

Valley Bible Church
Sermon Notes for February 3, 2019

Walk in Wisdom
Ephesians 5:15-17

I. Study your life (5:15)

15 Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise,

- The study of our life (v. 15a)
 - Context (Walk statements)
 - “Then” - ESV or “Therefore” - NASB connects this verse previous verses
 - “Look”
 - Much like the Olivet Discourse where Jesus has commanded His followers to watch eagerly for His return
 - Mark 13:33 “Be on guard, keep awake. For you do not know when the time will come.”
 - Thus, this is an intense looking
 - “Carefully”
 - This is a call for intense study and examination of our “walk” or our lives
- The standard for our study (v. 15b)
 - “Not as unwise but as wise”
 - The appropriate question must be asked, “*How* do we look carefully at our walk?”
 - How do we evaluate ourselves?
 - What standard are we to use to measure our lives against?
 - The answer is “wisdom”
 - A second question might be asked, “*Where* does one find the wisdom to use as the standard for measuring their life?”
 - Proverbs 2:6 “For the LORD gives wisdom; from his mouth come knowledge and understanding;”
 - Psalm 19:7 “... the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple;”
 - Deuteronomy 4:6 “Keep them and do them, for that will be your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the peoples, who, when they hear all these statutes, will say, ‘Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people.’”

- “The wise one’s ‘wisdom is divine in nature and origin.’”¹
- Wise living occurs when we utilize the Word of God in our examination of every aspect and corner of our lives

II. Seize the day (5:16)

16 making the best use of the time, because the days are evil.

- An example of wise living (v. 16a)
 - Those who walk wisely will be “making the best use of the time”
 - “Making the best use of the time”
 - NKJV - “redeeming the time”
 - NASB - “make the most of your time”
 - NET - “take advantage of every opportunity”
 - Biblical concept related to the brevity of life
 - Psalm 39:4-5 “O LORD, make me know my end and what is the measure of my days; let me know how fleeting I am! 5 Behold, you have made my days a few handbreadths, and my lifetime is as nothing before you. Surely all mankind stands as a mere breath!”
 - Psalm 90:12 “So teach us to number our days that we may get a heart of wisdom.”
 - The wise person recognizes that their time is short and this causes them to act upon it
- An explanation for wise living (v. 16b)
 - “Because the days are evil”
 - *How* are the days evil?
 - The world is largely influenced by the lusts of man’s flesh and Satan’s deception over mankind
 - Ephesians 2:1-2 “And you were dead in the trespasses and sins 2 in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience”
 - 2 Corinthians 4:4 “In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.”
 - Paul does not command complete and total separation from the evil world in the evil times in which we are living

¹ Harold W. Hoehner, *Ephesians: An Exegetical Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2002), 691–692.

- Paul’s command is for us to make the best use of the time that we do have on this evil earth
 - This will certainly involve interaction with the world
 - Colossians 4:5-6 “Walk in wisdom toward outsiders, making the best use of the time. 6 Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you ought to answer each person.”
 - This must also involve walking in good works
 - Ephesians 2:10 “For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.”

III. Seek the Lord (5:17)

17 Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is.

- Paul lastly leaves us with the means for walking wisely
- First, we see what not to do
 - “Therefore do not be foolish”
 - “Refers to being ignorant of God’s values, concerns, and authority”²
 - Psalm 14:1 “The fool says in his heart, ‘There is no God.’ They are corrupt, they do abominable deeds; there is none who does good.”
 - Living in any area of our life that does not consider God is foolish living
- Second, we see what we must do
 - “But understand what the will of the Lord is”
 - Paul is simply stating that we must seek to know God more
 - When we seek to know God, we will understand His will
 - We know general truths about His will
 - Ephesians 1:9-10 “making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth.”
 - Bringing all things under the authority of Christ is a broad concept
 - But this broad concept can and must have specific applications
 - When we seek God we will know more specific truths about His will³
 - Salvation of the lost (1 Tim. 2:3, 4)

² John D. Barry, Douglas Mangum, Derek R. Brown, et al., Faithlife Study Bible (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2012, 2016), Eph 5:17.

³ John MacArthur Jr., ed., The MacArthur Study Bible, electronic ed. (Nashville, TN: Word Pub., 1997), 1812.

- Spirit-filled (v. 18)
- Sanctified (1 Thess. 4:3)
- Submissive (1 Pet. 2:13–15)
- Suffering (1 Pet. 2:20)
- Be thankful (1 Thess. 5:18)