

9/4/22

**Walk In Wisdom**  
**Eph. 5:15-17**

Paul has told the Ephesians that the walk of the believer is to be marked by unity, purity, love, light and now he is going to add wisdom to his list!

Paul gives seven ways the believer is to walk in wisdom in this world. Eph. 5:15-21

1. The first three seem to center on being beneficial to the unbeliever. vs. 15-17
2. The last four seem to center on being beneficial to the believer. vs. 18-21

We want to look at the first three ways a believer walks in wisdom in this world. Eph. 5:15-17

- I. The believer is wise by walking responsible to the word of God. vs. 15
  - II. The believer is wise by walking accountable to share the word of God. vs. 16
  - III. The believer is wise by walking enabled to know the will of God. vs. 17
- I. The believer is wise by walking responsible to the word of God. vs. 15**  
\* “See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise.”

- A. The apostle Paul still has the salvation of the unbeliever in mind by the believer’s life. vs. 15
  1. Paul began the second division of the epistle, the walk of the believer in Christ, in view of the wealth the believer in Christ. Eph. 4:1-6:9
    - a. He is to walk worthy of his calling. Eph. 4:1
    - b. He is to walk in humility. Eph. 4:2
    - c. He is to walk in unity. Epph. 4:3
    - d. He is to walk in holiness. Eph. 4:24
    - e. He is to walk in love. Eph. 5:2
    - f. He is to walk in light. Eph. 5:8
  2. Paul is looking back to the previous verse. vs. 14
    - a. He has just given the invitation to those who are spiritually dead, “Therefore He says, “Awake, you who sleep.” vs. 14a-c  
\* The word therefore “dio”, indicated the conclusion of the section of the children of light and of darkness.
    - b. He stated this in view of the that sin is exposed and declared to be sin, the sinner should awake from their death sleep.
    - c. He gave the proclamation to repent of their sins, “Arise from the dead”, an imperative command present active, brought to pass by the power of the Holy Spirit. vs. 14d
    - d. He then gave the affirmation of illumination for transformation, “And

Christ will give you light”, the indicative future active, literally, “shall shine upon you.”, becoming children of light. vs. 14e

- B.** The apostle Paul follows up with the positive first, telling the believer to walk according to the light of the word, the gospel. vs. 15a  
\* “see then that you walk circumspectly.”
1. The expression “see then” indicates the personal responsibility to the unbeliever who has his eyes on the believer who by example can preach Christ. vs. 14
    - a. He in other words was saying, in view of the fact or these things being so!
    - b. He declared that we are children of the light used by God to bring children of darkness to salvation. vs. 15a
  2. The word see “blepo”, means to discern mentally, to observe or consider.
    - a. The idea is to beware and watch out, being very careful or taking heed, in the present active, going on continuously.
    - b. This is of critical importance and urgency for the salvation of others, not compromising with darkness. vs. 11
  3. The expression “walk circumspectly” indicates the capable goal.
    - a. As we have stated before the word walk “paripateo”, means to regulate one’s behavior and conduct in life.

- 1) This is the 8th and last time the word walk appears in the epistle.
  - 2) The number 8 is new beginnings, the new man created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness. Eph. 4:24
- b.** This kind of comportment is to be circumspectly “akribos”, meaning exactly, by the rule, according to set norms in the word of God, not sinless.
- 1) The word could be translated diligently, as when Herod told the Magi, “Go and seek diligently for the young child”. Matt. 2:8
  - 2) Recognizing that privilege of being enabled brings greater responsibility.
  - 3) Once again, the tense is the present active, constantly!
- C.** The apostle Paul then re-enforced the positive by way of a contrast, warning that there are two possibilities in the life of the believer. vs. 15b  
\* “not as fools but as wise.”
1. Paul presented the negative first, “not as fools”.
    - a. The expression not as fools, “asophos”, means not wise or unwise, an adjective made up of two words.
      - 1) The word “a” and “sophos”, not wise an “a” in front of a Greek word

- negates or denies the word that follows.
- 2) The word atheist means no God, it denies God, amillennium, means no Millennium, denying there is to be a 1,000 year reign of Christ on earth.
- b. Paul in using the phrase “not as fools” is referring to spiritual matters for life.
- 1) The fool is the simple one who walks apart from discretion and obedience, the Proverbs contrast him to the wise.
    - a) “Fools despise wisdom.” Prov. 1:7
    - b) “The way of the fool is right in his own eyes.” Prov. 12:15
    - c) “Fool makes a mock at sin.” Prov. 14:9
  - 2) The believer prior to coming to Christ was a fool “asphos” unwise regarding spiritual matters, being dead in trespasses and sins. Eph. 2:1-2
  - 3) The believer after coming to Christ has the potential for spiritual matters, but still has a “sin-nature” that can cause him to be unwise or a fool in his decisions regarding spiritual matters.
2. Paul then presented the positive, “but as wise.”
- a. The word wise “sophos”, is one who is using the best reliable information to come up with the best solution or answer.

- 1) We live in an age of massive information, yet a very unwise generation for problem solving or decision making in life.
  - 2) Information is not wisdom in and of itself, it is the understanding and comprehension of information for the best application that is wisdom.
- b. The wisdom Paul is referring to once again is spiritual wisdom, not worldly or natureal wisdom. Eph. 1:8, 17; 3:10
- 1) The believer’s ability is based on what God has done for him. Eph. 5:8; 2:1
  - 2) “For Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel, not with **wisdom** of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of no effect.” 1Cor. 1:17
  - 3) “For it is written: “I will destroy the **wisdom** of the wise, And bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent.” 1Cor. 1:19
  - 4) “Where *is* the wise? Where *is* the scribe? Where *is* the disputer of this age? Has not God made foolish the **wisdom** of this world?” 1Cor. 1:20
  - 5) “For since, in the **wisdom** of God, the world through **wisdom** did not know God, it pleased God through the foolishness of the message preached

- to save those who believe.” 1Cor. 1:21
- 6) “For Jews request a sign, and Greeks seek after **wisdom**.” 1Cor. 1:22
- 7) “but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the **wisdom** of God.” 1Cor. 1:24

### Illustration

“And Samuel said to Saul, “You have done **foolishly**. You have not kept the commandment of the LORD your God, which He commanded you. For now the LORD would have established your kingdom over Israel forever.” 1Sam. 13:13

### Application

1. The way God has chosen to prepare and guide us to walk circumspectly, diligent, carefully in wisdom is by giving us His word.
    - a. So we are to read through the Bible and studying to not be foolish, but wise, knowing what God has revealed and grow in wisdom.
    - b. Praying to God to receive wisdom from God.
    - c. Fellowshiping to learn wisdom from the older saints in the church being sanctified.
- \* “Thus says the LORD: “Let not the wise *man* glory in his **wisdom**, Let not the mighty *man* glory in his might, Nor let the rich *man* glory in his riches; But let him who glories glory in this, That he understands and knows

Me, That I *am* the LORD, exercising lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness in the earth. For in these I delight,” says the LORD.” Jer. 9:23-24

2. We are to walk according to the word of God, so that the unbeliever hear and see a clear message.
  - a. “Give no offense, either to the Jews or to the Greeks or to the church of God, just as I also please all *men* in all *things*, not **seeking** my **own** profit, but the *profit* of many, that they may be saved.” 1Cor. 10:32-33
  - b. “For though I am free from all *men*, I have made myself a servant to all, that I might win the more; and to the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might win Jews; to those *who are* under the law, as under the law, that I might win those *who are* under the law; to those *who are* without law, as without law (not being without law toward God, but under law toward Christ), that I might win those *who are* without law; to the weak I became as weak, that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all *men*, that I might by all means save some. Now this I do for the gospel’s sake, that I may be partaker of it with *you*. 1Cor. 9:19-23
  - c. “All things are lawful for me, but all things are not helpful. All things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any.” 1Cor. 6:12

- d. “All things are **lawful** for me, but not **all** things are helpful; **all** things are **lawful** for me, but not **all** things edify.” 1Cor. 10:23
- 3. We need to constantly ask the Father in Jesus name to give us wisdom.”
  - a. “The fear of the LORD *is* the beginning of **wisdom**, And the knowledge of the Holy One *is* understanding.” Prov. 9:10
  - b. “The fear of the LORD *is* the instruction of **wisdom**, And before honor *is* humility.” Prov. 15:33
  - c. “How much better to get **wisdom** than gold! And to get understanding is to be chosen rather than silver.” Prov. 16:16
  - d. “*There is no* **wisdom** or understanding Or counsel against the LORD.” Prov. 21:30
  - e. “In whom are hidden all the treasures of **wisdom** and knowledge.” Col. 2:3
  - f. “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.” Ja. 1:5
  - g. “that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of **wisdom** and revelation in the knowledge of Him.” Eph. 1:17
  - h. “to the intent that now the manifold **wisdom** of God might be made known by the church to the principalities and powers in the heavenly *places*.” Eph. 3:10\*
  - i. “Him we preach, warning every man and teaching every man in all **wisdom**, that we may

- present every man perfect in Christ Jesus.” Col. 1:28
- j. “For this reason we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all **wisdom** and spiritual understanding.” Col. 1:9
- k. “in whom are hidden all the treasures of **wisdom** and knowledge.” Col. 2:3
- l. “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all **wisdom**, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.” Col. 3:16

*The believer is wise by walking responsible to the word of God!*

## II. The believer is wise by walking accountable to share the word of God. vs. 16

- A. The apostle Paul exhorted the believer to make good use of the opportunities to preach the gospel. vs. 16
  - \* “redeeming the time.”
  - 1. Paul understood that time can be divided into two groups.
    - a. There is chronological time that runs in a linear line, “chronos” in the Greek.
      - 1) It is characterized by past, present and future.

- 2) It is one of the things we cannot recover once it is gone.  
\* “Lord, teach me to number my days.” Ps. 90:12
- b.** There is time “kairos” that is mark not by its sequential order, but rather a critical epoch, a special opportune period which may soon pass, it is seasonal.
- 1) This is the kind of time Paul is indicating in our text.
- 2) This quality of time is for salvation.
- 2.** Paul declared to the believer that one way they were to be wise was to redeem the time regarding the lost sinners.
- a.** So the time of redemption mentioned here does not refer to our stewardship of the use of time in general, though it is taught in Scripture.
- 1) The redemption of the time Paul is speaking of is a specific time.
- 2) Too many stray from the context here, it is still the unbeliever’s salvation.
- b.** The concept of redeeming has to do with making and doing the most and best with any occasion or opportunity presented to a person by the Lord.
- 1) The word redeeming “exagorazo”, means to buy up out of the market and make a profit for oneself and used twice for Christ redeeming sinners from the law. Gal. 3:13; 4:5

- 2) The word is a participle in the present middle voice, emphatic, indicating to purchase for oneself or benefit.
- 3) We might call it a “window time”, it is available for a certain time and not beyond it or it will pass.
- c.** This time is that opportune time prepared by God when the unbeliever is open to the gospel.
- 1) Questioning the teaching of evolution, psychology, the goodness of man.
- 2) When they have tried everything to satisfy their lives, academia, fame, money, drinking, drugs, sex, etc.
- 3) Perhaps they are just interested in what the Bible says?  
\* “Walk in wisdom towards those who are outside, redeeming the time.” Col. 4:5
- B.** The apostle Paul declared the reason for the exhortation was that the days were wicked.  
\* “because the days are evil.”
- 1.** Paul lived in days of low morals and pagan religions.
- a.** There were the temple prostitutes of Corinth of Aphrodites.
- b.** The debauched life-styles of the Roman emperors and the Gentile world,, some were homosexuals, like Hadrian. Rom. 1:18-32

- c. The apostle has given two list of sinful vices in the letter. Eph. 4:14-19; 5:3-5
- 2. Paul uses the word evil “poneros”, which means evil in active opposition to good.
  - a. The word describes also the satisfaction of corruption and destruction of people.
  - b. The word is used for Satan, “the wicked one”. 1Jn. 2:13, 14; 3:12; 5:18, 19
  - c. The word is used in Matthew, “but if your eye be evil.” Matt. 6:23
  - d. The word is used by Jesus for the evil and adulterous generation seeking a sign from Him. Matt. 12:39
  - e. The word is used as a command for the beleiver to abhor what is evil. Rom. 12:9
  - f. Satan is the god of this world, prince and power of the air, blinding sinners. 2Cor. 4:4; Eph. 2:2-3
- 3. Paul was saying that in days that are charactrized and given over to evil, the opportunities may be few that come to the believer, so they should not let them go by.
  - a. When evil is taught, people are tempted and corrupted.
  - b. When evil is permitted, people give themselves over to it with less resistance.
  - c. When evil is practiced without restraint, people are more hostile to the gospel of holiness.
  - d. The corrupting and destroying of children by the lie of transgendeerism

- and transexualism by hormone pills or sergery, many by their own parents!
- e. The lies about the Plandemic, the deaths, the masks, the vaccine, etc.

### Illustration

Paul illustrates our accountability to share God’s word as he said, “King **Agrippa**, do you believe the prophets? I know that you do believe.” Then **Agrippa** said to Paul, “You almost persuade me to become a Christian.” And Paul said, “I would to God that not only you, but also all who hear me today, might become both almost and altogether such as I am, except for these chains.” Acts 26:27-29

### Application

1. When a person becomes a Christian, they have many people to share Christ because often all their family and friends are unbelievers.
  - a. So there are more opportunities open when we are first saved to share Christ.
  - b. So we must guard against not reaching out to unbelievers the longer we are in the Lord.
    - \* “And we are His **witnesses** to these things, and *so also is* the Holy Spirit whom God has given to those who obey Him.” Acts 5:32
2. The Lord Jesus will prepare clear opportunities for all to share the gospel with those who will be eternally lost without Christ.
  - a. Jesus directed Peter and John to the man at gate. Acts 3

- b. Jesus directed Peter to the house of Cornelius. Acts 10
  - c. Jesus used Paul and Silas to reach the Philippian Jailer and Lydia. Acts 16
  - d. Jesus used Stephen to preach to the synogogue of the Freedmen, Phillip to the Ethiopian. Acts 6-7, 8  
\* “He who wins souls is wise.” Prov. 11:30b
3. The believer needs to recognize the active opposition of Satan to the gospel.
- a. “But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them.” 2Cor. 4:3-4
  - b. Satan is called, “the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience.” Eph. 2:2b-c
  - c. Sinners are ensnare by the devil, having been taken captive by him to *do* his will. 2Tim. 2:26
  - d. Satan is a master deceiver, “And no wonder! For Satan himself transforms himself into an **angel of light**. Therefore *it is* no great thing if his ministers also transform themselves into ministers of righteousness, whose end will be according to their works.” 2Cor. 11:14-15
  - e. Sanhedrin forbade the apostles to preach the gospel, Elymas the sorcerer tried to hinder the gospel and at Athen Paul was mocked. Acts 4, 13, 17

*The believer is wise by walking accountable to share the word of God!*

### III. The believer is wise by walking enabled to know the will of God. vs. 17

- A. The apostle Paul declared believers were not to live as having no wisdom regarding the gospel and the unbeliever.  
\* “Therefore do not be unwise.”
- 1. Paul brings the instuction of veres 15-16 to a logical conclusion.
  - a. The word therefore “dio” is a concluding word, looking back to what is before it, being the sum total of what procedes.
  - b. This brings the conclusion of verse 15 to a command, “See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise.”
- 2. Paul presented the negative, in view of what he had just told them, they should not fail in discretion or opportunity for the gospel.
  - a. The word unwise “aphron” is a stronger form of “fools” in verse 15.  
\* Being without spiritual understanding about the gospel and the lost!
  - b. This is an imperative command, literally, “stop becoming foolish.” A. T. Roberts n  
\* Beacon’s commentary translates it “dumb or stupid”.



C. The apostle Paul declared the believer was to know the will of the Lord toward those needing salvation. vs. 17

\* “but understand what the will of the Lord *is*.”

1. Paul is not referring to some mysterious plan for our life in the future, as the will of God.
  - a. Some people always make their relationship with God mystical.
    - 1) They are attempting to find some secret messages in the Bible.
    - 2) They are always running after the latest prophet.
    - 3) They are not grounded in God’s word.
    - 4) They are living by their feelings, emotions and experiences, based on situations and circumstances.
  - b. These individuals fail in three ways.
    - 1) They never do anything because they are always waiting on the Lord.
    - 2) They give a bad example of Christianity.
    - 3) They are easily deceived.
2. Paul presented the positive, wanting them to alien the will of God and sinners properly.
  - a. The word understand “*suniami*”, means to set or bring together, to put the perception with the thing perceived in the mind and get hold of it.
    - 1) Jesus used this word for the disciple, “How is it that you do not understand”. Mk. 8:21

- 2) Paul used it for the unbeliever, “There is none that understands”, about God, spiritual truth or their need of salvation. Rom. 3:11
- 3) Paul said, “For this reason we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding.” Col. 1:9
- b. The process between knowledge and wisdom is essential.
  - 1) “A wise man will hear, and will increase learning: and a man of understanding shall obtain unto wise counsel.” Prov. 1:5
  - 2) “Wisdom is the principle thing: therefore get wisdom and with all your getting, get understanding.” Prov. 4:7
- c. The will of God in this context has to do with the plan and purpose of God for fallen humanity.
  - 1) The word will “*thelema*”, means what one wishes or determines to be done.
  - 2) Paul was an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God. Eph. 1:1
  - 3) Our predestinated adoption was the good pleasure of His will. Eph. 5, 9
  - 4) Our inheritance is according to the council of His will. Eph. 1:11

- 5) Servants are to do the will of God from the heart. Eph. 6:6

### Illustration

Paul illustrates our third point beautifully, “Knowing, therefore, the terror of the Lord, we persuade men; but we are well known to God, and I also trust are well known in your consciences.” 2Cor. 5:11

### Application

1. The will of God is found and revealed in His word.
  - a. We are to meditate on the word day and night, then we shall be prosperous and have good success. Josh. 1:8
  - b. We are not to lean to our own understanding, but acknowledge God in all our ways and He will direct our paths, Prov. 3:5-6
  - c. We are to know the will of God is that, “we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.” 1Jn. 1:7
2. The will of the Lord is that we fully and clearly understand the oneness of the gospel and sinners.
  - a. That every sinner can be save if they repent by trusting the atoning sacrifice of Jesus by grace through faith. Eph. 2:8-9
  - b. That every sin can be forgiven and the person is cleansed from all defilement, whiter than snow. Ps. 51:7

- c. The every sinner only has a set number of years before they die, then the judgment that will separate them from God for all eternity. Heb. 9:27

- 1) “Now all things *are* of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation, that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation. Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore *you* on Christ’s behalf, be reconciled to God.” 2Cor. 5:18-20
- 2) One of the five crown promised to the believer is the crown of rejoicing at Christ's return, it is for soul winning! 1Thess. 2:19

***The believer is wise by walking enabled to know the will of God!***

### Conclusion

These are the first three ways a believer walks in wisdom in this world.

- I. The believer is wise by walking responsible to the word of God!
- II. The believer is wise by walking accountable to share the word of God!
- III. The believer is wise by walking enabled to know the will of God!