

Ephesians 5:15-21

1. Review

2. Paul tells here not just “to be wise” but instead to walk in wisdom. What would be the difference between the two? Another way to put it is, what does commanding us to walk in wisdom mean for our lives and what does that communicate over simply telling us to be wise?

3. Walking and wisdom often appear together in the Old Testament
 - a. Proverbs 4:10-14; 8:1-9; 10:8-9; 12:15; 28:26; Eccl 2:14; Hos 14:9

 - b. We even see this in Paul’s writings (Col 4:5)

4. What then is wisdom?
 - a. Fear of the Lord
 - i. Proverbs 9:10

 - b. The practical application of God’s Word to one’s faith and life
 - i. Ps 119:65-67; Proverbs 1:2, 4, 7, 20, 22, 29; James 3:13-17

 - c. The wisdom of God as conveyed through his Spirit. Primarily the revelation of Christ as the long-promised Redeemer of the world
 - i. 1:8, 17; 3:10

- d. A gift given from God
 - i. James 1:5; 1 Kings 3:8-13
5. What is foolishness?
- a. Those who reject God and his Word
 - i. Jeremiah 8:9

 - b. Those who put their faith and trust in the rulers of the world
 - i. 1 Cor 1:20; 2:6; 3:18-20

 - c. Buying into the wisdom of this age
 - i. 1 Cor 3:18-20

 - d. Why is the cross foolishness to the world?
6. What wisdom of this age do we buy into? That we need to uphold other people's truth that are contrary to God's Will? That material possessions make us happy? That we should eat, drink, and be merry for we have one life? That we control our own destiny?
7. Paul makes the point by saying the days "are evil" not "becoming evil" or "usually evil". Why is this important?
- a. Who do we do battle against?
 - i. Eph 6:12

"Salvation in Christ does not mean the Christian is immediately snatched from the grasp of this evil age, but that the age (the "time") is snatched by Christ and redeemed for the Christian's use. Thus, the paradox can be true that while the day of redemption still lies in the future (1:14, 4:30), Paul can nonetheless proclaim: "Behold, now is the favorable time [Kairos]; behold, now is the day of salvation"."¹

¹ Winger, p.582.

8. Why single out drunkenness?
 - a. Connects back to sensuality
 - b. Pagan worship, especially the month-long festivities of Artemis Ephesia
 - c. Combination of immorality and idolatry, explained by the use of sacred prostitutes in pagan temples, is frequently extended in the NT to include drunkenness
9. After encouraging them to walk in wisdom and to flee from foolishness. Paul then encourages the Ephesians to support each other using hymns, psalms, and songs. Notice, the antithesis of pagan worship and talk then is thanksgiving and worship. Thus, Paul directs the Ephesian Christians to a pattern of worship in the Holy Spirit that is Christ-centered and consist of the wholesome words of psalm-singing and sacramental thanksgiving compared to the foul language and drunken orgies of pagan worship. Remember everyone worships. It is just a matter of who or what you worship. Thus, Paul is encouraging the Ephesians to worship God instead of the pagan gods.
10. Verse 21 is a transition verse into the next section when Paul discusses husband and wives, children and parents, and slaves. However, how do we see submission as wise instead of foolish? Is this the same way the world see submission? Do they see submitting as foolish or wise?