

Discussion Questions

Intoxicating Spirits

Ephesians 5:15-21

(Share about your favorite food and drink and why you enjoy it so much.)

Ephesians 5:15-21

Look [well] then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, [“redeeming”] the time, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. [That is] do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit, addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with all your heart, giving thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ.

In Ephesians 5, Paul wrote, “*Do not get drunk with wine...but be filled with the Spirit.*”

- Have you ever been drunk? What did you like about it? What did you not like about it?
- Do you ever feel tempted toward drunkenness, if so, when?
- Why do you think Paul warns us: “*Do not get drunk with wine...*”?
- It appears that Paul seems to think being filled with the Spirit might be like a replacement for drunkenness or maybe even a better kind of drunkenness. What do you think? Do you think being filled with the Holy Spirit can provide a similar or even better effect than drunkenness?
- Have you ever had an especially intimate or memorable time under the influence of the Holy Spirit? Share about it.
- What do you think being filled with the Spirit—rather than being drunk with wine—has to do with being wise, redeeming the time and understanding the Lord’s will?
- There is a list of activities in the above passage following the words: “*but be filled with the Spirit...*” Do you think doing these activities fills us with the Spirit or the opposite: being filled with the Spirit causes these activities in us? Or both? Explain.

When we read passages like the one above we can be tempted to judge ourselves and others.

- In what areas do you find you are most judgmental towards yourself? How about towards others?
- Are there any areas in which you have tried to make “self improvements” but are just sick of yourself and feel like it’s a lost cause?
- Why do you think God allows space for us to wrestle with judgments of others and ourselves?
- Since God has “consigned all men to disobedience that he may have mercy on all” (Rom. 11:32), do you think it is possible for us to make good judgments? If we do make good judgments, how are they made possible if we are “consigned to disobedience”?

It’s easy to get bogged down with our sin and inability to make good judgments but Scripture reveals that the Judgment of God is revealed in Christ; He is God’s Judgment and His Judgment is Love!

- When you reflect on Christ and what He did for you on the cross, what does that reveal to you about God’s Judgment and about you?
- Who does He say you are?

Surrender the areas where you have tried to improve on yourself—trying to use your own judgment—to God. Take a moment to ask Him to set you free in those areas with His Judgment and instead fill you with His promised Spirit so that you can escape the lies and illusions of this world.

Drink from the fountain of His love.

**These questions were created by Kimberly Weynen*