**Walking As Wise Men**

Eph. 5:15-21

Introduction:

1. Throughout the text of Scripture walking is used to depict one’s movement through life.

 a. Eph. 5:1 says, “Walk in love, just as Christ loved you and gave Himself up for us.” So

 the children of God are to move through life loving as Christ loved in self-sacrificial

 giving.

 b. Verse 6 then refers to “walking as children of Light.”

 c. Then verse 15 adds that we are to be careful how we walk.

 d. (Might note also 2:10; 4:1, 17).

2. So we move through life carefully, enlightened by the will of God, loving as Christ loved.

3. This is equivalent to “walking as wise men.”

4. What does this wise walk look like? Paul is about to elaborate.

Discussion:

I. Carefulness is required (v. 15).

 A. My parents would always say, “Wayne, be careful!” My mother would say, “You are like

 a bull in a china shop.”

 1. Bulls don’t care so much about fine china.

 2. When bulls are in china shops delicate things get broken.

 3. Be careful means to give special consideration to. The Greek term has to do with

 acting with precision or exactness. Paul says that his education was according to

 the exactness of the law (Acts 22:3). Herod determined the exact time the star

 appeared to the wise men (Matt. 2:7). Priscilla and Aquila explained to Apollos, “the

 way of God more accurately,” since he only knew the baptism of John (Acts 18:26).

 B. The idea of exactness is in Eph. 5:15.

 1. Paul says walk not as unwise but as wise, making the most of your time, because

 the days are evil.

 2. Col. 4:5 parallels this. It says, “Conduct yourselves with wisdom toward outsiders,

 making the most of the opportunity.” The idea seems to be that we are to influence

 those outsiders in an efficient way to win them to Christ. He calls on us to exploit

 the opportunities we have to affect the world.

 C. “So then, don’t be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is.” It is not a

 matter of irrational impulse, but of intelligent reflection, deliberate and exacting

 direction.

II. “Do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation” (debauchery, ESV; excess, KJV).

 A. The ESV and KJV translations do not help me a lot.

 B. The word in the Greek (asōtia) comes from the word (sōzō) meaning saved. But it is

 the opposite. So it means unsaved, not saved.

 1. You may save your leftovers from lunch today or you may throw them out. You

 may destroy them.

 2. The idea here is that getting drunk is dissipation. It is wasteful, destructive. It is

 the opposite of saving.

 C. It is used in two other instances in the N.T.

 1. Titus 1:6—elders are not to have children accused of dissipation or rebellion.

 They are to train them different than that. The prodigal son of Lk. 18 was that. I

 am sure he was trained differently, but He was wasteful and on a path of self-

 destruction, until he came to his senses.

 2. 1 Pet. 4:4—identifies the behavior of the Gentiles. Having pursued a course of

 sensuality, lusts, drunkenness, carousing, drinking parties, and abominable

 idolatries. They are surprised that believers do not run with them into the same

 excesses of dissipation.

 3. This does not identify all the specific actions associated with dissipating

 behavior. The list is not exhaustive. But the direction, the course of life is what

 is under consideration.

III. Be filled with the Spirit.

 A. Being filled with the Spirit defines the direction of the walk of wisdom that is reflected

 in specific behaviors.

 B. Some of the behaviors are identified.

 1. Speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs.

 2. Always giving thanks for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God.

 3. Be subject to one another in the fear of Christ.

 C. Some seem to want to define being filled with the Holy Spirit around tongue speaking

 and performance of miracles, but that is certainly not the focus in this text.

 D. Gal. 5:16ff draws a similar contrast as it distinguishes between walking by the Spirit

 and carrying out the desire of the flesh.

 1. It identifies a list of deeds of the flesh, not exhaustive but representative (19-21) of

 the direction.

 2. It identifies a list of the fruit of the Spirit, not exhaustive but representative (22-23)

 of the direction.

 3. Verse 26 adds boastfulness, challenging one another and envying one another to

 the deeds of the flesh.

 E. Col. 3 is parallel to Eph. 5. It draws a similar contrast between the mind set on the

 things above vs. the mind set on the things that are on earth.

 1. Note the differences in 5-14.

 2. But notice particularly how “the word of Christ dwelling in you” parallels being

 “filled with the Spirit” in Eph. 5:18.

 F. Turning back to Eph. 5:21ff being filled with the Spirit results in our being subject to

 one another. Paul elaborates on this by discussing family relationships. So the

 behaviors he recommends for the church (husbands and wives), children, fathers,

 slaves and masters all reflect the wise walk of being filled with the Spirit.

IV. So to walk as wise men . . .

 A. We use our time on this earth “conducting ourselves with wisdom toward outsiders”

 (Col. 4:5), “making the most of the opportunity” (“making the most of our time”).

 B. We are careful how we walk.

 C. Filled with the Spirit, the word of Christ dwelling in us, we sing, give thanks and

 subject ourselves to one another.

Conclusion:

1. Are you walking wisely?

2. It will be evident in your behavior.