

Ephesians 5:15-21

Author: Paul

Audience: Church at Ephesus

Theme: The Body of Christ is Blessed

### v. 15-16

#### Be Aware

- Paul instructs us to walk wisely and to pay close attention to our behavior.
- We are to make the best use of our time that we have here in the service of the King.
- Paul says that the days are evil. That hasn't changed. Have we become more evil since Paul's day?
- No! People in the first century faced things like: idol worship, sexual immorality, murder, stealing...the same things we face now.
- There is nothing new in this time that they didn't face back then.
- Scripture is absolutely timeless.
- There is no truth that is outdated or is inapplicable to our current time.
- Whatever the world wants to throw at us there is a Biblical response to it.

#### The Days are Evil

- Nothing in this world is completely neutral.
- Everything is either edifying or destructive.
- What we listen to, what we read, what we watch, etc. all have an effect on us.
- Paul tells us here that the days in which we live are evil.
- What are the implications of that?
- If the days by default are evil then we must make a special effort to walk in holiness.
- We are commanded here to use our time wisely.

- We are told many times throughout Proverbs, as well as the New Testament, that we are to be diligently working.
- This is not a command because God hates us and wants us to exhaust ourselves with hard labor.
- This is a protective command.
- When we are idle then our minds tend to wander.
- Our hands find mischief.
- Our feet find trouble.
- Romans 3:10
- The Bible tells us that the day is evil therefore we must take extra precaution to be wise in how we live.
- According to verse 16 this means making the most of the time we have been given to serve the Lord.

### Making the Most of the Time

- What does this look like?
  - 1) We are to fill our time with things of God instead of things of the world.
    - We are to pursue holiness with our time.
    - Instead of nestling close to the line of sin we should do everything that we can to get away from the line.
  - 2) We are to be obedient to the commands of Christ.
    - We are told that if we love Him then we will keep His commandments.
    - Discipleship, Evangelism, Caring for the widows and orphans, etc.

3) We are to do all things with intentionality.

- If we allow our time to simply fade away without directing it then we miss the opportunity to do the two aforementioned things.
- It's the same premise as money.
- If we don't control our money intentionally then we will waste much of it.

### V. 17

Understand what the will of God is

- What is the will of God?
- 1 Peter 1:16
- The will of God is for you to be holy.
- What does the word *Holy* mean?
- The Greek word for holy is *hagios*.
- This literally means set apart.
- You and I are to live our life as if we have been set apart by God because we have been set apart by God.
- What does that look like?
- We are to address one another in a different manner.
- We are to be thankful in every situation because our hope has been secured. Our circumstances may change but Jesus doesn't.
- We are to be joyful.
- We are to be loving toward one another in Christ.

- We are to stand for truth even when it may be unpopular to do so.

### v. 18-21

#### Do Not Be Drunk With Wine

- This isn't a simple command to abstain from alcohol.
- The Ephesian culture was one rife with idolatry and false gods.
- Paul is warning them not to adopt the methods and ways of worship of the pagan.
- The cult of the Greek god Dionysus is likely what Paul is referring to.

#### Dionysus

- This was a Greek god that was known as the god of wine.
- He was also known as the god over ritual madness and religious ecstasy.
- His worshipers would be drunk with wine as they worshiped him and would then devolve into chaotic or even orgiastic worship rituals.
- They would fall to the ground, shriek, run around in chaos, etc.
- There was no order to his worship except to be disorderly.
- It was believed that those who partook could be possessed by the spirit of Dionysus.
- It would be as if his worshipers were drunk with wine.

#### Proper Worship

- Paul tells the Ephesians not to partake in these exercises even under the guise of worshiping Christ.
- They were to worship Christ in spirit and in truth.
- They were to address one another in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs.
- They were to spend their time making melody to the Lord.
- They were to spend their time giving thanks.

- They were to deny their selfish desires in favor of providing for their brothers in Christ.

### Worship is a Lifestyle

- We see in this passage that Paul isn't just talking about a weekly worship service.
- He's saying that this is the proper conduct of a born again believer in Christ.

#### 1) 1 Samuel 15:22

- Obedience is more sacred to the Lord than all of the sacrifices that could be made.
- We tend to focus on the actual worship service but God desires our daily obedience.

#### 2) Romans 12:1

- We are told in Romans that holiness is our spiritual worship.
- We are to pursue holiness everyday as an act of worship not an act of drudgery.
- Being holy unto the Lord is a gift.
- It's also a command.
- God's people have no business partaking in the wickedness and darkness of the world when we have been called to His righteousness and light.

### Big Idea:

As God's people we are to spend the time He has given us wisely by pursuing Him in holiness.

### Small Group Questions

- 1) When it comes to sin, have things really changed much since Paul's day?
  - No, the church has been dealing with the same sins since the beginning of human history.
- 2) What does the word *Holy* mean?
  - It means to be set apart. We have been set apart by God for salvation and we are to live like it.
- 3) What does it look like to live a life that is set apart from the world?
  - We can't isolate ourselves from the world but we can live differently. By simply obeying the commands of Scripture we will be different enough that people will notice that. Usually that opens doors for the Gospel to be shared but along with that comes ridicule at times.
- 4) What is worship in the Bible?
  - We tend to think that worship is the service that we attend weekly where there is singing, praying, preaching, etc. Those are elements of a worship service but what does the Bible say is true worship? It says that obedience is worship. It says that living a life that is pleasing to God is worship.