

A WISE AND WATCHFUL WALK WITH THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD

(Ephesians 5:15-21)

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Opening Illustration: The Story of Beth at Half Dome (Slide)

- Her parents weren't *watchful*
- She wasn't *wise*
- Suddenly, when there ought to have been unmixed joy, there was danger and terror everywhere!
- MP: This is the lesson of our text today: Our inheritance as Christian men and women is to live a purposeful, fruitful life, full of victory and joy. But the non-negotiable requirement for experiencing such a life is that every moment of every hour of every day, *we walk wisely and watchfully with the Light of the World.*

B. Review

- We are studying Eph. 4-6, in which are learning about *how we are to walk in this world*: what our attitudes, words, and deeds are to be
- We have seen in Christ God has provided for our *sanctification*, for a progressive separation *from* the world, the flesh, and the devil, and a progressive separation *to* the presence, power, and purposes of God
- We have seen that we who believe have an active role in our sanctification; that it involves both putting off and putting on
- In today's text, Paul continues to teach us how to walk in this world; and just as we might expect, we will find once again that there is much to put off and put on: (Slide)

C. Outline (Slide)

- (15-17) Walk in Watchful Wisdom
- (18-19) Walk in Holy Intoxication
- (20) Walk in Perpetual Gratitude
- (21) Walk in Mutual Submission

II. (15-17) WALK IN WATCHFUL WISDOM

A. Text: *Therefore, watch carefully how you walk, 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.*

B. Key points:

1. The Church is on a walk through the world (Slide)
2. She is to walk watchfully, not carelessly
3. She is to walk wisely, not foolishly
4. Wise men redeem the time, knowing the days are evil
5. Wise men understand what the will of the Lord is

III. (18-19) WALK IN HOLY INTOXICATION

A. Text: *And do not be drunk with wine, in which there is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord . . .*

B. Key Points:

1. Man was created for intoxication: with God! (But sinners don't know it or want it)
2. Sinful man, burdened by guilt, fear, and pain, naturally seeks for a way of escape
3. Drugs and alcohol are NOT the way—for they lead to dissipation. That is, they EMPTY us of life and health.
4. God's prescription is that we be FILLED with the Spirit; that we escape into His Presence, His Love, and His joy.
5. When we are FILLED, his life OVERFLOWS our vessel and pours out onto others in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs
6. To note: Joy, music, song, celebration—these are the earmarks of the New Covenant and of a healthy Christian walk
7. How God releases the geyser of joy, music, song, and celebration in our hearts: By revealing that he is a singing God

(Slide: Old Faithful)
(Storms reading)

IV. (20) WALK IN PERPETUAL GRATITUDE

A. Text: . . . *always giving thanks for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ . . .*

B. Key Points:

1. We are ALWAYS to give thanks, not just some times
2. We are always to give thanks for ALL things, not just some things!
3. Question: How can this be??????
4. Answer:
 - Because Christ so walked through the world for us—living and dying for us—that God is now our Father
 - Because we now know that God our Father is working all things together for our good! (Rom. 8:28)
5. Gratitude is not only a gift, but also a discipline (Q: Nouwen; the pastors in *God's Not Dead*)
6. Gratitude—plus wisdom—turns life into an adventure (e.g. Diane Kopriva)
7. Gratitude—plus wisdom—prevents seeds of fear, anger, selfishness, etc. from taking root and growing in our hearts (Quote Hendriksen)

V. (21) WALK IN MUTUAL SUBMISSION

A. Text: . . . *and* submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ

B. Key Points

1. What is mutual submission? (An example)

2. What mutual submission requires from us

3. Why we commit ourselves to mutual submission: out of reverence for Christ, who:

- Commands it (Scriptures)
- For our good
- And His glory

4. The beautiful fruit of mutual submission: Murmuration! (Video)

“When starlings flock together, wheeling and darting through the sky in tight, fluid formations, we call it a murmuration. These murmurations can range from small groups of a few hundred starlings in a small ball, to undulating seas of millions of birds, blocking out the sun.”

VI. CONCLUSION