



Walk Wisely

Ephesians 5:15-21

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FIRST THOUGHTS

Who or what do you consult when planning a trip?

If you were traveling in an unknown remote area and could select only one form of navigational help, which would you choose? Would you prefer a map, a GPS device, or an experienced guide who had frequently traveled that area and was thoroughly acquainted with it? The wise choice would be a personal guide who possessed complete understanding to reveal the best path for you.

The same is true as move about in our daily lives. We need a personal guide to help us make right choice in a culture that has so many choices. The great news for believers is that they have the Holy Spirit to personally guide them.

The Holy Spirit came upon the early church believers in [Acts 2:1-4](#). This was the initial outpouring of God's Spirit upon believers. Peter and the other believers were later described as being filled with the Holy Spirit ([Acts 4:8,31](#)). When God initially poured out His Spirit upon the Gentiles, they were filled with the Spirit in a similar fashion as the believers on the day of Pentecost ([Acts 10:47](#)). The church had entered a new covenant with God through Jesus' blood, and they had a new relationship with God through the indwelling Spirit.

EXPLORE THE TEXT

Be Wise

[Ephesians 5:15-17](#) (ESV)

¹⁵ *Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, ¹⁶ making the best use of the time, because the days are evil. ¹⁷ Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is.*

Why must believers pay careful attention to how we live?

Knowing and understanding God's will through His Word is spiritual wisdom. We are to walk (live) as wise men, knowing the will of God. Not as the world that has no understanding of the things of God. Paul is encouraging deep introspection of one's life to make sure it reflected the changes God had made in the salvation experience. We are to reflect on the way we live. By focusing on the small, everyday decisions about how to live, Christians will place themselves in positions to discern His will about the big, major decisions of life.

Paul is encouraging us to make most of the time that we have because the time is short. Just as we do today, the early church expected the immediate return of Christ. Thus "*The time*" for the realization of God's plan (Christ's return) is short, so believers are to make the most of the time available.

There is a saying that you never ask a Texan if he is a Texan. If he is a Texan, he'll let you know it without your asking. If he is not a Texan, you wouldn't want to embarrass him! A Christian ought to walk in such a way that you know he is a child of God without asking him. We all need to look carefully at how we walk.

Be Filled

[Ephesians 5:18](#) (ESV)

¹⁸ *And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit,*

Compare and contrast being drunk with being filled by the Spirit.

When talking about living wisely, Paul encouraged Christians not to like those who get drunk with wine. Believers are not to be controlled by wine. But believers need to be under the control of the Holy Spirit. When a person is drunk, they lose control of their actions. Life becomes reckless and uncontrolled. Being filled with wine brought negative consequences, but being filled with the Spirit brought the opposite. Alcohol is a depressant; the Holy Spirit stimulates us to understand and do God's will.

The verb Paul used carries the idea of continuing to be filled by yielding to the Spirit on a regular basis. Being Spirit-filled is for all believers, not an elite few. Being filled is a command, not an option. We aren't commanded to be sealed with the Spirit—that's a completed action God took at our conversion ([Eph. 1:13](#)). Being filled by the Spirit isn't something we work up ourselves. God fills us with His Spirit when we yield control to Him. Believers are to go on being filled, continually surrendering to the Spirit's control.

Be Genuine

[Ephesians 5:19–21](#) (ESV)

¹⁹ addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with your heart, ²⁰ giving thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, ²¹ submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ.

List characteristics of Spirit-filled believers. What does each look like in daily living?

A result of the filling of the Holy Spirit is praise and thanksgiving directed to the Lord. The Spirit-filled believer is to be singing and making music in his or her heart to the Lord. The worship of Spirit-filled believers has both a horizontal and vertical dimension. Some songs were sung to one another to edify and build each other up in the faith. Other songs were sung to the Lord as a prayer or direct expression of praise. Those who include only one of these focuses in worship miss out on one of the important dimensions of worship.

Spirit-filled believers thank God for being victorious over evil, being with us in this dark world, and sovereignly working His purposes in the midst of sorrow and suffering. Since the Spirit of Christ is humble, all who are filled with Him are humble. In a spirit of mutual submission, we set aside our rights and serve one another in love. This is how wise believers live genuinely every day, not just at church and small groups.

APPLICATION

- A wise walk is Spirit-led, Spirit-dependent, and Spirit-filled.
- A wise walk deliberately makes lifestyle choices that lead to spiritual transformation.
- We walk carefully by using time wisely, taking advantage of every opportunity to know God's will, and working for His purposes.
- A wise walk is a joyful walk. We sing, give thanks continually, and build positive relationships through mutual submission.

Personal Challenge: Is your walk best described as wandering or wise? How will you pay more careful attention to lining up your priorities with God's purposes? In what ways will you make better use of your time? What steps will you take to yield control of your life to the Spirit?

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