



Ephesians Week 13 - Ephesians 5:15-20

December 3, 2023 - Pastor Rafael Aristy

Ephesians 5:14-20 NLT 14 "for the light makes everything visible. This is why it is said, "Awake, O sleeper, rise up from the dead, and Christ will give you light." 15 So be careful how you live. Don't live like fools, but like those who are wise. 16 Make the most of every opportunity in these evil days. 17 Don't act thoughtlessly, but understand what the Lord wants you to do. 18 Don't be drunk with wine, because that will ruin your life. Instead, be filled with the Holy Spirit, 19 singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs among yourselves, and making music to the Lord in your hearts. 20 And give thanks for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ."

As we said before, Paul is helping the believers in Ephesus with HOW TO LIVE as a Christ follower - being a follower was so much different then...you give your life for them when you followed then. Today you "click" a button with no commitment and can block whenever you feel like it.

- Paul throughout this letter not only says, "stop doing that!," but he provides examples on **how** to do stop.

Paul tells them what NOT TO DO **AND** tells them what TO DO instead.

v14 "Awake, O sleeper, rise up from the dead, and Christ will give you light."

Paul begins with "WAKE UP!" What happens when you're sleeping? Does the world stop? NO! But you do. You are unaware and vulnerable.

- Have you seen people that seem like life is just happening to them? Like they're just existing and sleepwalking through life?

Maybe you feel that way today. We pray the words of Paul over you today, **may Christ give you light...** may the Lord Jesus bring you back to life!

In the following verses, Paul paints the lines on the road and adds the necessary signage so we can know what to do, how to go...

Main Theme: Be careful how you live

1 - Don't live like fools, INSTEAD live as wise people who make the most of every opportunity.

2 - Don't act without thinking, INSTEAD do what God wants you to do.

3 - Don't get drunk with wine, INSTEAD be Filled with the Holy Spirit, singing and making music expressing your thanks to God

1 - Don't live like fools, INSTEAD live as wise people who make the most of every opportunity.

v15 "So be careful how you live. Don't live like fools, but **like those who are wise."**

v16 "Make the most of every opportunity in these evil days."

Paul saying "Be careful how you live," means we have to be cautious, we have to be aware of HOW we are LIVING life. If you surround yourself with fools, you will end up doing foolish things! You want to stop gossiping? Stop hanging with people who gossip. You want to stop being unteachable? Stop hanging with people who are unteachable. You wanna stop cheating, lying...

v15b "Instead learn to be wise." How? Ask God.

James 1:5 NLT "If you need wisdom, ask our generous God, and he will give it to you. He will not rebuke you for asking."

Instead, hang with people who are wise. Spend time with people **you can learn from**, people who'll **challenge you to do better**. People who are not going to **ALLOW you to sleepwalk through life**.

Wise people MAKE THE MOST of every opportunity.

You may hear this and think, "I don't get too many opportunities." Yes you do!

EVERY DAY is a brand new opportunity!

- You want to grow in your relationship with with your heavenly Father? **Every day** you have that opportunity! You want to become a better human being? **Every day** you have that opportunity. **Every day** you have the opportunity to become a better spouse, son, daughter, friend, employee, manager, CEO... **but we make excuses**. Don't waste time! Don't be lazy! It takes work. Choice. Determination. Ask God to help/lead you.

-What do you tend to make excuses for?

-In what areas do you need God to lead you so that you are living wise, making the most of all opportunities?

2 - Don't act without thinking, INSTEAD do what God wants you to do.

v17 "Don't act thoughtlessly, but understand what the Lord wants you to do."

This goes back to Paul telling them to WAKE UP and to walk in the LIGHT! When you're sleepwalking through life you're not really thinking, you're on auto pilot.

You also act without thinking when you do something that you've practiced a lot. You've gone through the reps...you've honed in a skill... Practice makes permanent! The more you've done something, the easier it becomes...it becomes easier to do without thinking. The less it feels like sin. The more you become desensitized.

- Give a practical example of things you do on autopilot in life (feeding the dog, drive to work, etc).

- What is a more vital area of life where we can tend to be on autopilot?

- Share an example of acting without thinking because you have practiced something so much it became default?

- Have you ever experienced becoming desensitized to sin in your journey? Will you share?

A) How do you know God's will? By His word (the Bible).

Psalms 119:105 NLT "Your word is a lamp to guide my feet and a light for my path."

In His word we hear His will for us to: Renew our minds (Romans 12:2), Avoid sexual immorality (1 Thessalonians 4:3-5), Seek His kingdom first (Matthew 6:33). And on and on ...

These are the instructions we MUST read.

To know His will, to understand WHAT he wants us TO DO, we have to KNOW what He has said...

B) How do you know God's will? By His Spirit.

1 Corinthians 2:10-12 NLT 10"But it was to us that God revealed these things by his Spirit. For his Spirit searches out everything and shows us God's deep secrets. **11**No one can know a person's thoughts except that person's own spirit, and no one can know God's thoughts except God's own Spirit. **12**And we have received God's Spirit (not the world's spirit), so we can know the wonderful things God has freely given us."

It is the Spirit of God who reveals the mysteries of God and reveals God's thoughts to us. He speaks, we listen.

C) How do we hear his voice? We have to draw close and be silent...

The spirit of God speaks to you in your heart...that still small voice that says _____. We have to quiet the noise. Silence all the voices. You may say, "I don't know if God wants me to do that or not." Ask yourself: DOES IT BENEFIT THE KINGDOM of God? DO IT!

- Which of these 3 points (His word, His Spirit, drawing close and being quiet) come the easiest to you? The hardest? Why?
- What/whose voices speak the loudest to you?
- What influences which voices you are listening to most?
- Have you heard God's quiet voice speaking to you? Share your experience.
- Have you ever heard and ignored it (like PR shared)? How did that feel? Did you change anything after that?

3 - Don't get drunk with wine, INSTEAD be Filled with the Holy Spirit, singing and making music expressing your thanks to God

v18 "Don't be drunk with wine, because that will ruin your life. Instead, be filled with the Holy Spirit, 19 singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs among yourselves, and making music to the Lord in your hearts. 20 And give thanks for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. "

The pagan people of Ephesus worshiped their god in drunken orgies:

"They believed that to commune with their god and to be led by him, they had to be drunk. In this drunken state, they could determine the will of their god and determine how best to serve and obey him." (Holman New Testament Commentary)

Paul contrasts the practices of the people of Ephesus with the way followers of Jesus should live. Paul is not JUST talking about alcoholic beverages, he is addressing the difference between the One True God and all the other false gods. **He is addressing the reality of who their God is** and how they must respond. Paul is saying, **"we don't need to get drunk, because we don't serve those false gods. We don't need to get drunk because we place our trust in the Lord God almighty, and in Him alone."**

By understanding the context of Paul's words, we can better grasp the meaning for us today.

Going after the things of this world, the THINGS that the gods of this age provide, WILL RUIN YOUR LIFE!

- It is not ONLY about alcohol. It's about that **thing your flesh (AND satan) wants** more than anything else.

That thing that **you've made an idol**. That thing which **keeps you in the dark**, that keeps you **SLEEPWALKING through life...WAKE UP!**

- What are some examples of "gods" and things of this world that we can tend to idolize that can ruin lives? Something that your flesh wants in place of God?
- Do you have something in your life that is keeping you "sleepwalking"? Share.

v18 "INSTEAD be filled with the HOLY SPIRIT"

BE FILLED is in the present tense, meaning **"keep on being filled"**

- This is NOT a one time event, an "I was filled with Holy Spirit at the time of salvation, so I'm good" but rather this is an **ongoing PURSUIT!** Why? Because WE LEAK! We leak because we sin and grieve the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 4:30)

To me, to be filled with the Spirit means to surrender to the Spirit's leading and power, in order to live a life that pleases God.

- What does that practically look like?

Look into these examples of some filled with the Spirit:

Jesus (Matthew 4:1, Luke 4:18)

John the Baptist (Luke 1:15)

Elizabeth (Luke 1:41)

Zechariah (Luke 1:67)
Bezalel (Exodus 31:3)
Joshua (Exodus 34:9)
Samson (Judges 13:25)
The believers on Pentecost (Acts 2:4)

Like we discussed last week: You can't just play defense, you MUST also play offense as well or you're not going to win the game.

DON'T DO THIS - is the defense...INSTEAD DO THIS - is the offense. Paul gives them, and us, the defensive and offensive blueprint.

v18b,19 **"be filled with the Holy Spirit, 19 singing** psalms and hymns and spiritual songs among yourselves, and making music to the Lord in your hearts."

Does this mean I need to become a worship leader or something? YES! When YOU begin to praise the Lord, opening your mouth to declare His power, to declare His majesty and glory, your problems begin to diminish...your attitude begins to shift...the spiritual atmosphere changes... **You don't have to sing to anyone else, but to the Lord...sing praises to Him...I know at times it's hard, but praise him regardless and you'll experience what SO MANY believers have.**

Do you know what King David did when he was discouraged and depressed? He PRAISED the Lord!

Psalm 42:11 "Why am I discouraged? Why is my heart so sad? I will put my hope in God! I will praise him again – my Savior and my God!"

Psalm 69:29 "I am suffering and in pain. Rescue me, O God, by your saving power. **30** Then I will praise God's name with singing, and I will honor him with thanksgiving."

v20 "And **give thanks** for everything..."

This was also a practice of King David. Be thankful...For EVERYTHING (at all times)! Thanksgiving forces you to look at what you possess and not at what you lack! Thankfulness encourages gratitude and hope in the Lord. As Carissa said the other day during worship, you can't be thankful and complain at the same time...

- What do you have to be thankful for?

You were MADE in the IMAGE of God. God opened His mouth and CREATED everything seen and unseen. There's power in your words.

- What are you creating or destroying with your words? Praise and be thankful to the Lord!

Be careful how you live

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- What are you going to DON'T and what are you going to DO?

-Our Response- what is Holy Spirit saying to you:

- 1 - You need wisdom and to make the most of every day
- 2 - You need to stop "sleepwalking" - acting carelessly and do what God wants you to do
- 3 - You need to stop trusting in the gods of this age...give up the "idol" that has taken God's place in your life