

## Walking In Wisdom Series: 1

### Redeeming The Time

#### Ephesians 5.15-17

“See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is.”

We have several instructions in these verses which are very relevant to us today:

- **walk circumspectly** – this means that we walk accurately (straight, that is we don't wander to the left or right), carefully, diligently and purposefully. We are to watch where we walk lest we stumble.  
Our walk is one of the important themes in Ephesians, this statement is the sixth and last of these.
  - i. *Ephesians 2.10 – walk in the good works God has prepared*
  - ii. *Ephesians 4.1 – walk worthy*
  - iii. *Ephesians 4.17 – walk not as the Gentiles walk*
  - iv. *Ephesians 5.2 – walk in love*
  - v. *Ephesians 5.8 – walk as children of light*

“Look carefully then how you walk! Live purposefully and worthily and accurately...”  
(Amp)

- **Don't be as fools but wise** – walking circumspectly is the action of wise people. The foolish just aimlessly drift along or run off to the left and right, not looking where they are going. (*people on their phones*).

Luke 9.62

“But Jesus said to him, “No one, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.” - Jesus taught this parable about those who don't watch where they walk are not fit for the kingdom. Why? Have you tried walking in a straight line while looking behind you. A farmer couldn't have a hired hand that wasn't able to plough straight. If we are going to be useful for the kingdom we need to walk straight.

- **redeeming the time** – the word redeem = buy back, ransom, rescue from loss.

We know this word in our Christian/Church talk – we've been redeemed.

- We've been bought with a price – the precious blood of Jesus.
- We've been rescued from being lost.
- We were slaves to sin and the devil, held in captivity but now we've been ransomed.

But what does this word mean in relation to time as Paul mentions it here in this verse. The important thought is that we rescue or recover our time from waste but using every opportunity to improve it and use it for greater things

- improving our walk with God
- doing good to ourselves and others
- serving God
- attending to the Word of God
- Sharing the good news/Gospel

“Making the very most of the time [buying up each opportunity]....” (Amp)

“Making the most of every opportunity...” (NIV)

“Make the best use of your time...” (J B Phillips)

There is a similar phrase to this in the Old Testament

Daniel 2.8

“The king answered and said, "I know for certain that you would gain time, because you see that my decision is firm.”

The Chaldee word translated as 'gain' literally means 'buy'. We use this phrase in English 'to buy time' in order to squeeze a little more time in a situation or to prevent/put off something from happening.

- How much time do we waste?
- How much time do we spend doing things which have little or no eternal value?
- Can we squeeze any more time into our prayer life, study of the Word etc.?

You only redeem something that is precious and valuable. You were redeemed because you are precious and valuable to God.

Again Jesus told the parable of a man who bought a field in order to gain valuable treasure that was hidden in it - **Matthew 13.44**

Time is valuable, Time is short.

- ***Because the days are evil*** – The reason we need to ensure that we walk circumspectly, be wise and redeem the time is that the days are evil. Jesus is returning soon – what will He find His children doing?

There are many things in these days to divert and distract us. Many things jostle for our time (not always wrong things) and the enemy gives us these distractions because he knows that his time is short, and therefore we won't be about our rightful business if other things occupy our time. (**Matthew 24.45-51**; **Luke 12.35-40**)

Colossians 4.5

“Walk in wisdom toward those who are outside, redeeming the time. ”

“Behave yourselves wisely [*living prudently and with discretion*] in your relations with those of the outside world (the non-Christians), making the very most of the time and seizing (buying up) the opportunity” (Amp)

- *Do not be unwise but understand what the will of the Lord is* – The implication of this verse is that wisdom understands the will of God.

Do not be fools in the use of your time, and in your manner of life. Show true wisdom by endeavouring to understand what the will of the Lord is, and then doing it.

So how do we walk in wisdom? Where do we start?

### **Psalm 90.12**

“So teach *us* to number our days, That we may gain a heart of wisdom.”

We begin by following the instructions that we have just studied from the apostle Paul.

I believe this scripture is telling us exactly the same – redeem the time, that we make each day count for the kingdom of God

“Teach us to use wisely all the time we have.” (Contemporary English Version)

“Teach us to make the most of our time, so that we may grow in wisdom” (New Living Translation)

“Teach us to order our days rightly, that we may enter the gate of wisdom” (New English Bible)

“Teach us to keep account of our days so we may develop inner wisdom” (International Standard Version)

Doing this will give us a heart of wisdom.