

Sermon Series: The Building Blocks of Healthy Relationships

Sermon Title: The Building Block of Spirit Filled Living

Sermon Text: Ephesians 5:15-21

Sermon Summary: This study concludes the building blocks of healthy relationships although it is not the last of the studies on Relationships! Being filled with the Holy Spirit is one of the most important building blocks of all when it comes to healthy relationships! In fact theologians in the NIV Application Commentary state that “Ephesians 5:15-21 is a summary climax and a further development of what it means to ‘live a life worthy of the calling you have received’” which we saw back in Ephesians 4:1! This study answers this question: What is Spirit filled living? Spirit filled living is living wise in The Spirit, living dependent on The Spirit, living in a Spirit of worship, living in a Spirit of gratitude, and living in a Spirit of submission.

Full Sermon Notes:

Because Jesus was willing to allow His righteous life blood to flow from His torn body to cleanse my unrighteous life, I am able to not only be forgiven for my sins, I now have the opportunity to be filled with His precious Holy Spirit on a daily basis. Sin no longer separates me from having a personal relationship with God! Because my sin is washed away by the Blood of the Lamb I can walk in sweet fellowship with God! The Spirit of the Lamb of God resides in me, and folks He brings the power of the Blood into my life on a daily basis and He enhances my relationships for so many reasons. We're going to talk about that today. Pray!!

Father God, thank You for creating us and breathing into us the very breath of life! Thank you for Your willingness to come to this world and take on human flesh as God the Son, and give Your life for us! Thank you for not leaving us alone when You ascended back to heaven! You sent us Your Holy Spirit to live in our hearts and to walk with us as we live out our lives in this world! God you know the struggles we face in this life. The disappointments, the attacks from the enemy, the temptations from the flesh, the fears of uncertainty, the sadness of the loss of loved ones, difficulties in relationships, and just knowing how to make the right decisions we are faced with on a daily basis. But we are not left alone to face these things. You, oh God, are with us every moment and every step of the way! And what sense of peace and relief that brings to our hearts!! I pray you will let the message today teach us and empower us to live Spirit filled lives! Fill me with Your precious Holy Spirit and anoint the words that are spoken today. Let me fade into the background and allow Your glory to come to the forefront of everything that is said and done here today! Thanks for hearing and answering this prayer, In Jesus Name I pray and believe!

Over the past 10 weeks we've talked about the building blocks of healthy relationships. We talked about the building blocks of unity, serving, love, attitude, authenticity, selfcontrol, responsibility, wholesome words, forgiveness, moral purity and the final one today, the building block of Spirit filled living! Although this is the last building block, it will not be the final message on relationships! In fact this message sets the stage for our next series titled: It Starts at Home and how being filled with the Holy Spirit is probably the most important building block of all when it comes to healthy relationships and especially in the family! In fact theologians in the NIV

Application Commentary state that “Ephesians 5:15-21 is a summary climax and a further development of what it means to ‘live a life worthy of the calling you have received’” which we saw back in Ephesians 4:1! Let’s read our text in Ephesians 5:15-21 and see what God’s Word has to say about the building block of Spirit filled living!

Ephesians 5:15 Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise,  
Ephesians 5:16 making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil.  
Ephesians 5:17 Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord’s will is.  
Ephesians 5:18 Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit,  
Ephesians 5:19 speaking to one another with psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit. Sing and make music from your heart to the Lord,  
Ephesians 5:20 always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.  
Ephesians 5:21 Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.

From this text we can answer this question: What is Spirit filled living? Spirit filled living is...

### **Living Wise in The Spirit!**

Ephesians 5:15 Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise,  
Ephesians 5:16 making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil.  
Ephesians 5:17 Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord’s will is.

Do you want to live a wise life or a foolish life? If you want to live a life of wisdom then you must understand that The Holy Spirit reveals the wisdom of God through the Word of God and helps you remember that Word, just when you need it! Jesus was the embodiment of the Word of God and no one ever lived the Word or the Spirit filled life like Jesus! John tells us this...

John 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.  
John 1:2 He was with God in the beginning.

And then down in verse 14 we are told...

John 1:14 The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

So the wisdom and Word of God became flesh. That’s who Jesus was and is! Scripture tells us The Holy Spirit descended upon Jesus at His Baptism and that He was led by The Holy Spirit. Now watch what Jesus the Son, full of grace and truth, the Word made flesh, tells His disciples towards the end of His ministry...

John 14:26 But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.

The Holy Spirit brings God's wisdom into your life and your relationships in powerful ways! The Holy Spirit reminds us of the Spirit filled life Jesus lived and brings to us the power to follow His example. Paul tells us that...

*The Holy Spirit Helps you see and seize opportunities you would have otherwise missed!*

Paul said...

Ephesians 5:16 making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil.

Everyday we are faced with choices and decisions! There are opportunities to do good or to do evil! We can build our relationships up or tear them down, depending on what we decide to do with our opportunities. Sometimes we miss opportunities to do good because we are not allowing The Holy Spirit of God to fill us, speak to us and to guide us! The Psalmist understood the opportunities that we all face and how decisions impact our lives and our relationships. Here's what he had to say...

Psalm 1:1 Blessed is the one who does not walk in step with the wicked or stand in the way that sinners take or sit in the company of mockers,

Psalm 1:2 but whose delight is in the law of the LORD, and who meditates on his law day and night.

Psalm 1:3 That person is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither— whatever they do prospers.

Psalm 1:4 Not so the wicked! They are like chaff that the wind blows away.

Psalm 1:5 Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the assembly of the righteous.

Psalm 1:6 For the LORD watches over the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked leads to destruction.

Job quoted God in one of his discourses...

Job 28:28 And he said to the human race, "The fear of the Lord—that is wisdom, and to shun evil is understanding."

*The Holy Spirit helps you discover God's Will for your life!*

Paul said...

Ephesians 5:17 Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord's will is.

So one of the best ways to live wisely and not foolishly is to allow the Holy Spirit to help you discern right from wrong in all areas of your life, both what you should not do and what you should do! He, The Holy Spirit, wants to lead you into God's will for your life, and this is certainly

true when it comes to your relationships. Now it's so important for me to mention something to you about this. The Holy Spirit convicts us when we've done wrong or when we've not done something we should have done! Kids, have you ever disobeyed your parents and felt guilty about that? That's because you know your parents weren't trying to be mean, they were in fact trying to protect you or teach you to do the right things and not do wrong things. The Holy Spirit convicts us when we sin because He is trying to protect us from the terrible consequences that come along with sin! Conviction of the Holy Spirit is different from Satan's condemnation. The Holy Spirit will convict us when we are about to do something wrong, when we are doing something wrong, or when we've done wrong in order to draw us away from destruction to forgiveness and healing.

On the other hand, when you've done something wrong and you begin feeling as if God would never forgive you, never hear your prayers, never love you again or never give you another chance, that's not the conviction of The Holy Spirit! That's Satan's condemnation! He's trying to destroy you. God's Word tells us plainly...

Romans 8:1 Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus,

When The Holy Spirit convicts you He is trying to save you by getting you to live wise in the Spirit!

The writer of Proverbs weighed in on the living wisely concept when he said the following...

Proverbs 4:5 Get wisdom, get understanding; do not forget my words or turn away from them.

Proverbs 4:6 Do not forsake wisdom, and she will protect you; love her, and she will watch over you.

Proverbs 4:7 The beginning of wisdom is this: Get wisdom. Though it cost all you have, get understanding.

Proverbs 4:8 Cherish her, and she will exalt you; embrace her, and she will honor you.

Proverbs 4:9 She will give you a garland to grace your head and present you with a glorious crown."

Proverbs 4:10 Listen, my son, accept what I say, and the years of your life will be many.

Proverbs 4:11 I instruct you in the way of wisdom and lead you along straight paths.

Proverbs 4:12 When you walk, your steps will not be hampered; when you run, you will not stumble.

Proverbs 4:13 Hold on to instruction, do not let it go; guard it well, for it is your life.

What is Spirit filled living? Spirit filled living is...

### **Living Dependent on The Spirit!**

Ephesians 5:18 Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit,

In other words, be filled with The Spirit, singular, not the spirits, plural! The Holy Spirit fills your life with meaning and purpose so you don't need the crutch of alcohol or other substances. Everyone knows how a person gets filled with the spirits or influence of alcohol, that's simple. They over indulge in the use of alcohol or use other substances and those things certainly influence every decision a person makes! That's why it's called being under the influence. But how does one get filled with The Holy Spirit of God so He can influence us in a positive and morally pure way? It all begins when we place our faith in Jesus for salvation. Paul tells us in Romans 5:1-5 this amazing truth...

Romans 5:1 Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,

Romans 5:2 through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we boast in the hope of the glory of God.

Romans 5:3 Not only so, but we also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance;

Romans 5:4 perseverance, character; and character, hope.

Romans 5:5 And hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us.

God has poured out His love into our hearts by The Holy Spirit. Poured out! Not sprinkled, not measured out carefully in little small increments. Poured out His love into our hearts through The Holy Spirit! What a gracious act of God! It is very important that we understand some basic things about The Holy Spirit if we are to live dependent on The Spirit. First of all we receive The Holy Spirit when we accept Christ as our Savior not at some later date. The way Jesus comes into our hearts and lives is by way of The Holy Spirit and that happens when we get saved! And while God has been so wonderful to pour out His love through The Spirit into our hearts, we must understand that God's Spirit is not some inanimate object or force that He pours on us. He is the very Spirit of God! The Spirit of Jesus Christ! He is the third person of the Holy Trinity, Father, Son, Holy Spirit! Remember, God the Son, came to show us the love of The Father, the knowledge and wisdom of The Father, the mercy of The Father, and the power of The Father. He showed us these things by living a Spirit filled life and He has now given us His Spirit so we too can experience Spirit filled living. Jesus was God The Son, but He lived His life just like He wants us to live our lives, under the leadership of The Holy Spirit of God! This was truly Jesus' secret power, although it was no secret. Right after He faced the temptations of Satan in the desert He quoted an Old Testament passage to reveal His secret. Listen...Luke 4:13-20...

Luke 4:13 When the devil had finished all this tempting, he left him until an opportune time.

Luke 4:14 Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit, and news about him spread through the whole countryside.

Luke 4:15 He was teaching in their synagogues, and everyone praised him.

Luke 4:16 He went to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, and on the Sabbath day he went into the synagogue, as was his custom. He stood up to read,

Luke 4:17 and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was handed to him. Unrolling it, he found the place where it is written:

Luke 4:18 “The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free,

Luke 4:19 to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor.”

Luke 4:20 Then he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant and sat down. The eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fastened on him.

The same Spirit of The Lord that anointed Jesus anoints us to live lives which proclaim good news to the world! So if we receive The Holy Spirit when we become a follower of Jesus, what does it mean to be filled with the Spirit? That's a good question. Here's the answer: Being filled with The Holy Spirit is not you getting more of the Spirit, but allowing The Holy Spirit to get more of you! In other words, the building block of Spirit filled living happens when we allow Jesus to be Lord of our lives and let His Holy Spirit fill up every area of our lives, every room, every place, every aspect of our lives. Our morality, our relationships, our work life, our entertainment life, our hobby life, our financial life, our physical life, every room of our lives. This has to do with being willing to submit everything to the Lordship of Christ! In fact, Paul tells us this truth in Romans 8:5-6...

Romans 8:5 Those who live according to the flesh have their minds set on what the flesh desires; but those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires.

Romans 8:6 The mind governed by the flesh is death, but the mind governed by the Spirit is life and peace.

Living in dependence upon the Holy Spirit brings life and peace!! This leads us to another wonderful part of the answer to the question: what is Spirit filled living? Spirit filled living is...

### **Living in a Spirit of Worship**

Ephesians 5:19 speaking to one another with psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit. Sing and make music from your heart to the Lord,

The Holy Spirit allows worship to be a part of our everyday life and to be a part of our relationships! In other words, worship is vertical and horizontal! It is first of all vertical between you and God. It's you looking up to God in awe and wonder as you see God for who He is in all His glory, majesty, and splendor! Regardless of whether you're bowed on your knees or standing with hands lifted high, worship is one of the ways we show our love for God. Lifting the hands is a physical gesture that displays on the outside what we are sensing on the inside! It's like saying, “Wow, would you look at that! How awesome and wonderful is The Lord our God!” But worship is not only vertical, it is also horizontal as we worship together as families and as a church family. What does this look like? Paul said...

Ephesians 5:19 speaking to one another with psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit. Sing and make music from your heart to the Lord,

Hey kids, does this mean that when we are at church, we stop talking normally to others and just walk around singing to everybody? If we did that people just might think we've gone a little crazy! What Paul is talking about here is that we encourage one another when we sing together to the Lord. We help each other when we let them see us singing and worshiping the Lord. How so? Well maybe you've been going through a really hard time in your life and yet you've chosen to trust the Lord and continue worshiping Him through it all! Maybe there's someone who knows what you're going through and seeing your faith, your joy even in the midst of sadness, gives them the hope and courage to keep their faith because they're going through some tough things too! I can't tell you how many times I've been having a tough time and I come together with my Christian family to worship and God uses it to change my whole perspective and outlook on things. Years ago when I was a teenager and had given my life to Christ and even felt called to ministry, yet I was going through a very difficult time in my life. I had faced some disappointments in life and I was down. I went to a Bible study and worship meeting at the home of a family in Jackson, Mississippi, Dan and Betty Helmentoller, who had opened their home to people who were homeless, and some who had been struggling with addictions. As we were singing I was standing by a young man, maybe in his thirties, which seemed really old to me then, he had his eyes closed, was looking heavenward with his hands raised, and he had big old crocodile tears flowing down his face. What I saw that night was the face of someone who had been saved out of the depths of darkness, forgiven of his sins, adopted into the family of God, and who was crying out with gratitude and thankfulness for salvation. His eyes were closed and he had no clue that he was speaking to me with psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit! It encouraged my heart that night and over forty years later, I'm still moved by the Spirit of worship I witnessed that night!

I love the way the writer of Hebrews puts it...

Hebrews 10:23 Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful.

Hebrews 10:24 And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds,

Hebrews 10:25 not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

But there may be someone here who would say this: "Pastor Larry, I'm just not musically inclined. It wouldn't make you or anyone feel any better if I sang to them!" Well, maybe that's why Paul said "Speaking together with Psalms!" Your gift might just be to smile at someone and welcome them to the church and show them where they check their kids into Shorekids, or where the worship center is, and then just sit back and enjoy listening to others sing the songs and play the music. And there may be others here who would say: "Pastor Larry, I can sing, but I'm hurting, and I just don't feel like singing or making music! What am I supposed to do in times like these?" What I'm about to tell you may seem counterintuitive, but hear me out. What is Spirit filled living? Spirit filled living is...

**Living in a Spirit of Gratitude!**

Ephesians 5:20 always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The Holy Spirit causes us to be thankful no matter what we are facing in this life. You might wonder how in the world this could even be remotely true. Like I said, hear me out and I think you'll understand. Let me remind you of a few verses we read just a moment ago...

Romans 5:2 ... And we boast in the hope of the glory of God.

Romans 5:3 Not only so, but we also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance;

Romans 5:4 perseverance, character; and character, hope.

How do our sufferings give us hope? When we suffer, that suffering produces perseverance, and perseverance produces character and character produces hope. Trials and tribulations teach us our need for dependence on the Holy Spirit! For a while the disciples had Jesus in person to get them through storms of life, but when He left to ascend back to heaven, He promised to give them another comforter! His Holy Spirit! And let me remind you of something. When we allow the Holy Spirit to help us remember what Jesus did for us on the Cross to save our souls, and all that He has done for us since we've accepted that salvation, and when we think and remember the promises that have become our own personal promises because we are adopted as the very children of God, then we begin to realize that...

Romans 8:37 No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.

Romans 8:38 For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers,

Romans 8:39 neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

I'm so thankful for that promise! And because of that promise I can do what Paul told the believers in the Thessalonian Church to do...

1 Thessalonians 5:16 Rejoice always,

1 Thessalonians 5:17 pray continually,

1 Thessalonians 5:18 give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.

1 Thessalonians 5:19 Do not quench the Spirit.

Notice, he didn't say give thanks for all circumstances, but in all circumstances! This is how we can give thanks for everything, because we know God is still God and He is going to get us through and we have ultimate victory over this old world! I've read the back of the book and we win in the end!! Romans 8:28 says...

Romans 8:28 And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.



Not all things are good, but all things work together for the good of those who love Him, who have been called according to His purpose!

And this is the very reason we can also answer our question of the day, what is Spirit filled living? With this: Spirit filled living is...

### **Living in a Spirit of Submission**

Ephesians 5:20 always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Ephesians 5:21 Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.

In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ is so important here! If your relationships are all about you, and in your name they will always falter, but if they are in the precious name of Jesus - Spirit filled, then your relationships will flourish. What is the key to Spirit filled relationships?

Submission! The word submission is a word that so many people view negatively! However, submission in Christ and under the control and guidance of The Holy Spirit is a beautiful and freeing concept! Why? Because it's a voluntary submission and comes with the understanding that submission to someone who has your best interest at heart is a good thing. We know from Scripture that God has given us free will to choose whether or not we will submit to His leadership and will, but we also know from Scripture that God's heart and purpose for us is 100% pure. One of my favorite verses in Scripture states God's intentions for us plainly...

Jeremiah 29:11 For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.

Jeremiah 29:12 Then you will call on me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you.

Jeremiah 29:13 You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart.

The Holy Spirit gives us the power to submit first of all to God knowing He cares so deeply for us, and then to one another out of reverence for Christ and this is precisely why I said at the beginning of the message that this building block, the building block of Spirit filled living, is probably the most important one of all. The only way we can control the old sinful and selfish nature is when we submit ourselves to the control of The Holy Spirit. And when we do we exhibit the fruit of the Holy Spirit, and talk about important things for our relationships, check out the fruit of the Spirit list and you'll see why it's so important...

Galatians 5:22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,

Galatians 5:23 gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.

Anybody think those things would make your relationships better? Absolutely!!

Let's pray!