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Weekly Letter – 18 August 2024

Ephesians 5.15-20

“Because we leak!”

Paul’s words of, “don’t get drunk on wine” are rather wise words because, well, we all know from experience that an excess of alcohol generally leads to wild conduct. For me that meant dancing on tables and chairs, and then crashing through them, and trying to pull a huge marquee down. Not particularly creative.

But, Paul’s main interest is not in silly or daft behaviour, but rather, ‘to be filled with the Spirit! So, I wonder, do you regularly pray to be filled with God’s Spirit? A perfectly reasonable question is to ask why do I need to be filled again and again by the Spirit?

David du Plessis (1905-1987) was an American Pentecostal Minister, and he gave an excellent reason, “Because you leak!” His pithy and poignant words emphasise our constant need to be refilled! Paul is urging you to make a choice, for he knows that God’s truth only ever came as a challenge, and is an invitation to follow him and be closer to Him. It is entirely foreign to God to pressure you, or to manipulate you, because He respects your freedom. The God who gives us Christ and His Holy Spirit, addresses us and challenges us, but never forces us to do anything. So when Jesus says, “Let anyone who thirsts come to me and drink, (John 7.37-30) or “ask, seek, and knock, (Matthew 7.7-12)” he is inviting you to choose a way forward. Perhaps it’s worth remembering that nothing will give the Father more joy than giving you what you truly desire, what you deep down know you need.

Some prayers you might like to use?

We praise you, Lord, - and we thank you for all your blessings – Lord, give us your Spirit;

Give us peace of mind and generosity of hearts – grant us health and strength to do your will - Lord, give us your Spirit.

Be with all those who have asked our prayers, and grant them all their needs. – Lord, give us your Spirit; Amen.

Stephen

Sunday Morning Worship in Christ Well, and on Zoom at 10.30 am will be led by Stephen Baker
Bible Reading: Matthew 5.43-48

Take and transform

us

Lectionary readings: 1 Kings 2.10-12, 3.3-14 and Psalm 111: Proverbs 9.1-6 and Psalm 34.9-14: Ephesians 5.15-20: John 6.51-58

Holy God, take and transform us.

We confess that we have lived carelessly,
frittering our days away.

Renew us, Lord in wisdom,
and keep us from slipping into evil ways.

We confess we have acted foolishly,
paying little heed to your instruction.

Renew us Lord, in understanding,
and strengthen us to put your will into practice.

We confess that we have chosen wantonly,
ploughing our resources into passing pleasures.

Renew us, Lord, in the riches of your Spirit,
and focus us for your work and witness.

Holy God,
take our croaky voices, our hesitant hearts,
and by your redeeming love transform us
until our lives become a hymn to your grace and glory.

Dominic Grant

(URC Prayer Handbook 2024)

