

Divine Intoxication: The Scope

“And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit” (Eph. 5:18).

While passing out gospel tracts on a street corner, the bartender from a nearby pub asked me to come in the bar and give tracts to his constituents. As I was going from booth to booth, a man burst in the side door and wanted to know who I was and what I was doing. When I explained, he said he was a gospel singer and went on to prove it by singing every verse of “How Great Thou Art” and “Rescue The Perishing.” Although it embarrassed me, it didn’t seem to bother him.

The poor soul tried to hide the fact that he was drunk, but the more he tried the worse the situation became. With intoxication comes indications; signs of drunkenness; evidences of being under the influence of strong drink. Although one may attempt to hide them, the marks of inebriation are extensive and inescapable. It is impossible to be drunk and your life and the lives of those around you not be dominated by the intoxication.

Divine intoxication, or the Spirit-filled life, also comes with its indicators, signs and evidences. Of course, when we are filled with the Holy Spirit, we are not interested in hiding any spiritual quality. But, we couldn’t hide the marks of a Spirit-dominated life if we wanted to. Being filled with the Spirit has its manifestations in every area of our lives. From the remaining verses of Ephesians 5 and 6, we see the scope of the Spirit-filled life.

Divine intoxication is manifested in our inner life! The fullness of the Spirit does not begin on the outside; it begins on the inside. Outward manifestations will definitely follow, but the inner man must be first transformed. “Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord” (5:19). From within, we will also give thanks “for all things unto God and the Father in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ” (5:20).

Divine intoxication is manifested in our family life! Spirit-filled mates submit themselves “one to another in the fear of God” (5:21). Spirit-filled wives willingly “submit” themselves to their “own husbands” (5:22) and Spirit-filled husbands love their wives with a sacrificial, Christ-like love (see 5:23-33). Spirit-filled parents and Spirit-filled children are also blessed with a special relationship in Christ (see 6:1-4).

Divine intoxication is manifested in our warfare life! In the home place and in the workplace (see 6:5-9), being filled with the Spirit prepares us for spiritual warfare. He equips us with “the whole armour of God” and enables us “to stand against the wiles of the devil” (6:11). He gives us His own sword, “the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God” (6:17), and helps us pray “in the Spirit” (6:18). Oh, may every believer be divinely intoxicated.