

Sermon Supplement

Ephesians 5:15-21

Jubilee: Redeeming Wisdom that Reflects God's New People

UNDERSTANDING THE PASSAGE

1. **Main Idea of the Passage:** Paul commands his readers to 'look carefully how they walk' because 1) they are no longer part of the old, dark creation yet it still exists around them, 2) because people are trying to deceive them, 3) because of the dire consequences of persisting in the behavior of the old world, and 4) especially because these are the last days.
2. **Melodic Line of the Letter:** The two become one for His glory. God the Father, through God the Son, by the power and presence of God the Spirit, is making a multi-ethnic people for the purpose of His glory, based in his eternal plan, in this final age.

KEY WORDS

1. **Walk** (*peripateō*) – how you behave or live your life, live as a habit of conduct, a key metaphor for a disciple throughout the Bible; see also, Eph. 2:10, 4:1; Col. 1:10.
2. **Wise** (*sophos*) – understanding that results in wise attitudes and conduct; pertains to wisdom that is divine in nature and origin; humility that flows from God in us; see also, 1 Cor. 3:18; James 3:13.
3. **Will** (*thelēma*) – the regulative principle of the Christian life; the will of God in Ephesians is the Scriptural, Christ-centered, plan of God for his saved, unified, and empowered people; see also, Eph. 1:1, 5, 9, 11; 6:6.
4. **Debauchery** (*asōtia*) – wastefulness, reckless abandon, wild living, foolishness, loss of self-control; often where we run in stress, shame, questioning, and sin; see also, Titus 1:6; 1 Peter 4:4.

STRUCTURE/OUTLINE OF THE PASSAGE

1. Walk in wisdom (vv. 15-18)
 - a. Make the best use of our limited time during evil days (v. 16)
 - b. Understand the will of God (v. 17)
 - c. Be filled with the Spirit (v. 18)
2. The steps of Spirit-filled wisdom (vv. 19-21)
 - a. Music (v. 19)
 - b. Thankfulness (v. 20)
 - c. Submission (v. 21)

GOSPEL CENTRALITY

As God's new people, we are able to walk in wisdom through the infilling of the Holy Spirit, as He applies the finished work of Christ to our lives, which then bears fruit in songs of praise, thankfulness to God, and submission to one another.

KNOWING AND BEING KNOWN

- There seems to be a tension between Paul urging his listeners to live into reality and our sinful tendency to avoid it. How are you doing at pursuing reality (i.e. God's will through wisdom)?
- Can you identify ways you try to avoid reality? Give an example.
- Paul exhorts us to give thanks always and for everything to God in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ – What are some scenarios where you thanked God for being God (i.e. his character and nature) in the midst of favorable times and trying times?

RESPONDING IN PRAYER

- Thank God that He has made us a new creation through the person and work of His Son by the power of the Spirit.
- Pray that we would be able to walk in wisdom and not in foolishness.
- Pray that we would be filled with the Holy Spirit.
- Spend some time praising God and thanking Him for his provision, presence, and promises.