

**THE MARKS OF THE CHRISTIAN LIFE:
A COMPULSION TO WORSHIP GOD
Ephesians 5:15-21**

I. God wills that we worship him.

- A. As Paul encouraged the believers in Ephesus, he reminded them to continually seek God's will.

¹⁵Therefore be careful how you walk, not as unwise men but as wise, ¹⁶making the most of your time, because the days are evil. ¹⁷So then do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. There are two phrases here that point us toward worship.

1. We are challenged to make the most of our time or redeem the time.
2. We are encouraged to understand what the will of the Lord is.

These two ideas go together. As we continue through this passage, we will find a description of what happens when believers are filled with the spirit of God. They can't help but break out in worship of God. If that is the inevitable result of God's spirit breaking out in believer's lives, it is clear that God wills us to worship him. He wants us to know him, praise him, thank him, and adore him. Healthy worship reflects that we have an appreciation for its place in our lives. Worship is an integral part of our spiritual health. Worship is also a context in which we celebrate and continue to discover the will of God for our lives. That is the process of being sanctified or set apart by God for a particular purpose.

- B. Worship is a part of our regimen of knowing God. Knowing God strengthens our spirits, wills, and bodies. The presence of the Holy Spirit in us compels us to worship the one who has given us life. The more we distance ourselves from God, the less we hunger for

the things of God. The more we walk with him and know him, the more we crave him.

II. Worship should stir our passions.

- A. Paul drew a contrast between being filled with wine and being filled with the Spirit. *¹⁸And do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit, ¹⁹speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord; ²⁰always giving thanks for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father;* Paul's readers would have been familiar with the sight of someone drinking to excess and behaving foolishly. They would have been controlled by the alcohol. Their inhibitions would have been lowered and their willingness to behave foolishly would have been heightened. Being filled with the Spirit should also result in behavior that is outside the ordinary. It should result in behavior that reflects our walk with Christ.
1. Psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs were used to declare their thoughts about God. They would have been sung with passion.
 2. The worshippers were thankful. The working of the Spirit in their lives taught them about God's ability to use everything that touched their lives for their good.
- B. Passion for Christ should be an identifying characteristic of every believer. Passion is defined as intense, driving, or overmastering feeling or conviction. In terms of love, it is defined as a strong liking or desire for or devotion to some activity, object, or concept. There ought to be a driving conviction that compels us to worship Christ.

1. You've been invited to a birthday party or recognition party for someone you didn't know or like. You went because it was the right thing to do or because someone with power over you expected you to go. You critiqued the food, the entertainment, and the guests. You couldn't wait to get out of there and get on with your preferred schedule. Some of you treat worship in the same fashion. Your passion is for something or someone else.
- C. It is the filling of the Holy Spirit that motivates us to worship Christ with passion. We must be willing to open every part of our lives to the power of the Holy Spirit.

III. Worship should draw us together in Christ.

- A. Paul concluded this section with one of my favorite verses in Ephesians. ²¹*And be subject to one another in the fear of Christ.* The Phillips Translation of the New Testament reads like this: *And fit in with each other because of your common reverence for Christ.*
- B. Worship should be a dynamic experience that changes us. We are a diverse body called together by a common experience of salvation. We are supposed to fit in with each other.
 1. Ours should be a complementary body. We should complete each other. We should encourage one another. We should hold each other accountable.
 2. To fit in with each other, we must constantly be growing and be sensitive to those around us.
 3. The only way we can accomplish this daunting task is through our common reverence for Christ. When we submit to Christ, we will submit to one another.