

Walk with Awareness

Ephesians 5:15-21

We have discussed much in recent weeks. Paul admonished the church to walk in **Love**. Our walk and witness are to reflect the love of Christ – the sacrificial love we have received. We are to walk in **Righteousness**. The world at large lives to please the flesh, seeking primarily to indulge its lusts. As children of God, we are to walk uprightly before the Lord and man. We are also expected to walk in the **Light**. Those saved by grace have been brought from darkness into the glorious light of Christ. The light of the Lord must illuminate and guide our path.

Having shared such profound truth, Paul shifts his focus a bit in the text today. Those who walk in love, in righteousness, and in the light are to walk in awareness of the day. This involves not only recognizing the great lostness and depravity of our day, but responding to these pressing needs in a way that honors the Lord and impacts our culture. Regardless of our position within the church, every believer is within the body of Christ. Being within the body brings a responsibility to engage the needs of our day with the gospel.

As we continue the series in chapter five, I want to examine the expected **facets** of our daily lives as we consider the challenge to: **Walk with Awareness**.

I. The Direction for Believers (15-17) – Paul begins this section of text with biblical direction regarding our recognition and awareness of the needs around us. He urges believers to possess:

A. An Accurate Walk (15) – *See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise.* As we walk among the world, we are to walk carefully and with wisdom. We are called to walk **circumspectly**, literally walk “*exactly, accurately, and perfectly.*” It also carries the idea of walking with alertness. Paul was well aware of the temptations and pit-falls so common among men, and he urged the church not only to walk pleasing to the Lord, but with an awareness of the enemy and his tactics. **Gal.5:16** – *This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.*

- It is impossible to overemphasize the importance of our walk among the world. Those who profess Christ as Savior are watched by the unsaved. They carefully examine how we walk and carry ourselves in a variety of situations. We must walk in wisdom, honoring the Lord.

B. An Attentive Walk (16) – *Redeeming the time, because the days are evil.* We are instructed to **redeem the time**. This is an interesting phrase. The word **redeeming** means “*to buy up, to ransom, to pay the price to recover.*” How can we buy up time; how can we ransom our days? It is really

quite simple – we are to make the most of every day and every opportunity that the Lord gives us. The word “**time**” does not speak of “**clock time**”. It does not speak of minutes, hours, days, weeks, months and years. The word he uses here is a word that speaks of a “**measured allotment of time**.” Paul is talking about the small window of time we have in this world. In other words, we are to “**deliver the allotted time we have been given in this world from loss.**”ⁱ

- One cannot argue that we are living in perilous times. The Lord’s return is closer than it’s ever been. We all have a brief moment here on this earth to impact others with the gospel. May we redeem the time and seize every opportunity for the gospel. “Yesterday is a spent check; tomorrow is a promissory note; today is cash in hand – so spend it wisely,” Unknown.

C. An Acceptable Walk (17) – *Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is.* The believers at Ephesus were bombarded with all manner of false doctrine and idolatry. The temple to Diana was there. The influence of the Roman culture was very prevalent. Also, there were Jews who sought to corrupt the Gospel with the legalities and rituals of the law. Paul wanted them to understand the contrary influences and be wise concerning the will of God and His plan for the church and their individual lives.

- We are responsible to understand the will of God. The word **understanding** means to “*grasp, perceive, or comprehend.*” All believers are responsible to grasp and comprehend the will of God for their lives. So, this begs the question – how does one understand the will of God? A proper understanding of God’s will is always found within the Scriptures. God’s will never leads in a way contrary to the Scriptures. Do you desire to understand God’s will? Let me give you a biblical basis to understanding God’s will. First of all, God desires you to submit to the gospel, repent of sin, and believe on Christ for salvation. If you are not saved, you do not understand the will of God. Following salvation, God wants you to surrender your life in conformity to Christ, living in obedience to Him. Once these two steps are taken, you are well on your way to understanding the will of God. Those saved by grace, living in obedience to Him, and searching the Scriptures will understand the will of God.

II. The Devotion of Believers (18-21) – Here Paul deals with how believers are to respond to the needs around them. We must always respond in a Christ-honoring way. He mentions:

A. Our Discipline (18) – *And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit.* Paul reveals another fundamental truth and obligation in the life of believers. Now, often this verse is used to make the argument concerning strong drink. Clearly there is application for that, but the focus of this verse is the filling of the Spirit.

- The charismatic movement has caused many to shy away from the Spirit. Many tend to downplay or even discourage the Spirit's role in our lives. Keep in mind, this is not an option; it is a command. We are to be filled with the Spirit.
- At the moment of salvation, all believers are indwelt with the Holy Spirit. We are now the temple of God and His Spirit dwells within us. The initial indwelling of the Spirit is not in view here. This is a command to continually be filled with the Spirit. The word **filled** means "*to make full; to cause to abound; to fill to the brim so that nothing else is wanting.*" It carries the idea of *being constantly filled; literally to keep on being filled.* It is the will of God for all believers to be filled with the Spirit on a continual basis.

B. Our Communion (19) – [Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord.](#) Those filled with the Spirit will naturally be a joyful and surrendered people. There will be songs of joy emanating from the redeemed. When our hearts are filled with the Spirit, creating an awareness of the goodness and grace of God in our lives, a melody within the heart will find its way to the lips to be expressed in praise to the Lord.

- It is interesting that Paul says, "[speaking to yourselves.](#)" It is apparent that he intended to imply the significance of corporate worship in songs of praise unto the Lord. One can certainly worship the Lord alone, but there appears to be a strong admonition from Paul to gather in corporate worship through song. There is something wonderfully beautiful and uplifting when the church gathers to sing songs of praise. The Lord is glorified and the body of Christ is encouraged. [Psalm 95:1 – O come, let us sing unto the Lord: let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation.](#)

C. Our Appreciation (20) – [Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.](#) This is difficult to accept, but it is commanded from the Word of God. Paul declares that we are to give thanks for **all** things unto the Lord. In other words, we are to be in an attitude of prayer and thanksgiving unto the Lord every day and in every situation.

- Such an attitude of continual thanksgiving is impossible apart from an awareness of the sovereign care of our Lord. Admittedly, we all have things in life that bring heartache, despair, and pain. Even then, however, we must be mindful of the sovereignty of God in our lives. Regardless of the situations we face, we continue to be kept in His gracious care. We are granted eternal life and victory through Christ our Lord. Even in the valley, God is good; and He is worthy of our thanksgiving continually.

D. Our Submission (21) – [Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God](#). This too is a vital part of living in a way that pleases the Lord and testifies of His grace. Without submission we will cannot properly bear witness to the transformation Christ has wrought in our lives. [Submitting](#) is a military term that means “*to arrange under; to yield to, or obey.*” Those filled with the Spirit will humbly submit themselves to others. Christ serves as our example. Deity robed in flesh humbled himself and became the Servant of men. He submitted to the will of the Father, willingly going to the cross and laying His life down to secure our redemption. We too must be willing to submit to others.

- We now live in a “me” centered society. Most are determined to have their way regardless of the needs of others. May we be willing to humble ourselves in submission. [Phil.2:5-8 – Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:](#) ⁶ [Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God:](#) ⁷ [But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men:](#) ⁸ [And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.](#)

Conclusion: This has been another challenging passage. Are we truly aware of the needs of our day and those who are outside the body of Christ? Are we redeeming the time, making the most of the allotted time we have been given in this life? Do our lives reveal the transformation Christ has made in us? Are we being continually filled with the Spirit, walking in submission to God and others?

If there are needs in your life, bring them to the Lord today. If you are yet unsaved, remember, it is the will of God for you to respond to the gospel and be saved. Each day you live unsaved is another day living outside the will of God.

ⁱ Alan Carr, [“The Walk of Wisdom \(Ephesians 5:15–17\),”](#) in *The Sermon Notebook: New Testament* (Lenoir, NC: Alan Carr, 2015), 2820.