

Title: Living Wisely in Evil Days

Passage: Ephesians 5:15 - 6:10

Passage: Ephesians 5:15 - 6:10

Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, making the best use of the time, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit, addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with your heart, giving thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ.

Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Savior. Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit in everything to their husbands.

Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish. In the same way husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ does the church, because we are members of his body. "Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh." This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church. However, let each one of you love his wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband.

Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. "Honor your father and mother" (this is the first commandment with a promise), "that it may go well with you and that you may live long in the land." Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.

Bondservants, obey your earthly masters with fear and trembling, with a sincere heart, as you would Christ, rendering service with a good will as to the Lord and not to man, knowing that whatever good anyone does, this he will receive back from the Lord, whether he is a bondservant or is free. Masters, do the same to them, and stop your threatening, knowing that he who is both their Master and yours is in heaven, and that there is no partiality with him. Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might.

EXPOSITION

Introduction

"Fire Blow-up"

- Definition = a type of fire that is fanned by fierce hurricane-type winds that creates walls of fire that is greatly destructive.

- “Blow-up” = Illustration of what has been happening to America over the last few decades.
 - A combination of lethal elements that are creating an environment that is destroying things in their path
 - Today: Increasing “fire” of culture/trends that is directly contradictory to God.

Question: What can we do in an evil world like this?

Answer: There is nothing new under the sun. We look to God and His Word in how to respond in such dark contexts

- See Acts 18-19 (Similar dark and immoral places)
- See Ephesians

Ephesus Culture (Similar to Today)

1. Reject God and have no fear of God.

- Rejecting God: characteristic of City of Ephesus of old / our nation of today
- Forget who God is or have a low/small view of God.

Proverbs 1:7

The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge;

fools despise wisdom and instruction.

- Fear of God = sincere, on-going reverence of God
- God is a holy God that we should be continually fearing and in reverent awe. He is holy, just, and righteous while we are not.
- Today: superficial understanding of sin.
 - Low view of God that He won't call us to account for our sin.
 - Small view of God that we make God in our own image within our perceived comforts.
 - Result? Cheap grace because we view God as small.

2. Reject the truth of God's law and celebrated immorality.

- Ephesus celebrated and elevated sexual immorality.
- Today: idolization of sexuality. Surrendering to one's personal individualized determination.
 - If do not agree, then labeled as bigot or intolerant

3. Wrong way and understanding of marriage.

- Ephesus: many man domineered their families or passive. Divorce was common.
- Today: similar trends .

4. Wrong and unbiblical way of understanding the ways and roles of children's be parents.

- Ephesus: children viewed as expendable in Roman Empire or as a nuisance.
- Today: similarly kill children through abortion and marginalized.

- Study: Parents spend an average of only 50 minutes per week in serious discussion with their children. Pervasive parental abandonment of children.

Summary

Today: we got here the same way other cultures got into a place of darkness and immorality

- **Question:** What are we to do? Is there any hope?
- **Answer:** Yes! Believing in the Gospel of Jesus Christ and applying the truth.
 - Do not look to a particular person or group to bring about change.
 - True transformation begins at the heart.
 - The only way to transform hearts is the Gospel of Jesus Christ!

How can we be a light to change society?

Key Importance of believing in the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

- Only the Gospel of Jesus Christ can transform lives and change lives/homes.
- You are saved by faith alone in Christ alone
 - As a result, will have transformed minds and hearts that transform relationships.

I. Personal Pursuit of Holiness

- transformation begins in each person's heart.

Ephesians 5:1-2

Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children. And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

Ephesians 5:8-11

for at one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light (for the fruit of light is found in all that is good and right and true), and try to discern what is pleasing to the Lord. Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them.

- to be quiet about evil is to promote it.

Personal holiness is key

- we must repent of our sins and turn to God continually.
- From the ashes of personal repentance, what can emerge is something glorious that God has created and empowered by His light.

Isaiah 6:5 (personal repentance)

And I said: "Woe is me! For I am lost; for I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts!"

II. Biblical focus on being wise and being filled with the Spirit

Ephesians 5:15-21

Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, making the best use of the time, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit, addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with your heart, giving thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ.

Be wise

- in the face of much darkness, our natural tendency is to try to escape (ex: be drunk so one's mind doesn't think about it)
- Instead: focus on God and His truth.

Be filled with the Spirit

- Meaning = allowing God take more control of your life
- How? Let God's Word dwell in you richly.

Colossians 3:16

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God.

- Application: Immerse yourself deeply and constantly into God's Word.
 - Why? When look into God's Word, you better understand that God is in control of all things and He will redeem suffering.
 - We are to push through suffering for our good in time and His glory for eternity
- Praise God with songs of rich truth, allow thankfulness to refill your hearts.
 - Be mindful of songs with shallow truths.
 - Focus on songs filled with God's truth and Word.

III. Reclaiming the Biblical view of Marriage

- Key Command: Submit in Love
- The only way to be a light in society is to live contrary to the consequences of sin.

Ephesians 5:22-33

Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Savior. Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit in everything to their husbands.

Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish. In the same way husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ does the church, because we are members of his body. "Therefore a

man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh." This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church. However, let each one of you love his wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband.

Genesis 3:16b (sin's consequences)

Your desire shall be contrary to your husband, but he shall rule over you.

- Women's world/flesh tendency is to think: I need to be in control
- Men's world/flesh tendency is to think: tyrannical control harshly over others
- Truth of God's Word: submission in the Lord
- Focus on the Biblical view of manhood and womanhood

IV. Reclaiming the Biblical View of Parenting

- Be different than the world.

Ephesians 6:1-4

Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. "Honor your father and mother" (this is the first commandment with a promise), "that it may go well with you and that you may live long in the land." Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.

- these commandments are contrary to our nature/flesh
 - Children naturally disobey parents
 - Parents naturally do not want to nurture and train children (either be overbearing or abdicate entirely).
 - Fathers either dominating over our children or abdicate their responsibility as leaders
- Command: Raise and train children to fear God.
- Start with your own household to change society
 - Train and nurture your children in the Lord
 - Discipline wisely
 - Praying and worshipping together

V. Reclaiming the Biblical View of Work

- work in a way that is God-honoring

Ephesians 6:5-10

Bondservants, obey your earthly masters with fear and trembling, with a sincere heart, as you would Christ, rendering service with a good will as to the Lord and not to man, knowing that whatever good anyone does, this he will receive back from the Lord, whether he is a bondservant or is free. Masters, do the same to them, and stop your threatening, knowing that he who is both their Master and yours is in heaven, and that there is no partiality with him. Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might.

Summary Conclusion

- Blow-up Fire (1949) - 15 firefighters, 2 survived (1 survived by starting a match in front of him by burning ground in front of him and stood there)
- Lesson: To escape the fire, we must light another fire (fire of Christ). Flight is impossible. Safety is only found in the fires of God's divine troop.

Jeremiah 31:35

Thus says the LORD, who gives the sun for light by day and the fixed order of the moon and the stars for light by night, who stirs up the sea so that its waves roar— the LORD of hosts is his name:

- Likewise, we must light and bring the light of God's fire within our hearts, families, and communities.
- Focus and courage on Christ will create a place of refuge in the midst of destructive fires.
- Light the fire of Christ and be faithful and courageous

Other Passages in Service

Hosea 13:4

But I am the LORD your God from the land of Egypt; you know no God but me, and besides me there is no savior.

Psalms 18:2

The LORD is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer, my God, my rock, in whom I take refuge, my shield, and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold.

Psalms 78:35

They remembered that God was their rock, the Most High God their redeemer.