

Watch Your Step

Ephesians 5:15-20

INTRODUCTION

In Ephesians 5:15 Paul said, “Be very careful then how you live...” Literally in the Greek he said, “Watch carefully, then, how you walk” In other words, watch your step! *How do we do this??*

Don't Be Unwise, but Wise (vs. 15-16)

¹⁵ *Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise,* ¹⁶ *making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil.*

HOW? Making the most of every opportunity (16a)

WHY? Because the days are evil (16b)

Related passages: Proverbs 1:32-33; 2 Timothy 3:1-5; Ephesians 5:7-8

Don't Be Foolish, but Understand God's Will and Do It (vs. 17)

¹⁷ *Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord's will is.*

What does it mean to *understand God's will*? How do we do that? How do we “find out what pleases the Lord” (5:10)?

We Need the Word of God (Psalm 119:9)

We Need the People of God (Hebrews 3:12-13; 10:23-25)

Don't Be Drunk with Wine, but Be Filled with the Spirit (vs. 18)

¹⁸ *Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit...*

HOW MAY I BE FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT?

There are a number of ways that people have taught this but this is one way to describe the process:

1. **ADMIT—We must admit to ourselves and to God that we indeed can do NOTHING** (John 15:5). Many times, God allows circumstances in our life that bring us to the end of ourselves and we realize that we can't simply cannot live the Christian life in our strength. Part of Christian maturity is the deepening of that understanding in every area of our lives.
2. **SUBMIT—We must surrender our wills completely to the Lordship of Christ** (Matt 6:24; Rom 12:1-2). Remember... the Holy Spirit is a HOLY Spirit. This means that He must and will only do that which is right and pure and holy. If we are asking Him to fill/control us, then we submitting to His holy will. Thus, to ask to fill/control us while knowingly hanging onto certain "favorite sins" would be contradictory.
3. **BELIEVE—We must believe by faith that the Holy Spirit will empower us to change.**

Sometimes it is good to pause before asking the Lord to do something and check your faith. Do you believe God will fulfill His promise to you? If there is doubt, confess the doubt and ask for greater faith. The main point here is to make sure that these are not empty words. Don't wait until you have great faith either. Remember, He is able to do quite a lot with even a mustard seed-sized faith (Matthew 17:20).

4. **RECEIVE— Finally, we must ask the Holy Spirit to fill us, receiving Him by faith that He will control us, allowing us to experience the life of Christ being lived out through us** (2 Peter 1:3-4)

In this moment, simply receive by faith that the Holy Spirit who is in you will begin to minister the life of Jesus through you. Ask the Spirit to simply share the life of Jesus with you in this moment. Expect and watch for a difference in the attitudes of the heart, the anxiety decreasing, a settled-ness of spirit, an increase of love or patience or peace that is clearly not of you, etc.

The Other Fruit of the Spirit (19-21)

¹⁹speaking to one another with psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit. Sing and make music from your heart to the Lord, ²⁰always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. ²¹Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.

- SPEAKING Spirit-filled truth to one another (19a)
- SINGING and MAKING MUSIC from your heart to the Lord (19b)
- GIVING thanks continually to the Father in Jesus' name (20)
- SUBMITTING to one another out of reverence to Christ (21)

Questions for Personal Reflection/Group Discussion

1. In what ways have you been walking carelessly, even foolishly?
2. What are the possible land mines in your life right now?
3. What would change in your life if you began living in light of eternity?
4. What is your relationship to the Word of God and the people of God right now?
5. Take time to prayerfully review the suggested Scriptures and process for being filled with the Holy Spirit.