



Ephesians

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See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, Ephesians 5:15

Paul now begins with "See then..." This is an instruction based on the previous verse –

Therefore He says:
"Awake, you who sleep,
Arise from the dead,
And Christ will give you light."

As we are given the light of Christ, we are then to ensure that we "walk circumspectly." The word is *akribós*, and it means, "'the high point, *extreme*,' ... properly, extremely accurate, very exact; '*more (very) accurate*' because researched down to the finest detail ('factually precise')" (HELPS Word Studies).

In other words, our walk is to be based on that light which we receive when we depart from the ways in which we once lived, and instead pursue Christ as He is. This is described by Paul with the words, "not as fools but as wise." Fools in the Bible are depicted as having no spiritual wisdom. They live in sensual pleasure and pursue those desires with reckless abandon. They are careless about sin and unconcerned about the things of God.

The wise, on the other hand, are those who fear God. The fear of the Lord, the Bible says, is the beginning of wisdom. After fearing the Lord, they pursue Him and His ways. They emulate Him and are willing to be pleasing to Him, as faithful subjects of His kingdom. Their eyes are set on heavenly things, away from that which is earthly and sensual.

Life application: Let us endeavor to pursue the words of this verse with all of our hearts and souls. And the way to do so is to know what the Lord considers foolish or wise. This is learned through applying the words of Scripture. Learn your Bible!

...redeeming the time, because the days are evil. Ephesians 5:16

The word “redeeming” comes from the Greek word *eksagorázō*. It is a combination of two other words, *ek*, which indicates “completely *out from*.” This intensifies the word *agorázō*, which means, to “buy-up at the marketplace.” In this then, it indicates to “take *full advantage* of, seizing a buying-opportunity, i.e. making the most of the *present opportunity* (recognizing its *future gain*)” (HELPS Word Studies).

In the few hours that we have each day, in the short number of days we have each week, and in the quickly fading weeks, months, and years of our lives, we need to take advantage of the time we have been given, pursuing the greater and weightier matters which have eternal significance.

Instead of whining about what is bad, we should praise for what is good. Instead of moaning of our situation, we should be in prayer for the needs of others, and for the glory of God. Instead of reading novels which satisfy our minds for a moment, we should read and study God’s word which will enrich our souls for eternity. Rather than telling others about the latest sports statistics, we should tell others about the great deeds of the Lord and the love of God found in Christ Jesus. These are the type of things we should pursue in order to redeem the time.

And the reason why is “because the days are evil.” The world is a fallen place. Even when things are going really well for us individually, there is still death, sadness, and pain for others. When one person is becoming rich, others are in the process of losing all they have. A thousand planes may take off safely, but from time to time one will not reach its intended landing site. The tides rise and fall with regularity, but when it is unexpected, a tsunami may come and destroy the land. Man does not know the day of his death, and we can never say when we will meet a friend or family member for the last time.

Life application: The days are evil because they are unknown concerning the next moment. Joy may be ahead, but sadness may also be waiting there as well. It is our obligation to make the very most of each day for the positive work of the Lord, and for the sake of eternity which lies ahead. Our attitude should be, “Use me up now, Lord. My time is yours.”

Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is. Ephesians 5:17

The word, “Therefore” is certainly referring to the thought of verses 15 and 16 –

“See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise,¹⁶ redeeming the time, because the days are evil.”

But, in a fuller sense, it is speaking of the entire argument which led to that statement. We are to be imitators of God, walking circumspectly and not as fools. Rather, we are to be wise. Now Paul says, “...do not be unwise.” Here he uses a different word than that of verse 15. It is *aphron*, and it means “*lacking perspective because short-sighted*, i.e. lacking the ‘over-all picture’ (perspective) needed to act prudently.” We are not to be lacking the overall picture. To explain what this entails, he then says, “but understand what the will of the Lord *is*.”

The Bible says that –

“The fear of the LORD *is* the beginning of wisdom,
And the knowledge of the Holy One *is* understanding.” Proverbs 9:10

We begin to demonstrate wisdom by fearing the Lord. From that stepping stone, we are to then learn what His will is for us. How do we do this? Do we go meditate in the corner of a room? Do we watch TV, hoping to hear a wise man tell us what God’s will is? What is it that brings us to an understanding of the will of the Lord? It is reading and remembering Scripture. It is the source of our understanding what we are to do, how we are to act, and what we are to refrain from doing.

It is incomprehensible that people do not want to learn Scripture and yet they claim to be followers of the Lord. How can you follow and imitate that which you do not know! Although spoken to Israel while under the law, Jesus’ words in the parable of the sower show us where such an attitude can lead –

“And that servant who knew his master’s will, and did not prepare *himself* or do according to his will, shall be beaten with many *stripes*.” Luke 12:47

Further, without knowing the word and applying it to a right understanding (in context) of what it is saying, He then gives these words from Matthew 13 –

“When anyone hears the word of the kingdom, and does not understand *it*, then the wicked *one* comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart.” Matthew 13:19

Is this how we want our state to be? Does it matter so precious little to us what the Lord intends for our proper walk in His presence? Are we willing to have the wicked one come and steal away our joy which was sown in our hearts?

Life application: A Bible which remains unopened and unread is a true tragedy.