

Theme: Walk Wisely

Ephesians 5:15-20 (EHV)

¹⁵ Consider carefully, then, how you walk, not as unwise people, but as wise people. ¹⁶ Make the most of your time, because the days are evil. ¹⁷ For this reason, do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. ¹⁸ And do not get drunk on wine, which causes you to lose control. Instead, be filled with the Spirit ¹⁹ by speaking to one another with psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs (singing and making music with your hearts to the Lord), ²⁰ by always giving thanks for everything to God the Father, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Do you like talking walks? I do. I come from a family who likes to walk as well. Most every Saturday evening I take a walk around the neighborhood to clear my mind and get some blood flowing before I head over to church to print the bulletins and do some final read-throughs of the sermon. My grandfather, who was a pastor and a professor, told me that he thought walking helped him to memorize his sermons better. (I guess I'm literally following in his footsteps! ☺). If you've ever taken a walk with my parents you probably know what avid (and fast!) walkers they are. I seriously think they could medal in race-walking if they were to try out for the Olympics!

Well, Paul talks about "walking" in our text for today. "**Consider carefully, then, how you walk**" (v. 15). That's how Paul begins the verses of our text for today. Is he encouraging us to be safe while we're out for our evening stroll or on a hike? Make sure to look both ways when you're crossing the street. Keep your eyes forward and look where you're going. Don't be looking at your phone while you're walking around or you might run into things or into other people. Watch out for tripping hazards on the ground in front of you. Is this what Paul is talking about in our text when he encourages us to "**Consider carefully, then, how you walk**" (v. 15)? No. He's using the term "**walk**" in the sense of how you go about living your life—your "walk of life," so to speak. He encourages us to not only be careful how we "**walk**," or how we live our lives, but also to Walk Wisely, to live as "**wise people**" (v. 15).

Paul in our text lists three very simple, yet profound things we should be doing if we are truly going to Walk Wisely. First, he tells us to "**Make the most of your time**" (v. 16). Time is such a precious gift. In fact, it is one of the greatest gifts God gives to us. You and I and every other person born into this world has a limited amount of time in this life, and no matter how many years you live it goes by very fast! All of us get the same number of hours to use each day, the same number of moments to make the most of. Once they are gone you can never get them back. King David once wrote in **Psalm 39:4**, "**Show me, O LORD, my life's end and the number of my days; let me know how fleeting is my life.**" Moses wrote in **Psalm 90:12**, "**So teach us to number our days, That we may gain a heart of wisdom.**"

What's the best way to make use of God's great gift of time we are given in this life? Look again at Paul's words in v. 16 of our text, "**Make the most of your time, because the days are evil.**" Paul is reminding us that in these increasingly evil and dark days it is even *more* important to make the most of our time by "**[letting] our light shine**" (**Matthew 5:16**). This would include everything from serving God by serving our fellow man to sharing the Good News about our Savior, Jesus with others who may not yet know Jesus. Paul once wrote in his letter to the Colossians, "**Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity. Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone**" (**Colossians 4:5-6**).

God will give you—and has given you—many of these types of "**opportunities**" to let your faith and love for Christ shine through your actions and your words. Watch out for them. Make the most of every one of them that the Lord puts in your path.

Does our “walk” reflect Christ’s light and His love? Are we truly “walking wisely” and making the most of our time and our opportunities to witness to others around us? Let’s not forget one other great use of our time: Prayer! If we are seeking to truly **Walk Wisely** and make the most of our time then ask God for help! The Apostle James reminds us to pray to God for wisdom, “**If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him**” (James 1:5).

The other sets of instructions Paul gives us in our text as to how we can truly **Walk Wisely** also relate to making the best use of the time God has given us. Paul reminds us that we are not only to be concerned with the souls of others by witnessing the Good News of the Gospel of Christ to them, but also we are to further our own spiritual growth. Paul tells us in v. 17 of our text to “**understand what the will of the Lord is.**” How do we find out “**what the will of the Lord is**”? Well, we listen to what He says! We can’t know what God’s will is, what He wants us to do and doesn’t want us to do if we never read or hear what He says to us in His Word! Read His Word for yourself! That is a great use of the time we have been given! Not only is God’s Word filled with instructions as to how you and I can truly **Walk Wisely**, it is also filled with many comforting and powerful promises which He gives to each one of us to help us in this life and to help focus our hearts and minds on the eternal life in heaven He has prepared for us!

Finally, Paul reminds us in our text that if we are to truly **Walk Wisely** we need to “**be filled with the Spirit**” (v. 18). We are “**filled with the Spirit,**” of course, when we do what we just mentioned: Read and hear God’s Word. That is how the Spirit came into your heart and mine to create and strengthen our faith. But our text also reminds us what we will do once we are “**filled with the Spirit.**” He reminds us to do some of the very things we are doing today, “**speaking to one another with psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs (singing and making music with your hearts to the Lord),²⁰ by always giving thanks for everything to God the Father, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.**” (v. 19-20). In other words, in order to be continually encouraged (and encouraging), in order to continue to “**be filled with the Spirit**” we need to continue to gather together for worship and praise; for fellowship and the sharing of our faith and love; and for instruction and sharing in the Word of God. There is a great passage in Hebrews that encourages much the same thing, “**And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works,²⁵ not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.**” (Hebrews 10:24-25 EHV).

So, fellow brothers and sisters in Christ, let’s take a “walk” together and “**make the most of [our] time**” by walking carefully and **Walking Wisely**. Not wasting the time and the precious moments the Lord has given us by “**unwise walking**” or living “**foolishly**” in drunkenness and with a lack of self-control, as Paul warns against in our text (v. 19). Not only will that kind of “**foolish living**” damage—and possibly *destroy*—our minds, bodies, and souls; think of how it completely destroys our Christian witness to others and ruins all those opportunities God gives us to serve Him and share the life-saving Gospel message of Jesus Christ!

Jesus has given us purpose and meaning to the moments He has given us. He has “**filled [us] with the Spirit**” (v. 18) and given us reason for “**singing and making music with your hearts to the Lord... always giving thanks for everything to God the Father, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.**” (v. 19-20). By His cross He has washed away all the times we have wasted the time He has given us in this life. By His resurrection He has given us the strength to live a “**new life**” (Romans 6:4) and to make use of the time and opportunities He will give us in this life. Most of all, His death and resurrection assure us that we will live forever with Him in heaven and have limitless time to thank and praise Him!

Don’t forget to get your walk in today: Walk with Jesus and walk daily in His Word and we will truly **Walk Wisely!** Amen.