

Eph 5:17-18 17 Walk in Wisdom

Paul has told us in verses 15 and 16 to walk wisely by making the most of every opportunity to serve God in the limited time that we have here on Earth, He now says that we are to keep our priorities straight, keeping our eyes on Christ, living a life that is pleasing to the Lord.

On account of this do not become foolish,

Biblically, a fool is someone who is careless and despises wisdom, lacking understanding, despising knowledge—especially knowledge and wisdom from God. Wisdom, Paul is telling us to be careful, and not to be reckless or unwise in our lifestyle choices. Christians should not be reckless or unwise in our lifestyle choices. For example, Jesus denounces the Pharisees as fools because they were hypocritically clean on the outside but wicked on the inside. Luke 11:38-42 Wisdom is also about priorities. God labels the rich landowner in Luke 12:16-21 who wanted to build bigger barns a fool who put aside both his diligence in his earthly affairs **20 But God said to him, ‘You fool! This very night your soul is demanded of you; and as for all that you have prepared, who will own it now?’ 21 Such is the one who stores up treasure for himself, and is not rich in relation to God.** “Foolishness” in biblical terms is often linked to disregarding God’s wisdom. As a Jewish scholar and expert on the scriptures, Paul was familiar with the Bible’s emphasis on God as both the source of wisdom, and the one who encourages and expects it in those who are His. Prov 9:10 **The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, And the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.** Foolishness signifies living without consideration for God’s guidance and principles, choosing instead to rely on human understanding alone. Paul was familiar on the consequences of foolishness on relationships, and encourages us to let God be in charge. Prov 10:1 **A wise son makes a father glad, But a foolish son is a grief to his mother.** Our ways may seem right to us, but they will lead us to destruction. We can either take pride in our accomplishments and our wisdom, or we can seek God’s ways in humility—we can’t do both. Trying to live our lives our own way will always lead to destruction. 15:21 **Foolishness is joy to one who lacks sense, But a person of understanding walks straight.**; It doesn’t matter whether the world says “I know what I’m doing”, “everyone else is doing it”, or “it’s just a little this or that, it won’t hurt you”, remember that they are headed for destruction, and they want to pull you down with them.

But following God means turning toward Him, toward His ways with our heart, instead of insisting that we know what’s best for us. It means trusting God to lead. Proverbs 3:5-6 **5 Trust in the Lord with all your heart And do not lean on your own understanding. 6 In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He will make your paths straight.** Fools despise God’s wisdom and instruction because they do not fear or honor him. As believers, however, we submit to God’s wisdom because we know that He will direct our paths: God makes our paths straight by revealing His will to us. As our Heavenly Father, God wants us to let Him guide us and teach us. And He will give His wisdom to us freely, if we will just ask Him for it, for His Will in the decisions of everyday life. James 1:5 **5 But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him.** Seeking the Lord in this way allows God to guide us further along the path that He has picked out for our lives. This is what God wants for all of us. As believers, we have been set free from foolishness by the light of God’s Word, understanding the truth by the Power of His Holy Spirit. And we are not to begin to become foolish by returning to the ways of the world.

but understand what the will of the Lord is.”

Paul says understand the Will of the Lord, , and this word means “to perceive, understand, comprehend”, but it also includes the idea of coming into agreement with what you have heard. This was used as a metaphor for uniting in marriage, for the image of two rivers coming together to flow in

the same direction, to perceive what is heard, understand it, and agree with it; flow along with it. It means “set together.” Basically, it’s to agree that there’s wisdom in what God says. Agreeing to benefit from His insight that He shares with you through His Word. To understand God’s will, we must study and meditate on Scripture, which is the primary way that God communicates with us. Regarding the necessity and sufficiency of Scripture. Understanding God’s will is not just about knowing the right from wrong; it is about forming a relationship that guides our actions and decisions.

And do not get drunk with wine, in which there is dissipation,

Paul is using this one example to explain how this wisdom works out in the conduct of our lives. How many people have had their lives messed up by what they’ve done while they were drinking. And, so Paul is warning them not to allow such behavior to become a habit in their lives because this would be considered unwise or foolish conduct.

in which there is dissipation. Has the idea of “shamelessness, dissipation, profligacy, debauchery.” Most prodigals squander their money in debauchery and have no high moral standards as they readily yield to the temptation of pleasure. So Paul is saying that alcohol is a road to a foolish, wild and undisciplined life. In the gospels, this word is used in Luke 15:13 where it relates how the prodigal son squandered all his money in “dissolute” living.

but be filled by the Spirit,

The pagan people of Ephesus worshiped their god in drunkenness. They believed that to commune with their god and to be led by him, they had to be drunk. In this drunken state, they could determine the will of their god and determine how best to serve and obey him. By contrast, Paul commanded believers to be filled with the Holy Spirit. We are filled with the Holy Spirit when we cautiously consider our actions and yield ourselves to the Holy Spirit, allowing Him to guide and influence us. Sin and rebellion against God’s Will will hinder us from being filled with the Holy Spirit. When we give in to sinful temptations and worldly desires, when we lose control and do what we know is wrong, living as we did before accepting Christ’s salvation, we prevent God’s Spirit from guiding, influencing, & governing our behavior. The Holy Spirit is grieved & quenched because He’s not allowed to reveal Himself in our lives. When we are filled with the Holy Spirit, we “walk by the Spirit” (Galatians 5:16) and are “led by the Spirit” (Galatians 5:18), “live by the Spirit,” and “keep in step with the Spirit” (Galatians 5:25). The contrast is not between the wine and the Spirit but between the two states expressed: being drunk with wine leads to dissipation but being filled by the Spirit leads to joy in fellowship and obedience to the commands of the Lord’s will. Instead of going out and trying to find your own inspiration through alcohol, drugs, or whatever you have a penchant toward, instead allow God to fill you with His Holy Spirit, and when you are filled with all of the moral excellence and power of God, then you won’t want any other filling—you will be truly satisfied. In John 4, when the woman at the well was looking in the wrong place to quench her thirst, Jesus directed her toward the living water. John 4:10-14 **10 Jesus replied to her, “If you knew the gift of God, and who it is who is saying to you, ‘Give Me a drink,’ you would have asked Him, and He would have given you living water.” ... 13 Jesus answered and said to her, “Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again; 14 but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him shall never be thirsty; but the water that I will give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up to eternal life.”** We are commanded to be filled by the Spirit so that we will understand the will of the Lord and allow God’s control of our lives, thus allowing us to make the most of every opportunity rather than succumbing to the desires of the flesh. The wise walk is characterized by the Holy Spirit’s control.