

A Fine Vintage Walk

Long Beach Alliance Church • June 14, 2015 • Pastor Chris Lankford

Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, making the best use of the time, because the days are evil.

~Ephesians 5:15-16 (ESV)

1) Walking Worthy

- A) Like Russian Matryoshka dolls (nesting dolls), the life of the believer is first nested in God (adopted), through Christ (Gospel redeemed), and sealed by the Holy Spirit (set apart). We are nested with Christ's people in the Church (universally) and a church (locally) with Spirit empowered gifts for proclaiming the glory of God's love (our new selves) to the world (lots of people who are still old selves). This is Ephesians 4 (in a nutshell).
- B) Since our lives are nested in God, Christ, and Holy Spirit – we imitate God by walking (conducting ourselves) as His beloved child(ren), or simply, we walk like Christ. As His church, we are nested in love, which kills selfish and dead idols, renewing us as living worship centers. This is Ephesians 5:1-7 (again, nutshelled).
- C) As His children, we walk in light, transparently living among one another in His church, exposing and refining our intimate lives so we can authentically proclaim with Christ “Awake, O Sleeper...,” the blaze of the Gospel for all those who have not yet seen Christ's light or felt His warmth. Ephesians 5:8-14 (another nutshell).
- D) Finally, as those nested in love and light, we also walk in wisdom, living lives under the influence of the Spirit of God, expressing a varietal worship of God and representing the name of Christ in the innermost places of our souls all the way to the exterior actions of our lives. Ephesians 5:15-20 (let's crack this nut wide open).

2) Alertly Walking With Wide Open Spiritual Eyes

- A) For the third time in this chapter (Ephesians 5:2, 8, 15), we are given an imperative command providing clarity of how to accomplish walking worthy of the calling of Christ (cf. 4:1). We are commanded to “look carefully” (watch, inspect, consider carefully) at our walk (in love, in light) by walking in wisdom.
- B) Wisdom is a spiritual activity in Scripture. Simply, wisdom is the ability to apply Scriptural content (Bible knowledge) within your life context (experience/maturity) in whatever situation you find yourself facing (circumstances) through a normative and dynamic dependence on the Holy Spirit (prayer/worship).
- C) There is urgency behind the command to “make the best use of the time,” literally to “redeem” the time at our disposal, because “the days are evil” (5:16). Understanding the will of God contrasts with foolishness, not because it is an obvious contrast, but because God's will redeems evil to reveal spiritual wisdom.
- D) In order to provide total clarity, the Apostle Paul uses one of the easiest to understand metaphors available – drinking too much wine (under the influence of alcohol) leads to debauchery (morally loose behavior). In contrast, those who understand the will of God and carefully walk in spiritual wisdom do so by being filled with/by the Holy Spirit (5:18). If wine leads to debauchery, what does the filling of the Spirit produce?
- E) Like the previous results of walking worthy in Christ (note 5:2, 4, 9, 14), mindful and carefully watched conduct leads to a varietal of thanksgiving and worship, ranging from public (psalms and hymns and spiritual songs) to private worship (singing and making melody to the Lord with your heart, 5:19). This is the will of God! Wise living means a constant life of worship and prayer; life in the Spirit, unto God, in Christ (5:20).



Growth Group Guide

“a fine vintage walk”
ephesians 5:15-20 • june 14-june 19

Ice Breaker!

Share a time when you were high on something. Describe the feeling.

Looking Up!

Recall the manifold wisdom of God mentioned in Ephesians 3:10.
In light of this context, what is God’s manifold wisdom and how is God wise?

Ephesians 5:17 commands believers to not be foolish but to understand the Lord’s will.
In this context, what is the Lord’s will?

Leaning In!

Read Ephesians 5:19. What does it mean to be filled (with, by, in) the Holy Spirit?

What is the significance of this command? What does it mean?

Stepping Out!

Read John 18:20-21. What is God’s strategy for spreading the Gospel?
Is it coffee shops where the Gospel is preached? Physical healing that points to a higher power?
More attractive youth programs? Better music? Charismatic preaching?

Respond!

If wine leads to debauchery (loose living) – What does living under the influence of the Spirit lead to?



This Week In Action & In Prayer!

Pray for unity described in John 18.
Unity within your family, your small group, LBAC,
churches in Long Beach, in California,
in the United States, and in the world.

