:18, and 1 Pet. 2:11-3:17** spell out how Jesus will live out His life and love uniquely through you as you trust Him, rest in Him.
5. Be careful who you listen to and what you watch and read, what you're continually thinking about. Choose & be a good role model. Be sure there's a steady input from God's Word. Pray without ceasing. Realize there's a glorious, certain, guaranteed future for you and every other Christian.
6. **Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you will abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit (Rom. 15:13)**. Remember, this is a life and love only Jesus through the Holy Spirit can live in/through you! Yet He will as you by faith run the race set before you (**Heb. 12:1-2a**). Lessons you learned? Applications you made? Questions you have? What impact does this passage have on your daily walk with Jesus?

As a Christian, what is the wise walk? How do we make the most of our time? How do we understand what the will of the Lord is? How are we strengthened to carry out such a walk, and what are the results of being strengthened? **:15-18** Paul contrasts unwise versus wise, foolish versus understanding, drunk with wine versus being filled with the Spirit. In **5:22-6:9** we'll see how this works out in relationships between wife and husband, child and parent, and worker and boss.

:15 A command, "**Be careful** (present active imperative) **how you walk** (present active)!" Look or observe. **4:20-6:18** describe the walk of the new person. **Not as unwise men but as wise: Ps. 90:12** "Teach us to number our days, that we may present to You a heart of wisdom!" Why would Christians live as unwise, foolish people when we have GOD's wisdom (see **1 Cor. 1:30**)? Walk in a manner that corresponds to the new man you are in Christ. That is the supreme thing, not where you walk, but how you walk. Fools is asophos, unwise. Christians are sophoi, wise people. Practical wisdom. The wise don't operate out of impulses or feelings but out of wise reflection on God's revealed truth and our Lord Jesus.

:16 Making the most (present middle passive) **of your time. Gal. 6:10** has the same idea, "So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to all people." **Because the days are** (present) **evil**. Buy up the time that most use for evil.

:17 So then do not be (present middle or passive imperative) **foolish**. Another command. Aphron = without reason, senseless, acting without reflection, unthinking, not walking in line with God's truth as found in Jesus and in the written Word. Solomon in Ecclesiastes said anything like fame, fortune, power, pleasure do not satisfy. **Eccl. 12:13**, "The conclusion, when all has been heard, is: fear God and keep His commandments, because this applies to every person."

But understanding (present active participle) **what the will of the Lord is**. Make careful search into God's plans for you. Piece things together so we know how to respond in the midst of evil days. Faith is simply taking God at His word, believing it, and living our lives on that basis. In terms of our walk, the will of the Lord is described in **4:1-6:18**.

What is God's will for you? **1 Pet. 4:1-2** says to no longer live for the urges of men but for the will of God. Also see **1 Tim. 2:4, 2 Pet. 3:9, Eph. 5:18, 5:21, 1 Th. 4:3, 1 Pet. 3:17**: saved, Spirit-filled, sanctified, submissive, and if suffering, for God's will. If you are these things, you can do whatever you want! Delight yourself in the Lord, and He will give you the desires of your heart (**Ps. 37:4**). This is why Jesus could say, "I have accomplished the work which You have given Me to do (**Jn. 17:4**). His will is not so much where we live, what job we have, our marital status; His will is that we be conformed to the image of His Son (**Rom. 8:29-30**), no matter the situation. In **Eph. 1:9-10**, Paul describes God's will as the summing up of all things in Christ. Ultimately what God wants is faith (**Heb. 12:6**).

:18 Don't become intoxicated, full of or soaked with wine! The loss of control/judgment/balance. STATS: 2021 figures: 15.1 million adults aged 18 and older are alcoholics. 6.2% of America's population. 9.8 million men, 5.3 million women. 30% of all driving deaths due to alcohol. 1 in 8 American adults fulfill the criteria for having an alcohol use disorder. 80% of college students consume alcohol. 50% of college students who drink also binge drink (5 or more drinks). 11% of all alcohol consumed in U.S. by those aged 12-20. 414,000 teens were dependent on or addicted to alcohol in 2019. Drunk driving is leading cause of death among U.S. teens.

What's the point of living an unwise, foolish, wasteful way of life when as a Christian you can be strengthened with power through God's Spirit and experience the 5 results in **5:19-6:9**? The Holy Spirit resides in every Christian. As we trust Him, He gives life to our mortal bodies (**Rom. 8:11**). Present imperative: **be continually filled by the Spirit**. It is used of the wind filling a sail. Of permeating something, like salt in water. Of control. It is in the plural form, addressed to the whole Christian community. The imperative mood places the responsibility on the believers. Not to be filled with the Spirit is to fall back into the deeds of the flesh and giving in to the pressures of the world and succumbing to the devil's attacks (see **Gal. 5:16-25, Rom. 12:2, Eph. 6:10-17**).

:19 Similar to the teaching and admonishing one another in the parallel passage in **Col. 3:16** read. Christian singing is an expression of individual and corporate worship, of celebrating life together in Jesus. The context is public worship. **Making melody**: lit. to pluck on a stringed instrument. **With your heart**: from the new heart our Lord has given you, from the very core of your being. **To the Lord**: It's not to one another but to the Lord. Aristotle: "Music represents the passions of the soul, and if one listens to the wrong music, he will become the wrong kind of person." **Phil. 4:8**.

:20 To be thankful always is to recognize God's control of our lives in every detail. Giving thanks is not a matter of 'feeling' thankful; it is a matter of obedience, being filled with the Spirit, and letting the word of Christ richly dwell within you (**Col. 3:16**). The call to thanksgiving (**read Col. 3:15-17, 1 Th. 5:18**).

:21 Submission is not giving in; it is serving, and it is a result of being filled! All believers are spiritually equal in every sense (**Gal. 3:28**), but because Jesus is meeting your needs, because Jesus is always present, and because you're filled with the Spirit, make the choice to put the interests of others before your own (**Phil. 2:1-8**). You must become servants to all (**read Mk. 10:43-45**): husbands, wives, parents, children, employers, employees. To seek the welfare of others before our own and to be mutually submissive. You are an important part of the whole. It will lead you always to consider the Head and the Body and their good.


The Christian is a person who is governed by the Lord Jesus, with His word as truth. Those who are truly subject to Jesus do not find it difficult to submit to each other as well because the submission is a result of being filled. **In the fear of Christ: Unto the Lord, in the Lord, as unto Christ, as to the Lord (5:22-6:9)**. Christ is also with you, me, every Christian. What does He want in our relationships? Also see **Eph. 4:20-6:18, 1 Pet. 4:7-11** and **Rom. 12:9-21** for what Jesus' life in us and through us as His Body and as individual Christians looks like.

Two helpful facts to understand before we look at ECRAT/SCRAT and the Forgiveness and Victory Cycles:

1. Growth as a Christian is measured not by how much I'm filled with the Spirit (because I'm either filled or I'm not) but by how much of the time I'm filled with the Spirit. If I'm growing as a Christian, I am filled more of the time this year than I was last year. Remember, the Holy Spirit dwells in our bodies and will never leave us, but the 'filling' of the Holy Spirit is different than the 'indwelling'. As we cultivate and practice Godly thinking and habits, we find we'll be able to walk longer and longer between sins. We'll never walk sinlessly perfect on this earth as long as we're in these unredeemed human bodies where sin still dwells, but as we grow in Christ, we'll walk longer and longer periods of time in authentic Christianity.
2. Christianity is positive, not negative. It's okay to do unless you know it's wrong Scripturally or the Holy Spirit lets you know it's wrong for you.

Fill in Forgiveness and Victory Cycles. Forgiveness Cycle: In the inside circle: Forgiveness Cycle (**1 John 1:9, Psalm 32:1-5**). On the outside: Temptation/Test at 1:30, Sin at 4:30, Confess at 7:30, Forgiven and Cleansed at 10:30, Fellowship with God Restored at 12:00. Victory Cycle: In the inside of the circle: Victory Cycle (**Romans 6:1-14**). On the outside: Temptation/Test at 1:30, Know at 4:30, Consider at 7:30, Present at 10:30, Reign in Life (**5:17**) at 12:00.

Go through ECRAT (or SCRAT) handout.



Forgiveness Cycle
1 John 1:9
Psalm 32:1-5



Victory Cycle
Romans 6:1-14

1. **Examine (or Search) your life for sin (Ps. 139:23-24).**

- a. Sin is missing God's mark. It may be in thinking, action, word, power source, or motivation. When you sin, the enjoyable fellowship with the Father is broken. The relationship remains but the fellowship is absent.
- b. Be open to God's examination to see if there are any sins that are obstructing your fellowship with the Father. If your sin is the result of something from the past, the Holy Spirit knows the past, and He can/will bring it to your attention if it hasn't been dealt with and needs to be.

2. **Confess any known sin (1 Jn. 1:9, Ps. 32:1-5).**

- a. Confess means to 'agree with'. You are to 'agree with' God concerning your sin. "Father, I tried to find life or love or meaning in something or someone other than You, and that's wrong. I agree with You that I've missed Your mark." Focus on God, see sin as He sees it, accept responsibility for your sin, repent of it, and confess it.
- b. If it's a sin you committed from the past or present, when the Holy Spirit brings it to your attention, deal with it, make personal Jesus' forgiveness and cleansing that was accomplished on the cross, and then go on in His strength. When you fall, don't stay there. Let go of the whole burden of your sin, rest on the finished, complete work of the Lord Jesus, and resume walking. If the sin again comes to mind, it's an attack by Satan!
- c. If your sin involved another individual, first confess the sin to the Lord, then go to the person, confess your wrong, and ask his/her forgiveness.

3. **Review who you are in Christ & in the Spirit (Rom. 6:11, 8:9-13, Gal. 3-6).**

- a. Because your old man IN Adam died with Christ and you're now IN Christ, you are dead to sin and alive to God. You have a new nature, a new identity, a new heart, an alive spirit. Jesus IS your life!
- b. Because you're no longer IN the flesh but IN the Spirit, you are no longer under law and, you have no obligation to the flesh (remember, the flesh is NOT who you are!). You owe everything to the Spirit of God. The Holy Spirit gives life to your mortal body.
- c. Your thinking, choices, behavior, and speech should reflect the new person you are in Christ and in the Spirit. Jesus has taken up residence in your *spirit*. The Holy Spirit has taken up residence in your *body*.
- d. When you sin, you can't blame the nature—it's new in Christ. And, you can't blame the flesh—the Spirit dwells there to give you victory in your daily walk. So, when you sin, confess the sin, make personal the Lord's forgiveness, and review who you temporarily forgot or ignored you were (IN Christ and IN the Spirit).

4. **Allow yourself to be filled with the Holy Spirit (Eph. 5:18, Gal. 5:16).**

- a. "Allow yourself to be continually being filled." It's a constant choice to be made, not a one-time act or event.
- b. Remember, you are always indwelt by the Spirit. But at any moment, you're either filled with the Spirit or you aren't. Sin is what breaks His filling, His control, His strengthening.
- c. Having gone through the 5 parts, by faith assume you're filled until He lets you know differently. Go about your everyday life, making choices you know are honoring to God and realizing His Spirit is living the life of Jesus through you! You'll see His fruit (**Gal. 5:22-23, Eph. 5:19-21**), His life, through yours when you're walking in dependence on Him.
- d. Cultivate Godly trust, thinking, habits, and choices. You'll find yourself walking according to the Spirit more and more of the *time*. That's what growth and walking are all about!

5. **Thank Him (1 Th. 5:18, Eph. 5:20)**

Thank God for: revealing sins in your life, forgiving and cleansing you, making you who you are IN Christ and IN the Spirit, and filling you!

Psalm 139:23-24 Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me and know my anxious thoughts; and see if there be any hurtful way in me, and lead me in the everlasting way. You've examined my life for sin, and if You've revealed a sin to me, I'm to '**1 John 1:9**' it—**If I confess my sins, You are faithful and righteous/just to forgive my sins and to cleanse me from all unrighteousness.** I've confessed any known sin. Then I review my identity. **Romans 6:11** says I'm to **consider myself to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus** based on the truths of **Romans 6:1-10**. **Romans 8:9** says that if I'm a Christian, **I'm not in the flesh but in the Spirit**. **Romans 8:11** states that **if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in me, He who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to my mortal body through His Spirit who indwells me.** I've reviewed who I am IN Christ and IN the Spirit. **Ephesians 5:18** then says **be filled with the Spirit** and **Galatians 5:16** makes clear I'm to **walk by the Spirit, and I will not carry out the desire of the flesh**. **Galatians 5:25** adds, **Since I live by the Spirit, I should also walk by the Spirit.** I've allowed the Spirit to fill me. Finally, **1 Thessalonians 5:18** states **in everything give thanks; for this is God's will for me in Christ Jesus.** I've thanked God for His searching, forgiving, reviewing, filling work. Praise Him! Then by faith I understand that I'm walking in the Spirit's strength until He lets me know otherwise. What an abandoned life of freedom! Freedom to live as God intended me to live, a life of fellowship with God, worship, love, and service!

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:18 Stop being soaked with wine! Stop practicing it! Why? **It is dissipation** (asotia): the essential meaning of sozo is 'to save', deliver. In **5:18** this has a 'negative' in front of it. There is absolutely nothing saving or redeeming about drunkenness; it's a wasted way of life! Today we could add 'drugs' or whatever causes us to lose control/balance. Drunkenness is part of the 'old-man' walk, a deed of the flesh (**Gal. 5:21**). In Ephesus, one of the gods was Bacchus, the god of wine and drunken partying. Drunkenness was often considered an act of worship. MacArthur has 3 messages on drunkenness (gtv.org **Eph. 5:18**)

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But (a complete contrast to the old walk), **continually allow yourself to be being filled with the Spirit** (present passive imperative)! We are to be so carried along by Him (like a sail), so permeated with Him, so controlled by Him, that Jesus' life and the Spirit's fruit are evident. The filling of the Spirit is a continual drinking of Him for the resources we need in all situations. **Read Jn. 7:37-39.** Being filled is not something we 'do' but something we 'allow to be done' in us: by the indwelling Spirit. The filling is entirely the work of the Spirit Himself. The Spirit works through our willing trust and obedience. It doesn't have the idea of 'getting more' of Him, like filling up a cup. You are either filled or you aren't.

The Holy Spirit is a Person; He indwells the physical body of every Christian. **Read Rom. 8:9-11:** He gives life to our mortal bodies. Think about it: We can be strengthened with *God's power (3:20)* through the Spirit! Instead of letting alcohol or anything else control us, we're to be being filled continually, with HIM. Sin in our lives would be what would 'disrupt' the Spirit's filling.

When someone is under the influence of alcohol, we say "He's drunk!" It should be the same with someone filled with the Spirit, "He's Spirit-filled!" And when we're filled with Him, there's no bad hangover! Interesting, when filled with the Spirit, instead of losing control, there is self-control (**Gal. 5:23**).

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:20 Always giving thanks (present active participle) **for all things**. All we have is from Him (Paul himself a prisoner when he wrote this). See **Ps. 100:4, Rev. 7:12, 1 Th. 5:18**. Ingratitude is an indication of not being filled with the Spirit! Speaking, singing, making melody, giving thanks, being subject.

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Jesus is the central issue in marriage, parenting, work roles & responsibilities (**5:22,25, 6:1,4,5-9**). When dealing with a relationship with anyone, we first consider our Head, Jesus our Lord. Then we consider the other and his/her good. Jesus' life by the Spirit through ours! The walk of the new person in Christ and filled with the Spirit looks like different 'roles and responsibilities'.

Be careful how you walk. Don't be foolish. Be filled with the Spirit. The results of practicing these commands are speaking, singing, and making melody with our hearts to the Lord, always giving thanks for all things, and being subject to one another. What a beautiful description of an individual Christian or a local body of believers. We want to be joyful, thankful, and submissive. **:15-21** tell us God's way to these results. If not seeing these results, don't focus on the results. Focus on the cause! Cover Forgiveness & Victory Cycles. Include ECRAT handout.

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1. Start with Jesus (**Mt. 11:28-30**) and fix your focus on Him (**Heb. 12:1-3**). Practice ECRAT: Examine, Confess, Review, Allow, and Thank.
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Lessons you learned? Applications you made? Questions you have? What impact does this passage have on your daily walk with Jesus?

Eph. 2:10. We are God's workmanship created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that (hina) we would WALK in them. Because you have become a new man IN Christ, know the old walk that is to be laid aside and the new walk that is to be put on, be continually renewing your mind by responding to these 3 commands in **5:15-21: (1) Be careful how you walk. (2) Don't be foolish. (3) Be filled with the Spirit.** Eph. 4:1-6:18 is a picture of life in the Spirit, how Jesus' life through ours will be revealed.

:15-17 Therefore see (be careful, look carefully) how you walk, not as unwise men but as wise, making the most of your time (redeeming the time), because the days are evil. So then do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. This is what the wise, understanding, Spirit-filled life looks like.

:15 Be constantly seeing, looking at, examining, observing, how you walk, not as unwise men but as wise. Wisdom is God's knowledge applied to life's problems, God's insight into known facts. Keep a close watch on the Biblical principles by which you are regulating your lives. Make sure they're good, righteous, and according to truth (5:9). **Read Ps. 90:12.**

God's wisdom involves the right use of time. **:16 Buying up THE time**, taking full advantage of every opportunity (season) to wisely walk as the new man you are. **Read Gal. 6:10.** Take time to reflect on: what is better and what is best, what are secure boundaries for you, how to love God and serve others.

In this context, **because the days are evil** (wickedness that causes pain). **Read Rom. 1:18-32 & 2 Tim. 3:1-7** for descriptions of evil days. It is evil days that especially give us opportunities to 'demonstrate' our new lives IN Christ.

:17 Stop being foolish (acting without thinking, playing the fool), but all the time understanding what the will of the Lord is. Stop being foolish, unwilling to apply God's revealed knowledge practically! **Read Ps. 14:1, Rom. 1:22.**

Biblically a person is called a fool because of unbelief and ignoring God's truth. The foolish person doesn't choose to believe and act on God's truth and determines right/wrong and truth/falsehood by the world around him/her or by the sinful flesh or by Satan's deceit. On the other hand, the wise Christian is careful how he/she walks, makes the most of every opportunity, and is comprehending the Lord's will. **The will of the Lord** for His people has been revealed in His Word. In **Eph. 5:15-18** God's will for us is to be careful how we walk, not be foolish, and be filled with the Holy Spirit. **Read 1 Pet. 4:1-2.** Wise people are discovering and doing the will of the Lord, giving your mind to God's truths so you comprehend, get hold of them! What is it God wants out of this situation? God's wisdom can be found by prayer, being in God's truth, seeking advice from mature believers, careful thought.

How can we 'live' such a wise, understanding walk? **:18 Be being filled with the Spirit!** Being strengthened with power through the Spirit is absolutely essential for 'walking' the Christian life (3:16, also see Gal. 5:16,18,25, Rom. 8:1-28)! God has provided 'Himself' as being the way to 'walk' the Christian walk. We are to be filled up to all the fullness of the Father (3:19); the fullness of Jesus who fills all in all (1:23); filled with the Spirit (5:18).

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The Spirit is the key to the Christian walk. No Christian can use his/her time wisely, or fulfill God's will for his/her life apart from being filled with the Spirit. Only He can live the Christian life, in and through us. **Heb. 11:6:** a walk of faith.

Being filled with the Spirit is not the same as being indwelt by or baptized by or sealed by the Spirit. The one command concerning the Holy Spirit: Allow yourself to be filled with Him. Christianity is not a list of rules; the Christian walk is a life of being strengthened by the indwelling Holy Spirit.

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5. Be careful who you listen to and what you watch and read, what you're continually thinking about. Choose & be a good role model. Be sure there's a steady input from God's Word. Pray without ceasing. Realize there's a glorious, certain, guaranteed future for you and every other Christian.
6. **Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you will abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit (Rom. 15:13).** Remember, this is a life and love only Jesus through the Holy Spirit can live in/through you! Yet He will as you by faith run the race set before you (**Heb. 12:1-2a**). Lessons you learned? Applications you made? Questions you have? What impact does this passage have on your daily walk with Jesus?

As a Christian, what is the wise walk? How do we make the most of our time? How do we understand what the will of the Lord is? How are we strengthened to carry out such a walk, and what are the results of being strengthened? **:15-18** Paul contrasts unwise versus wise, foolish versus understanding, drunk with wine versus being filled with the Spirit. In **5:22-6:9** we'll see how this works out in relationships between wife and husband, child and parent, and worker and boss.

:15 A command, "**Be careful** (present active imperative) **how you walk** (present active)!" Look or observe. **4:20-6:18** describe the walk of the new person. **Not as unwise men but as wise: Ps. 90:12** "Teach us to number our days, that we may present to You a heart of wisdom!" Why would Christians live as unwise, foolish people when we have GOD's wisdom (see **1 Cor. 1:30**)? Walk in a manner that corresponds to the new man you are in Christ. That is the supreme thing, not where you walk, but how you walk. Fools is asophos, unwise. Christians are sophoi, wise people. Practical wisdom. The wise don't operate out of impulses or feelings but out of wise reflection on God's revealed truth and our Lord Jesus.

:16 Making the most (present middle passive) **of your time. Gal. 6:10** has the same idea, "So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to all people." **Because the days are** (present) **evil**. Buy up the time that most use for evil.

:17 So then do not be (present middle or passive imperative) **foolish**. Another command. Aphron = without reason, senseless, acting without reflection, unthinking, not walking in line with God's truth as found in Jesus and in the written Word. Solomon in Ecclesiastes said anything like fame, fortune, power, pleasure do not satisfy. **Eccl. 12:13**, "The conclusion, when all has been heard, is: fear God and keep His commandments, because this applies to every person."

But understanding (present active participle) **what the will of the Lord is**. Make careful search into God's plans for you. Piece things together so we know how to respond in the midst of evil days. Faith is simply taking God at His word, believing it, and living our lives on that basis. In terms of our walk, the will of the Lord is described in **4:1-6:18**.

What is God's will for you? **1 Pet. 4:1-2** says to no longer live for the urges of men but for the will of God. Also see **1 Tim. 2:4, 2 Pet. 3:9, Eph. 5:18, 5:21, 1 Th. 4:3, 1 Pet. 3:17**: saved, Spirit-filled, sanctified, submissive, and if suffering, for God's will. If you are these things, you can do whatever you want! Delight yourself in the Lord, and He will give you the desires of your heart (**Ps. 37:4**). This is why Jesus could say, "I have accomplished the work which You have given Me to do (**Jn. 17:4**). His will is not so much where we live, what job we have, our marital status; His will is that we be conformed to the image of His Son (**Rom. 8:29-30**), no matter the situation. In **Eph. 1:9-10**, Paul describes God's will as the summing up of all things in Christ. Ultimately what God wants is faith (**Heb. 12:6**).

:18 Don't become intoxicated, full of or soaked with wine! The loss of control/judgment/balance. STATS: 2021 figures: 15.1 million adults aged 18 and older are alcoholics. 6.2% of America's population. 9.8 million men, 5.3 million women. 30% of all driving deaths due to alcohol. 1 in 8 American adults fulfill the criteria for having an alcohol use disorder. 80% of college students consume alcohol. 50% of college students who drink also binge drink (5 or more drinks). 11% of all alcohol consumed in U.S. by those aged 12-20. 414,000 teens were dependent on or addicted to alcohol in 2019. Drunk driving is leading cause of death among U.S. teens.

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What's the point of living an unwise, foolish, wasteful way of life when as a Christian you can be strengthened with power through God's Spirit and experience the 5 results in **5:19-6:9**? The Holy Spirit resides in every Christian. As we trust Him, He gives life to our mortal bodies (**Rom. 8:11**). Present imperative: **be continually filled by the Spirit**. It is used of the wind filling a sail. Of permeating something, like salt in water. Of control. It is in the plural form, addressed to the whole Christian community. The imperative mood places the responsibility on the believers. Not to be filled with the Spirit is to fall back into the deeds of the flesh and giving in to the pressures of the world and succumbing to the devil's attacks (see **Gal. 5:16-25, Rom. 12:2, Eph. 6:10-17**).

:19 Similar to the teaching and admonishing one another in the parallel passage in **Col. 3:16 read**. Christian singing is an expression of individual and corporate worship, of celebrating life together in Jesus. The context is public worship. **Making melody**: lit. to pluck on a stringed instrument. **With your heart**: from the new heart our Lord has given you, from the very core of your being. **To the Lord**: It's not to one another but to the Lord. Aristotle: "Music represents the passions of the soul, and if one listens to the wrong music, he will become the wrong kind of person." **Phil. 4:8**.

:20 To be thankful always is to recognize God's control of our lives in every detail. Giving thanks is not a matter of 'feeling' thankful; it is a matter of obedience, being filled with the Spirit, and letting the word of Christ richly dwell within you (**Col. 3:16**). The call to thanksgiving (**read Col. 3:15-17, 1 Th. 5:18**).

:21 Submission is not giving in; it is serving, and it is a result of being filled! All believers are spiritually equal in every sense (**Gal. 3:28**), but because Jesus is meeting your needs, because Jesus is always present, and because you're filled with the Spirit, make the choice to put the interests of others before your own (**Phil. 2:1-8**). You must become servants to all (**read Mk. 10:43-45**): husbands, wives, parents, children, employers, employees. To seek the welfare of others before our own and to be mutually submissive. You are an important part of the whole. It will lead you always to consider the Head and the Body and their good.

The Christian is a person who is governed by the Lord Jesus, with His word as truth. Those who are truly subject to Jesus do not find it difficult to submit to each other as well because the submission is a result of being filled. **In the fear of Christ: Unto the Lord, in the Lord, as unto Christ, as to the Lord (5:22-6:9)**. Christ is also with you, me, every Christian. What does He want in our relationships? Also see **Eph. 4:20—6:18, 1 Pet. 4:7-11** and **Rom. 12:9-21** for what Jesus' life in us and through us as His Body and as individual Christians looks like.

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Two helpful facts to understand before we look at ECRAT/SCRAT and the Forgiveness and Victory Cycles:

1. Growth as a Christian is measured not by how much I'm filled with the Spirit (because I'm either filled or I'm not) but by how much of the time I'm filled with the Spirit. If I'm growing as a Christian, I am filled more of the time this year than I was last year. Remember, the Holy Spirit dwells in our bodies and will never leave us, but the 'filling' of the Holy Spirit is different than the 'indwelling'. As we cultivate and practice Godly thinking and habits, we find we'll be able to walk longer and longer between sins. We'll never walk sinlessly perfect on this earth as long as we're in these unredeemed human bodies where sin still dwells, but as we grow in Christ, we'll walk longer and longer periods of time in authentic Christianity.
2. Christianity is positive, not negative. It's okay to do unless you know it's wrong Scripturally or the Holy Spirit lets you know it's wrong for you.

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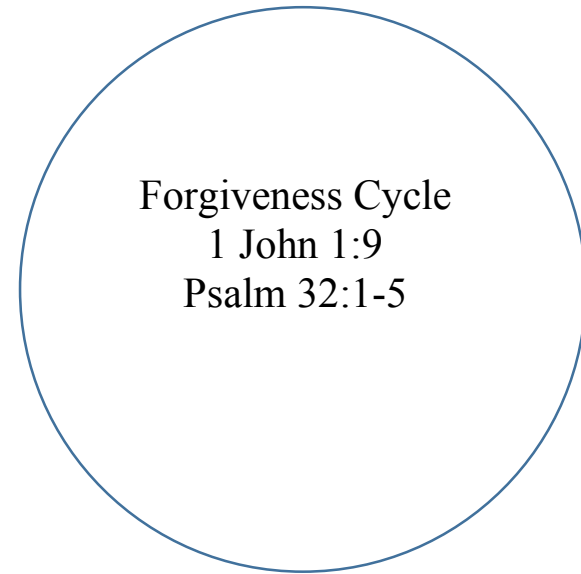
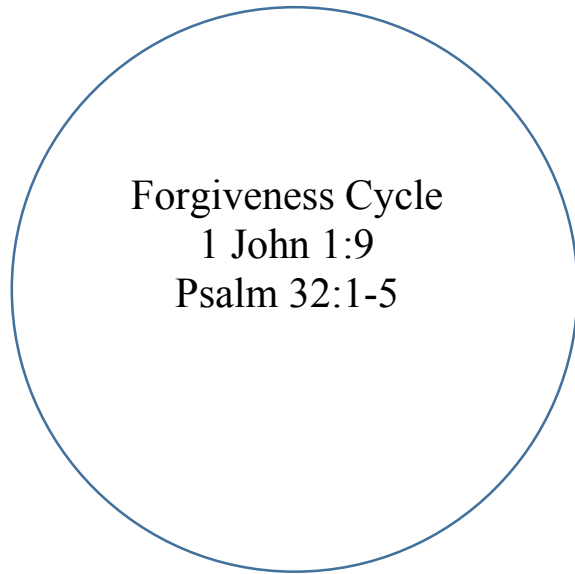
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1. **Examine (or Search) your life for sin (Ps. 139:23-24).**

- a. Sin is missing God's mark. It may be in thinking, action, word, power source, or motivation. When you sin, the enjoyable fellowship with the Father is broken. The relationship remains but the fellowship is absent.
- b. Be open to God's examination to see if there are any sins that are obstructing your fellowship with the Father. If your sin is the result of something from the past, the Holy Spirit knows the past, and He can/will bring it to your attention if it hasn't been dealt with and needs to be.

2. **Confess any known sin (1 Jn. 1:9, Ps. 32:1-5).**

- a. Confess means to 'agree with'. You are to 'agree with' God concerning your sin. "Father, I tried to find life or love or meaning in something or someone other than You, and that's wrong. I agree with You that I've missed Your mark." Focus on God, see sin as He sees it, accept responsibility for your sin, repent of it, and confess it.
- b. If it's a sin you committed from the past or present, when the Holy Spirit brings it to your attention, deal with it, make personal Jesus' forgiveness and cleansing that was accomplished on the cross, and then go on in His strength. When you fall, don't stay there. Let go of the whole burden of your sin, rest on the finished, complete work of the Lord Jesus, and resume walking. If the sin again comes to mind, it's an attack by Satan!
- c. If your sin involved another individual, first confess the sin to the Lord, then go to the person, confess your wrong, and ask his/her forgiveness.

3. **Review who you are in Christ & in the Spirit (Rom. 6:11, 8:9-13, Gal. 3-6).**

- a. Because your old man IN Adam died with Christ and you're now IN Christ, you are dead to sin and alive to God. You have a new nature, a new identity, a new heart, an alive spirit. Jesus IS your life!
- b. Because you're no longer IN the flesh but IN the Spirit, you are no longer under law and, you have no obligation to the flesh (remember, the flesh is NOT who you are!). You owe everything to the Spirit of God. The Holy Spirit gives life to your mortal body.
- c. Your thinking, choices, behavior, and speech should reflect the new person you are in Christ and in the Spirit. Jesus has taken up residence in your spirit. The Holy Spirit has taken up residence in your body.
- d. When you sin, you can't blame the nature—it's new in Christ. And, you can't blame the flesh—the Spirit dwells there to give you victory in your daily walk. So, when you sin, confess the sin, make personal the Lord's forgiveness, and review who you temporarily forgot or ignored you were (IN Christ and IN the Spirit).

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4. **Allow yourself to be filled with the Holy Spirit (Eph. 5:18, Gal. 5:16).**
 - a. "Allow yourself to be continually being filled." It's a constant choice to be made, not a one-time act or event.
 - b. Remember, you are always indwelt by the Spirit. But at any moment, you're either filled with the Spirit or you aren't. Sin is what breaks His filling, His control, His strengthening.
 - c. Having gone through the 5 parts, by faith assume you're filled until He lets you know differently. Go about your everyday life, making choices you know are honoring to God and realizing His Spirit is living the life of Jesus through you! You'll see His fruit (**Gal. 5:22-23, Eph. 5:19-21**), His life, through yours when you're walking in dependence on Him.
 - d. Cultivate Godly trust, thinking, habits, and choices. You'll find yourself walking according to the Spirit more and more of the *time*. That's what growth and walking are all about!
5. **Thank Him (1 Th. 5:18, Eph. 5:20)**
 Thank God for: revealing sins in your life, forgiving and cleansing you, making you who you are IN Christ and IN the Spirit, and filling you!

Psalm 139:23-24 Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me and know my anxious thoughts; and see if there be any hurtful way in me, and lead me in the everlasting way. You've examined my life for sin, and if You've revealed a sin to me, I'm to '1 John 1:9' it—**If I confess my sins, You are faithful and righteous/just to forgive my sins and to cleanse me from all unrighteousness.** I've confessed any known sin. Then I review my identity. **Romans 6:11** says I'm to **consider myself to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus** based on the truths of **Romans 6:1-10**. **Romans 8:9** says that if I'm a Christian, **I'm not in the flesh but in the Spirit**. **Romans 8:11** states that **if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in me, He who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to my mortal body through His Spirit who indwells me.** I've reviewed who I am IN Christ and IN the Spirit. **Ephesians 5:18** then says **be filled with the Spirit** and **Galatians 5:16** makes clear I'm to **walk by the Spirit, and I will not carry out the desire of the flesh**. **Galatians 5:25** adds, **Since I live by the Spirit, I should also walk by the Spirit.** I've allowed the Spirit to fill me. Finally, **1 Thessalonians 5:18** states **in everything give thanks; for this is God's will for me in Christ Jesus.** I've thanked God for His searching, forgiving, reviewing, filling work. Praise Him! Then by faith I understand that I'm walking in the Spirit's strength until He lets me know otherwise. What an abandoned life of freedom! Freedom to live as God intended me to live, a life of fellowship with God, worship, love, and service!

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