

## **“Spirit-Filled Living”**

*Ephesians 5:19-20*

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In Ephesians 5:18 Paul commands Christians to be Spirit-filled. In 5:19-20 he gives examples of what being Spirit-filled looks like in daily living. Being Spirit-filled is manifest primarily through godly attitudes that are selfless and “other-oriented” including the following:

### 1. Encouraging Others with Uplifting Edification.

*“speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs” (5:19a)*

*“teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs”(Colossians 3:16b)*

### 2. Praising the Lord with Personal Exaltation.

*“singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord” (5:19b)*

*“singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God” (Colossians 3:16c)*

### 3. Being Mindful of Your Blessings with Regular Exaltation.

*“always giving thanks for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father” (5:20)*

*“and whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to God the Father” (Colossians 3:17)*

### **Digging Deeper:**

**5:19—“speaking” [NASB; KJV; NKJV] “addressing” [ESV] “speak” [NIV]** is *lalountes*, a present tense, active voice, participle of result; from the root *laleo*; present tense emphasizes repetition or progression... this is to be an ongoing pattern of behavior; this is the first of 5 participles in verses 19-21 that are all governed by the imperative verb *plerousthe* “be filled” in 5:18—the other 4 participles are “singing,” “making melody,” “giving thanks,” and “submitting”; *laleo* means “to communicate”—similar to *lego* “to speak,” *laleo* refers to the sound which communicates [the mode] whereas *lego* refers to the substance [the content] of what is said; see Revelation 4:1 where a trumpet was “speaking/*laleo*” with John, “saying/*lego*...”

“**to one another**”—*eautois*, reflexive pronoun (in the dative indicating direction), literally “to yourselves” functioning as a reciprocal pronoun (as in 5:21 where *allelois* is used); one of the many “one another” injunctions of the NT reminding us that being a Christian means being part of a corporate entity; each of us is one member in the Body of Christ—we are interdependent upon each other for healthy growth—there are no Lone Ranger Christians!

“**in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs**”—these 3 nouns are in the dative referring to the means of communication; they are 3 distinct words with overlap in meaning and with nuances of difference as well; **1)** “psalms” is from *psalmos* which originally meant “plucking” the string of a bow or a stringed instrument; used 80 times in the OT (LXX) it translates 7 Hebrew words mostly in the Psalms—the singing of Psalms was accompanied by stringed instruments; in the NT *psalmos* occurs 7 times (Luke 20:42; 24:44; Acts 1:20; 13:33; 1 Corinthians 14:26; Colossians 3:16) always in reference to OT Psalms; **2)** “hymns” is from *hymnos*, which historically was poetic material recited or sung in honor and praise to deity; in the OT (LXX) it occurs 16 times translating 5 different Hebrew words, many times translated as “praise”; the verb form is used 4 times in the NT (Matthew 26:30; Mark 14:26; Acts 16:25; Hebrews 2:12); the emphasis in all these examples is that this word refers to “a song of praise to God”; **3)** “songs” is from *odeh* from which we get our English word ‘ode’; it refers to songs of joy or praise, or just simply singing; it occurs 71 times in the OT and translates 6 Hebrew words—the emphasis is always on singing, with or without instrumentation; it is used 7 times in the NT; Paul qualifies the kind of songs to be

sung by the Church, namely “spiritual” songs—music that is God-honoring and consistent with Scriptural content and purposes—“secular,” “non-spiritual” songs don’t make the cut...even if they are excellent in musical quality; to summarize: **psalms** emphasizes the *instrument* of music, **hymns** emphasizes the *artistry* of music, and **songs** emphasizes the human *voice* in music, all 3 of which converge in harmonious exultation, collectively from the saints in giving God honor, glory and praise.

“**singing**”—this is the verb *adoe* and is related to the noun discussed above, *odeh* “song”; it appears 71 times in the OT and 5 times in the NT and it refers to singing.

“**making melody**” [NASB; KJV] “**make music**” [NIV]—this phrase in English is actually just one Greek word, *psallontes*, a participle from the verb *psalloe*, “to pluck” a stringed instrument; it could literally be translated here as “psalming”; it occurs 55 times in the OT sometimes referring to stringed music with singing and sometimes without singing—hence the emphasis is on “making music”; in the NT it appears 5 times and includes the idea of singing with music; in this verse “singing” and “making melody” are joined by the conjunction *kai*, making them one unit, so it should be understood as “singing songs and psalms”

For further thoughts on the implications of Ephesians 5:19-20 relative to corporate music in the Church, see the GBF website under *Ministries—Worship*.