

Be Filled with the Spirit, Part 4: Spirit-Filled Thanksgiving

Scripture: Ephesians 5:20

Code: 1942

INTRODUCTION

A. The Key for Christian Living

The key to living the Christian life is being controlled on a daily basis by the Holy Spirit. When believers are not filled or controlled by the Spirit of God, there is no real progress. Since each true believer is indwelt by the Holy Spirit (Rom. 8:9), it is imperative that each true believer yield his life moment-by-moment to the Spirit. The apostle Paul scolded the Galatians by saying, "Are you so foolish? Having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect [mature] in the flesh?" (Gal. 3:3). Since believers are born again of the Spirit (John 3:5-7), renewed by the Spirit (Titus 3:5), and are the temple of the Spirit (1 Cor. 6:19), it is foolish to disregard the Spirit's work and try to live in the flesh. As Paul implies, having begun in the Spirit, we will become mature only in the Spirit.

B. The Key for Christian Leaders

The key leaders in the New Testament were all filled with the Holy Spirit.

1. Jesus Christ

Luke 4:1 says, "Jesus, being full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan, and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness." Likewise, John 3:34 says, "God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him." Jesus accomplished His earthly ministry by the power of the Spirit of God (e.g., Matt. 12:28).

2. John the Baptist

John the Baptist, the forerunner of our Lord, was the greatest man who ever lived up until his time (Matt. 11:11). Luke says, "He shall be filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother's womb" (Luke 1:15). Both John the Baptist's mother, Elisabeth, and father, Zacharias, were filled with the Holy Spirit (Luke 1:41, 67).

3. Peter

Acts 4:8 says the great apostle Peter was "filled with the Holy Spirit." He was filled with the Holy Spirit as he preached at Pentecost and here as he addressed the Sanhedrin.

4. Stephen

Stephen, one of the first officials of the early church, was chosen because he was "full of faith and of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 6:5). Verse 3 say any who desired to serve must be "of honest report, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom." Later in Acts 7:55 while being stoned, Stephen was "full of the Holy Spirit, [then] looked up steadfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God."

5. Paul

The apostle Paul met Jesus on the road to Damascus and was blinded. Afterwards a believer came up to him and said, "Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Spirit" (Acts 9:17). Acts 13:9 says, "Saul (who is also called Paul), [was] filled with the Holy Spirit."

6. Barnabas

Barnabas traveled with the apostle Paul and was known for his gift of exhortation. Acts 11:24 says, "He was a righteous man, and full of the Holy Spirit."

Ever since the earliest days of the church and even before, the concept of the filling of the Spirit has been central. When believers yield the control of their lives to the Spirit of God, what was said of the

disciples will be said of us: "These ... have turned the world upside down" (Acts 17:6). Being controlled by the Holy Spirit releases God's divine power enabling believers to do great things for God. Jesus said regarding those filled with the Spirit, "He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do, because I go unto my Father" (John 14:12). Likewise Paul said, "Unto him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh within us" (Eph. 3:20). When self-will is jettisoned, sin is confessed, and obedience is maintained, only then is the believer controlled by the Spirit of God.

C. The Key for Church Renewal

There has been a tremendous effort recently to recapture the meaning and effectiveness of the early church. The key to reproducing the power of the early church is not necessarily duplicating its methodology, but being controlled by the same Holy Spirit who was in the early church. When the church in the twentieth-century is controlled by the Spirit of God as was the early church, then the church will be under God's divine direction. Then and only then will the twentieth-century church

REVIEW

I. THE CONTRAST (v. 18a)

II. THE COMMAND (v. 18b)

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A. The Inward Result--Singing (v. 19)

LESSON

B. The Upward Result--Saying Thanks to God (v. 20)

"Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ."

A Spirit-filled believer gives thanks to God for everything. Psalm 100:4 declares, "Enter into his [God's] gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise; be thankful unto him, and bless his name." Commentator William Hendriksen said that when a person prays without thanksgiving, he has clipped the wings of prayer so that it cannot rise.

1. The source of thanksgiving

I believe being thankful is the single greatest act of personal worship a Christian can render to God. Thankfulness is the epitome of true spiritual worship. Worship does not necessarily require stained glass windows, organ music, or singing great hymns in church, though those things may enhance it. The highest and ultimate act in worship is to possess a thankful heart, recognizing God as the source of everything. The ability to offer thanks in the midst of any situation, good or bad, is the ability to praise God. A thankful heart sees beyond the difficult circumstances to the sovereignty of God (cf. Rom. 8:28). Thankfulness helps conform the believer to the image of Jesus Christ because it causes him to see God working out everything for the good regardless of the difficult circumstances (Rom. 8:28).

a) Job 1:21--Job said, "Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return there. The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." Job thanked God when He gave but also when He took away. Job had a mature perspective in seeing God as the source of everything. b) 2 Corinthians 4:15--Paul said, "All things are for your sakes, that the abundant grace might through the thanksgiving of many redound to the glory of God." Everything God does is for the believer's good whether a blessing or trial. We glorify God when we recognize that fact. Only then is a believer able to say, "God, no matter how much this situation hurts, I want to be thankful to You in spite of it." c) 2 Corinthians 9:11-12, 15--Paul said, "Being enriched in everything to all bountifulness, which causeth through us thanksgiving to God. For the administration of this service not only supplieth the want of the saints, but is abundant also by many thanksgivings unto God Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift." The ultimate response to what God has done in the life of a believer is thanksgiving. God has done all that He has that we might be thankful to Him. When we

thank God, we give Him glory.

2. The specifics of thanksgiving

Ephesians 5:20 answers several specific questions about the character of true thanksgiving.

a) When are believers to be thankful?"Always" Some people might say, "But you don't know my problem." This verse however, does not qualify itself with any special circumstances. The Christian is to be forever thankful to God regardless of his situation. Why? Because a thankful attitude recognizes that God is in complete control. His objective is to conform the believer to the image of Jesus Christ with everything that occurs in his life. As a result God receives the glory that is rightfully His. The apostle Paul said, "In everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you" (1 Thess. 5:18). If you do not understand what God is trying to accomplish by a certain trial or circumstance in your life, trust that as you obey Him in everything, it is His will that you persevere with thanksgiving. In Ephesians 5:17 Paul says, "Be ye not unwise but understanding what the will of the Lord is," and His will is clearly revealed in verse 20: "Giving thanks always." God's will for every believer is to be forever thankful. Shakespeare's king Lear said, "Ingratitude, thou marble-hearted fiend How sharper than a serpent's tooth it is to have a thankless child!" (IV. 263, 312). If Shakespeare recognized the detestable nature of ingratitude, imagine how God must feel. Should a believer complain when God brings difficulties and trials into a believer's life, it destroys what God is attempting to accomplish. It renders James 1:2-4 meaningless: "My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into various trials, knowing this, that the testing of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, lacking nothing." The will of God is to be thankful so that He can accomplish His perfect work in your life. (1) Thankfulness after a trial Many people are thankful only after God has blessed then it is easy to be thankful after experiencing a blessing. Although it is easy, God does expect that kind of thankfulness. (a) Exodus 14:31--After the Lord delivered the children of Israel, Scripture says, "Israel saw that great work which the Lord did upon the Egyptians: and the people feared the Lord, and believed the Lord and his servant Moses." They were so thankful, they sang unto the Lord: "Then sang Moses and the children of Israel this song unto the Lord, and spoke, saying, I will sing unto the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously: the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea. The Lord is my strength and song, and he is become my salvation; he is my God, and I will prepare him an habitation; my father's God, and I will exalt him" (Ex. 15:1-2). The singing was an expression of thanksgiving after the blessing. (b) Revelation 15:1-3--In recounting his vision, the apostle John's said, "I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvelous, seven angels having the seven last plagues; for in them is filled up the wrath of God. And I saw, as it were, a sea of glass mingled with fire, and them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, standing on the sea of glass, having the harps of God. And they sing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints." That describes the martyred saints in the tribulation who will gain victory over the Antichrist. They will sing that the victory is over and the battle is won. It will be a time of great thanksgiving. There will always be times of great thanksgiving after a battle is won, but there should also be times of great thanksgiving even beforehand. (2) Thankfulness before a trial This is the ability to give thanks to God before the battle begins. It is thankfulness in anticipation of victory. This is where true faith enters the scene. It is believing God before anything happens. In John 11:39-44 Jesus thanks God at the beginning of a difficult situation. While everyone around Him was crying, He said, "Take away the stone. Martha, the sister of him that was dead, saith unto him, Lord, by this time he stinketh; for he hath been dead four days. Jesus saith unto her, Said I not unto thee that, if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God? Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead was laid. And Jesus lifted up his eyes, and said, Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me. And I knew that thou hearest me always; but, because of the people who stand by I said it, that they may believe that thou hast sent me. And when he thus had spoken,

he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth. And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with graveclothes; and his face was bound with a cloth. Jesus saith unto them, Loose him, and let him go." This is a classic example of thanking God in advance. When you see a trial coming, you can believe God for the victory before it ever arrives. When someone falls apart in anticipation of a potential problem, he hasn't reached the level of maturity God desires. It is easy to thank God after the blessing, but much harder to thank Him before the trial begins. (3) Thankfulness during a trial is the hardest of all to thank God in the midst of a difficult trial. Doing so is indicative of true Christian character. Throughout the Bible, God's choice people have always been able to give thanks—even in the most impossible situations. (a) Daniel 6:10--King Darius set out a decree that stated no one could be worshiped or prayed to except him, but "when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went into his house; and his windows being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem, he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did previously." Daniel was thrown into a lion's den as a result, but God honored his thankful spirit by sparing his life. (b) Jonah 2:1-10--Jonah "prayed unto the Lord, his God, out of the fish's belly, and said, I cried by reason of mine affliction unto the Lord, and he heard me; out of the belly of sheol cried I, and thou heardest my voice. For thou hadst cast me into the deep, in the midst of the seas, and the floods compassed me about; all thy billows and thy waves passed over me. Then I said, I am cast out of thy sight; yet I will look again toward thine holy temple. The waters compassed me about, even to the soul; the depth closed me round about, the weeds were wrapped about my head. I went down to the bottoms of the mountains; the earth, with its bars, was about me forever; yet hast thou brought up my life from corruption, O Lord, my God. When my soul fainted within me, I remembered the Lord; and my prayer came in unto thee, into thine holy temple. They that observe lying vanities forsake their own mercy. But I will sacrifice unto thee with the voice of thanksgiving; I will pay that that I have vowed. Salvation is of the Lord. And the Lord spoke unto the fish, and it vomited out Jonah upon the dry land." Could you ever possibly imagine yourself in Jonah's situation--floating around in the acidic stomach of a huge fish? And even worse, to be alive and awake in the belly of that fish! But in the midst of his difficulty, Jonah thank the Lord for his problem and God responded to his prayer. He honored Jonah's thankfulness. (c) Hebrews 12:3-4--Hebrews 11 is a chapter dedicated to those who thanked God in the midst of terrible trials. The writer of Hebrews then turned to those he was writing to and said, "Ye have not resisted unto blood, striving against sin" (Heb. 12:4). He was encouraging those who had not suffered such terrible tragedies to thank God in the midst of their own trials. (d) Acts 5:40-42--Luke said, "When they [the Sanhedrin] had called the apostles, and beaten them, they commanded that they should not speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go. And they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name. And daily in the Temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ." The apostles were thankful to God in the midst of their beatings. (e) Acts 16:25--Luke said, "At midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God; and the prisoners heard them." With their hands and feet stretched as far as they could be and locked in stocks, they thanked God in the midst of their situation. (f) Philippians 1:12-14, 18--Paul said, "I would ye should understand, brethren, that the things which happened unto me have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the gospel, so that my bonds in Christ are manifest in all the palace, and in all other places; and many of the brethren in the Lord, becoming confident by my bonds, are much more bold to speak the word without fear.... Notwithstanding, every way, whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is preached; and in that I do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice." Even though Paul was a prisoner and being persecuted, his heart was filled with thanksgiving. How a believer give thanks is indicative of his spiritual maturity. If a Christian gives thanks to God only after a blessing or trial, he has reached only the first level of thanksgiving. If he can thank God before the trial, he shows a higher level of maturity. If however, he can thank God in the midst of the trial, he has reached the level of maturity very few Christians ever know. One such Christian, Joni Eareckson Tada, wrote about her experience after an accident that

paralyzed her body (recounted in Joni [Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1976]). She learned that giving thanks is not a matter of feeling thankful; it's a matter of obedience. You don't always have to feel thankful, but true spiritual maturity is a matter of recognizing that your entire life and circumstances are in God's sovereign hand. Everything that happens is simply God working out His purpose--conforming the believer to the image of Jesus Christ.

b) For what are we to be thankful?"All things"(1) The reasonThe believer is to be thankful for everything, including the goodness and mercy of God (Ps. 106:1; 107:1; 136:1- 3), the gift of Christ (2 Cor. 9:15), Christ's power and reign (Rev. 11:17), the reception and effectual working of the Word of God in others (1 Thess. 2:13; 3:9), deliverance through Christ from indwelling sin (Rom. 7:23-25), victory over death and the grave (1 Cor. 15:57), wisdom and might (Dan. 2:23), the triumph of the gospel (2 Cor. 2:14), the conversion of others (Rom. 6:17), faith exhibited by others (Rom. 1:8; 2 Thess. 1:3), love exhibited by others (2 Thess. 1:3), grace bestowed on others (1 Cor. 1:4; Phil. 1:3-5; Col. 1:3- 6), the zeal exhibited by others (2 Cor. 8:16), the nearness of God's presence (Ps. 75:1), appointment to the ministry (1 Tim. 1:12), willingness to offer our resources for God's service (1 Chr. 29:6-14), and the supply of our bodily wants (Rom. 14:6-7; 1 Tim. 4:3-4). In short we're to be thankful for all men (1 Tim. 2:1), and all things (2 Cor. 9:11; Eph. 5:20), including trouble (James 1:2-5).

(2) The realityOnly a humble person can be thankful for everything. He knows he deserves nothing and therefore gives thanks even for the smallest things. Lack of thankfulness comes from pride and thinking you deserve better. Pride tries to convince a man that his job, health, spouse is not as good as he deserves. Pride was the root of the first sin and remains the root of all sin. Satan's pride led him to rebel against God. The pride of Adam and Eve led them to believe Satan's lie that they deserved more than they had, even the right to be as God. Believers are still subject to the temptations of pride. The only cure is humility, and that comes from being filled with the Spirit. Humility dethrones self and enthrones Christ, and in so doing thankfully acknowledges that every good thing--including many things that do not at the time seem to be good--is from His gracious hand.

c) How are we to be thankful?"In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ" The believer's thankfulness is to be consistent with who Christ is and what He has done. Regardless of what occurs in a believer's life, he can still be thankful because Christ is working out His perfect will and deserves all the glory. Christ says thanks to the Father through the believer because He gives the believer the capacity to be thankful.

(1) The contrastA person who is not a Christian doesn't have Christ interceding on his behalf at the right hand of God or the Holy Spirit indwelling his life. Likewise he does not have the promise of joint-heirship with Christ or citizenship in God's kingdom. Since a non-believer has no indwelling Holy Spirit, he therefore is not filled by Him. He is not granted any of the wonderful promises made by Christ. He therefore cannot be thankful and has no assurance that everything is working out for his good, like the believer has (Rom. 8:28). He ends up only seeking the present, not eternal glory. The child of God however is indwelt by Christ, is a joint heir with Him, and does have the Son interceding for him at the Father's right hand. He has all of Christ's promises made certain through the Holy Spirit who indwells him. And as the Spirit controls him, he is cleansed from sin and made progressively more like Christ Himself. Since all this is true, the believer has every cause to be wholly thankful to God.

(2) The culminationBy nature, man is utterly self-seeking, and when he doesn't feel he got what he deserved, he becomes ingratitude personified. But the mature Christian who is filled with the Spirit becomes thankful as Christ Himself was thankful. In His earthly ministry, Jesus was continually giving thanks to His Father (cf. Matt. 11:25; 26:27; John 6:11, 23; 11:41). Before He multiplied the loaves and fish to feed the four thousand, "He gave thanks and broke them, and started giving them to His disciples to serve to them" (Mark 8:6, NASB). Even as He instituted the Lord's Supper in the shadow of the cross, He thanked His Father for the bread that would soon become a memorial of His sacrificed body (Luke 22:19). Jesus left His glory in Heaven and came to Earth to humble Himself and become a servant. He was spat upon, ridiculed, despised, scorned, rejected, blasphemed, beaten, and finally crucified. Yet because of His great humility He always gave thanks in all things. He didn't deserve any of the

ill-treatment He received, yet He was thankful. He deserved glory but received humiliation, He deserved love but received hate, He deserved worship but received rejection, He deserved praise but received scorn, He deserved riches but became poor, and He deserved holiness but He was made sin on our behalf. Jesus never ceased giving thanks to God because He could see the ultimate end in view--the cross. Hebrews 12:2 says we're to be "looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." Because Jesus emptied Himself to the point of giving His own life (cf. Phil. 2:7-8), He is able to fill believers with everything He emptied Himself of, including life. We deserve humiliation and yet in Christ we receive glory. We deserve to be hated but in Christ we receive divine love, we deserve to be rejected but in Christ we receive sonship, we deserve scorn but in Christ we receive affection, we deserve poverty yet He gives us His riches, and we deserve sin's curse yet He imparts to us His own righteousness and we receive eternal life! For what can we not give thanks? d) To whom do we give thanks?"Unto God and the Father"Believers should thank their heavenly Father just as the Lord Himself did on earth. The apostle Paul uses the term "Father" because he is emphasizing the benevolent aspect of God, who continually bestows gifts to His own. James says, "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning" (1:17). The Giver of these perfect gifts should also then be the Receiver of genuine and heartfelt thanks. We are to thank our beneficent Father for all things because He has given us all things (cf. Eph. 1:3). I once had the occasion to give a gift to someone who was in dire need. Subsequently, I received a note entirely thanking God and not me. It was thrilling to see that that person recognized the real gift giver--God Himself--and not simply the channel for that gift--me. Throughout the note, the person thanked the Lord and never mentioned me! They correctly recognized God as the actual source of all things. Thanking a human being is by no means wrong, but when a believer sees God as the source of everything, then he has the perspective of Ephesians 5:20.(1) The preceptsA distinguishing characteristic of unsaved people is thanklessness. Paul stated in Romans 1:21, "When they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful." The true mark of a Spirit-controlled believer is a thankful heart toward God. The Old Testament is replete with examples of those who were thankful to God (Psalms 30:4, 12; 50:14; 69:30; 92:1; 95:2; 100:4, and 116:17). There were certain orders of Levitical priests who had no other duty but to lead the people in thanksgiving (cf. 1 Chron. 16:4, 7-36; 23:27-30; 2 Chron. 31:2). The various feasts of Israel were designed to cultivate a spirit of thankfulness and praise. The Feast of Pentecost, Trumpets, Tabernacles, Lights, and Purim were great national acts of thanksgiving to a God who had served His people so lovingly and graciously.(2) The patternLikewise in the New Testament, God calls all believers to be thankful. Paul said to the Philippians, "Be anxious for nothing, but in everything, by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God" (4:6). And he said to the Colossians, "As ye have, therefore, received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him, rooted and built up in him, and established in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding with thanksgiving" (2:6-7). The writer of Hebrews commands, "Let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name" (Heb. 13:15).

3. The scope of thanksgiving

a) The parable of the rich foolSome people are not thankful simply because they think they deserve every good thing they have--and more. They think that thanksgiving is unnecessary. Jesus said, "The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully. And he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no place to bestow my crops? And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my crops and my goods. And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease. Eat, drink, and be merry. But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee; then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided? So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is

not rich toward God" (Luke 12:16-21). The rich farmer of Jesus' parable was presumptuous about his future prosperity and ungrateful for his past prosperity. He didn't think he owed God anything because he didn't acknowledge that God was the source of all his wealth. He assumed he had amassed all the wealth himself. Within Christ's judgment lay the truth that the farmer could no more protect his possessions by his own power than he had produced them by his own power. What the rich farmer didn't realize was that unless God made the grain grow, he would have had nothing. Not feeling the need to thank God is much worse than ingratitude--it essentially is unbelief. Failing to acknowledge God is practical atheism.^{b)} The parable of the Pharisee and the tax collector There are other people who thank themselves while under the guise that they are thanking God, but that is hypocrisy. Jesus "spoke this parable unto certain who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others: Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this tax collector. I fast twice in the week; I give tithes of all that I possess. And the tax collector, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner. I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other; for everyone that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted" (Luke 18:9-14). Although the Pharisee used God's name, his thankfulness was to himself and for himself. He was calling attention to his false piety. And because God had no part in his prayer, it was totally worthless. The humble, penitent tax-collector went home justified whereas the proud, self-righteous Pharisee did not. Like the rest of his life, the Pharisee's prayer of thanksgiving was hypocritical sham and pretense.^{c)} The account of the ten lepers Luke said of Jesus, "It came to pass, as he went to Jerusalem, that he passed through the midst of Samaria and Galilee. And as he entered into a certain village, there met him ten men that were lepers, who stood afar off. And they lifted up their voices, and said, Jesus, Master, have mercy on us. And when he saw them, he said unto them, Go show yourselves unto the priests. And it came to pass that, as they went, they were cleansed. And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, and with a loud voice glorified God, and fell down on his face at his feet, giving him thanks; and he was a Samaritan. And Jesus, answering, said, Were there not ten cleansed? But where are the nine? There are not found that returned to give glory to God, except this stranger. And he said unto him, Arise, go thy way; thy faith hath made thee well" (17:11-19). The Samaritan was considered an outcast in Jesus' day but he was the only one who received true forgiveness. All ten were healed of their physical disease but only one received salvation. It is apparent the other nine lepers sought Jesus for only physical healing. The Samaritan in contrast, sought it for God's glory. His thankfulness was an expression of his trust in Christ. He recognized that he was utterly helpless in Himself and that his healing was undeserved and entirely by God's grace. Gratitude is man at his best; ingratitude is man at his worst. The Spirit-filled believer will not only be thankful but will say like King David, "I may proclaim with the voice of thanksgiving, and declare all Thy wonders" (Ps. 26:7, NASB).

C. The Outward Result--Submitting (v. 21)

"Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God."

Note: The outward result of submitting to one another is expounded on in great detail in the study guide entitled, The Fulfilled Family. It is illustrated in the relationships between husbands and wives (Eph. 5:22-33), children and parents (6:1-4), and slaves and masters (6:5-9).

A Heart of Thanksgiving A city missionary in London was called to an old tenement building where a woman lay during the last stages of a terrible disease. The room was cold and small and the woman had nowhere to lie but on the floor. When the missionary asked if there was anything he could do, she said, "I have all I really need; I have Christ!" Hearing that account, someone wrote:

In the heart of London City,
'Mid the dwellings of the poor,

These bright, golden words were uttered,
'I have Christ! What want I more?'
Spoken by a lonely woman,
Dying on a garret floor,
Having not one earthly comfort--
'I have Christ! What want I more?'"

Focusing on the Facts

1. What is the key to living the Christian life?
2. Having begun in the Spirit, we will become _____ only in the Spirit.
3. Name the key leaders in the New Testament who were characterized as being filled with the Holy Spirit. Support your answer with Scripture.
4. Being controlled by the Holy Spirit releases God's _____ enabling believers to do great things for God.
5. What must occur for believers to be controlled by the Spirit of God?
6. What was the key for church renewal in the first century? What is the key for church renewal today?
7. True or False: Worship and thankfulness are two unrelated issues?
8. Give examples from Scripture on how the sovereignty of God and the thankfulness of man work in harmony.
9. God's will for every believer is to be forever _____.
10. Discuss the various times we can be thankful in relation to a trial.
11. What is the hardest attitude to have in the Christian life when in the midst of a trial? Give examples of those in Scripture who had this attitude?
12. True or False: How a believer give thanks is indicative of his spiritual maturity.
13. What reasons do believers have to be thankful?
14. _____ was the root of the first sin and remains the root of all sin.
15. What is meant by thanking God "in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ"?
16. Contrast the role of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer and non-believer.
17. How did Jesus express an attitude of thankfulness?
18. What is the apostle Paul emphasizing when he uses the phrase "Unto God and the Father"?
19. When a believer sees God as the _____ of _____, then he has the perspective of Ephesians 5:20.
20. What do the parable of the rich fool, the parable of the Pharisee and the tax collector, and the account of the ten lepers teach us about thanksgiving?

Pondering the Principles

1. The believer is to be ever and always thankful to God because that is His will. So often though, giving thanks to God is difficult because specific trials or hardships cause much pain and grief. When are you more likely to express thanks to God: before, during, or after a trial? The hardest time to be thankful to God is during a specific trial. As God brings you through your next trial, begin to thank Him in the midst of it and ask for strength and courage to grow as a result of His testing.
2. People tend to be either thankless, hypocritical in their offering of thanks, or truly thankful. How do you tend to be? Of the three parables described on pages xx-xx, which most characterizes your life? Take time now to evaluate your attitude about thanksgiving. Ask God to make you a truly thankful person.
3. Ephesians 5:20 gives four principles for offering thanks. We are to give thanks: (1) always, (2) for all things, (3) in the name of Jesus Christ, (4) to God the Father. Do you always give God thanks for all things? Do you thank God because of who Christ is and what He has done for you? As you offer

God thanks in the future, begin to use this four-point check system so you can better glorify Him.

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