**Study notes – Ephesians 5:18-21 Power in Christ**

**Welcome**– What particular worship songs do you remember? How/why do they speak to you?

**Worship** – Given the focus of the study it might work best to leave the worship until the end. You could then spend some time thanking God for his amazing grace to us. The following song reminds us of God’s plan of salvation from the start of creation:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Of5IcFWiEpg>

**Word – Power in Christ (Ephesians 5:18-21)**

**The negative:** Don’t get drunk on wine – In Paul’s time getting drunk was associated with various religious practices through which people tried to access a “divine consciousness”. Paul is contrasting this with our salvation which is God’s initiative, God reaching down to us, not us trying to reach up to heaven.

**The positive** – Be filled with Spirit. Which has 4 dimensions:

Command – not optional extra

Continuous – keep on being filled, not a one-off event

Passive – in sense the filling is done to us, we can block it, but we can’t do the filling ourselves

Plural – addressed to church not just us as individuals

**Outcomes:** Paul gives 4:

Speaking psalms, hymns spiritual songs to each other

Singing and making music in our hearts to Lord

Giving thanks to God

Submitting to one another

**Questions**

* It is easy to skip over the negative – we are unlikely to be taking part in drunk religious orgies - but in what ways might we try and reach up to God through our own means rather than accept God reaching down to us?
* What does Paul mean by phrase “*be filled with spirit*”? You might like to look at a parallel passage in Colossians 3:16-17 where Paul says: *“Let the word of Christ dwell in your hearts”* and then gives the same outcomes as our verses in Ephesians. How does being filled with the Spirit, and letting the word of God dwell in you richly fit together?
* If we use the image of a pipe which the Spirit flows through, it has been suggested that we can *“clog the pipe up, shut down or stop the flow”.* How might we do this? And how can we ensure the Spirit is free to flow through us?
* What do you feel about the fact that Paul is addressing these words to us as church, i.e. its plural not individual? In what ways does this challenge your perspective/experience of church?
* The first outcome Paul describes is that of worshipping together – why is this the first priority? How can we help or hinder each other when we worship together?
* How do you respond to this quote: *“We are right to nurture the expectation of a particular encounter with the dynamic presence of the Spirit and the indwelling richness of the word when we gather together in the corporate worship of the church.” John Risbridger book on BST Worship.*
* The second outcome is thanksgiving – what are you thankful for right now? Perhaps pause for a moment and bring your thanks to God
* The final outcome is Submitting to each other – how can that flow out of worship and thanksgiving?