



IM UNDER
THE INFLUENCE

S E R M O N G U I D E

I'm Under The Influence

Ephesians 5:11-18

INTRODUCTION

As much as you want to be in control of your life, there comes a time when you have to give up control and yield to a higher power. Once you get saved and begin to live your life for Jesus Christ, you relinquish control and then let the Holy Spirit take control because you've been bought with a price. Greater victory comes for Christians when we learn to walk in the authority and by the power given to us in Jesus Christ. That life giving, life sustaining, life changing power is the power of the Holy Spirit. And it is that power that should impact every aspect of our lives as Christians. We should be under the influence of the Holy Spirit, rather than under the influence of anything or anyone else.

KEY POINTS

1. Bring Light to Dark Places

A poet once said, "It's better to be a candle in the dark than to curse the darkness." We are living in dark times. We are living in times where truth is overlooked, poverty is ignored, bigotry is emboldened, and hate and indecency are popular. Rather than letting this darkness overcome us, if we let our lights shine bring, we can overcome the darkness.

God didn't save us, empower us, and fill us with His Spirit to be a light only in our homes or in the safe confines of spaces that are already well lit. Instead, God saved us to be His ambassadors of light in places where there is no light. The greatest moral tragedy of the church is the misuse of God's presence, power and anointing by spending all its time, resources, and energy bringing light to spaces that are already well lit.

2. Walk in Integrity and Wisdom

When you're under the influence of the Spirit, you don't waste your time on things, activities, and people that don't matter. Paul is telling us in his letter to the Ephesians to not waste our time walking around with the unwise.

We cannot leave the Christian life to chance. We must make wise decisions and seek to do the will of God. Not wasting time goes hand in hand with purpose. It is so sad to see many Christians drift through life, like sleepwalkers, who never really make the most of opportunities to live for Christ and serve Him. If we are to walk with the wise, that means walking with a purpose and a destination in mind. Wise walking is being guided by the Spirit and not by one's own impulses.

3. Be Filled with the Spirit

As followers of Christ, we must learn to not be overindulgent in that which brings temporary satisfaction, but rather to be filled with the Spirit. It is the Spirit that helps temper our desires, so that our wants do not become overdependent on the external realities of life.

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There are a whole host of behaviors Christians can become drunk with. Some people are drunk with power, drunk with credit cards, drunk with sex, or drunk with laziness. But instead of being filled with these things, Paul tells us to be filled with the Holy Spirit because while the physical wine of this world is temporary, the wine of the Spirit is eternal.

When you have the Spirit, you're not controlled by the circumstances or pleasures of this world. That's why the Bible says it's because of the Lord's mercy that we are not consumed. The Holy Spirit helps you to say no when you want to say yes. It helps you walk away from something that you would normally walk into.

With all of this mind, let's live our lives surrendered to the Holy Spirit and under the influence of His power, and let's not succumb to the pressures of this world that try to influence us instead.

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QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

1. Are you intentionally finding dark places in which to shine your light, or do you find yourself only spending time in well-lit places?
2. If you take a look at the people you spend time with, are you walking with the wise, or are you spending too much time with people who are unwise and influence you poorly?
3. What is something you try to find fulfillment in other than the Holy Spirit? What are some practical steps you can take to look to the Holy Spirit first for that fulfillment instead?
