

Ephesians 5:15-21

This section presents 3 exhortations:

1. 5:15-16 – **Be wise, not unwise**, which refers to your **use of time** in this age
2. 5:17 – **Understand practically** what the **Lord’s will** is instead of operating in foolish-mode.
3. 5:18-20 – Be filled with the Spirit so as to **function under the influence of God**, instead of under the influence of the world (“drunk”)

Each of the three main exhortations contain a contrast. In the Greek:

1. μη, *me*, “not”
2. ἀλλά, *alla*, “but”

Colossians 4:5-6 – “Walk in wisdom toward outsiders, making the best use of the time. Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you ought to answer each person.”

Colossians 3:16-17 – “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. And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.”

Ephesians 5:14 – “Therefore it says,
**“Awake, O sleeper,
 and arise from the dead,
 and Christ will shine on you.”**

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| 1352 [e] | 3004 [e] | 1453 [e] | 3588 [e] | 2518 [e] | 2532 [e] | 450 [e] | 1537 [e] |
| dio | legei | Egeire | ho | katheudōn | kai | anasta | ek |
| 14 διὸ | λέγει : | Ἐγείρε | , ὁ | καθεύδων | , καὶ | ἀνάστα | ἐκ |
| Therefore | it says | Awake you | the [one] | sleeping | and | rise up | out from |
| Conj | V-PIA-3S | V-PMA-2S | Art-VMS | V-PPA-VMS | Conj | V-AMA-2S | Prep |

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| 3588 [e] | 3498 [e] | 2532 [e] | 2017 [e] | 4771 [e] | 3588 [e] | 5547 [e] |
| tōn | nekrōn | kai | epiphausei | soi | ho | Christos |
| τῶν | νεκρῶν | , καὶ | ἐπιφάσει | σοι | ὁ | Χριστός . |
| the | dead | and | will shine upon | you | - | Christ |
| Art-GMP | Adj-GMP | Conj | V-FIA-3S | PPro-D2S | Art-NMS | N-NMS |

1. This is a poetic quotation with lines that form in the Greek a metrical triplet in a rhythm that was associated with religious initiation chants. (The Expositors’ Bible Commentary, Gaebelien)
2. This is not a direct quote from the OT, but similar to Isaiah 60:1; 9:2; 26:19; 51:17; 52:1.
 - a. Paul may have wrote these lyrics.
 - b. Some commentators suggest they are words of Jesus.
 - c. Most likely these are another NT example of early Christian (35-55 AD) church liturgy possibly used at the Christian initiation rite of baptism. The rhythm and melody may have been borrowed from the mystery religions of the Gentile world with words adapted for Christianity.

3. This is referring to the resurrection with phrases (or, words) like “wake up” (*egeire*) and “rise from the dead” (*anasta ek ton nekron*)
4. So, this is referring to believers following the Lord in resurrection to new life.
5. Baptism was considered as “having received the light” or having been “enlightened” as seen in Hebrews:
 - a. 6:4-6 – “For it is impossible, in the case of those who have once been enlightened, who have tasted the heavenly gift, and have shared in the Holy Spirit, and have tasted the goodness of the word of God and the powers of the age to come, and then have fallen away, to restore them again to repentance, since they are crucifying once again the Son of God to their own harm and holding him up to contempt.”
 - b. 10:32 – “But recall the former days when, after you were enlightened, you endured a hard struggle with sufferings,”
6. “shine” – *epiphaino* – means “to shine forth” and it is used to refer to:
 - a. the rising of a heavenly body
 - b. the dawn of a new day

Ephesians 5: 15 – “Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise,”

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| 991 [e] | 3767 [e] | 199 [e] | 4459 [e] | 4043 [e] | 3361 [e] | 5613 [e] | 781 [e] | 235 [e] | 5613 [e] | 4680 [e] | | | | |
| Blepete | oun | akribōs | pōs | peripateite | mē | hōs | asophoi | all' | hōs | sophoi | | | | |
| 15 | Βλέπετε | οὖν | ἀκριβῶς | πῶς | περιπατεῖτε | , | μὴ | ὡς | ἄσοφοι | , | ἀλλ' | ὡς | σοφοί | , |
| | Take heed | therefore | carefully | how | you walk | | not | as | unwise | | but | as | wise | |
| | V-PMA-2P | Conj | Adv | Adv | V-PIA-2P | | Adv | Adv | Adj-NMP | | Conj | Adv | Adj-NMP | |

1. *Blepete* meaning “look, see, perceive, discern” is in the present imperative and is commonly used by Paul to command “see to it”
2. Double – “Look Carefully!, or, “Watch Carefully!” - Here *Blepete* is combined with *akribos* which is a word that means “accurately” and “carefully”
3. Paul is commanding the Ephesians believers to “To be sure to carefully walk” in the light, or here he says to “walk...as wise”.
4. “To live as a wise person is not just to have knowledge but to have skill in living, to have the sort of perception that authenticates itself in practice” (Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 42, Ephesians, Lincoln)
5. Walking in the light that is shining on you or walking in the wisdom of the renewed mind is what is going to cast light on the darkness.
6. “walking” is used now for the fifth time in Ephesians 4-5 to refer to the believer’s life which would include life style, thought and speech.
7. The contrast between light and dark now becomes wise and unwise. The enlightenment of Christ has now empowered to believer to discern and be wise.

Ephesians 5: 16 – “Making the best use of the time, because the days are evil.”

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| 1805 [e] | 3588 [e] | 2540 [e] | 3754 [e] | 3588 [e] | 2250 [e] | 4190 [e] | 1510 [e] |
| exagorazomenoi | ton | kairon | hoti | hai | hēmerai | ponērai | eisin |
| 16 ἑξαγοραζόμενοι | τὸν | καιρόν | , ὅτι | αἱ | ἡμέραι | πονηραί | εἰσιν . |
| redeeming | the | time | because | the | days | evil | are |
| V-PPM-NMP | Art-AMS | N-AMS | Conj | Art-NFP | N-NFP | Adj-NFP | V-PIA-3P |

1. Meaning options:

- a. “Buying back time” or “trying to gain time” in order to have more opportunity to do good.
 - b. “Buy off” the wrath this evil time deserves. Similar to Christ’s act of redemption satisfied or bought off God’s wrath in Gal. 3:13 and 4:5.
 - c. In view of the final end times which are said to become more and more evil this verse would be stressing the urgency of our limited opportunity with time that are still good enough to present ministry opportunities.
 - d. Most likely explanation: The present age is evil and under the control of Satan (2:2) so we are to live in this evil age producing the fruit of the coming kingdom. We are to live the life of the age to come in this present evil age. We are making the most of our time in this evil age living in the light and being wise. We do realize that these days will grow worse and worse (as mentioned in point “c” above.)
2. This is not about getting back time or anything to do with time.
 3. “Time” – *kairon* – means “time” and “season”. *Kairon* is used to refer to “fitting season”, “opportunity”, “occasion” along with meaning “time” and “season”
 4. The emphasis is on “opportunities” and the “fitting season”
 5. “evil” days is referring to the evil age in which we live, not the difficult time period the Ephesians were living in as if they were facing unusual hardship or distress. We are living (and always are) in dark, unwise days that are of this cosmos.

Ephesians 5: 17 – “Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is.”

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| 1223 [e] | 3778 [e] | 3361 [e] | 1096 [e] | 878 [e] | 235 [e] | 4920 [e] | 5101 [e] | 3588 [e] | 2307 [e] | 3588 [e] | 2962 [e] |
| dia | touto | mē | ginesthe | aphrones | alla | syniete | ti | to | thelēma | tou | Kyriou |
| 17 διὰ | τούτο | , μὴ | γίνεσθε | ἄφρονες | , ἀλλὰ | συνίετε | τί | τὸ | θέλημα | τοῦ | Κυρίου . |
| Because of | this | not | be | foolish | but | understand | what | the | will | of the | Lord [is] |
| Prep | DPro-ANS | Adv | V-PMM/P-2P | Adj-NMP | Conj | V-PMA-2P | IPro-NNS | Art-NNS | N-NNS | Art-GMS | N-GMS |

1. Now “light and dark” along with “wise and unwise” are replaced with “foolish and understadning”
2. “foolish” – *aphron* – is a stronger word than *asophoi* of 5:15. *Aphron* means “without reason” and is used to say “senseless”, “foolish” and “inconsiderate”. It is used here to refer to “stupid imprudence” and “senseless folly in action”
3. “understand” – *syniemi* – means “to set together” and “to understand” so as to perceive and understand something because you are considering it and thinking about it. In other words get focused!
4. “understand” is again an imperative (present imperative)...It is a command. It indicates you are going to have to make an effort. It could be said, “Focus and try to understand what the Lord’s will is in every circumstances.”
5. Like Romans 12:2 this involves “discovering what is the will of God”

6. “understanding the Lord’s will” for this present age and avoiding “foolish” means recognizing where we are at in time (this church age, this evil age, this temporal age) and make the most of the opportunities we have to do good with our new nature, the revealed Truth and the presence of the Spirit during this time where the ages overlap (Now, but not yet). Today we are sons of God, but what we will be has not yet been made known.- 1 John 3:2; Gal. 3:26;)

Ephesians 5: 18 – “And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit,”

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| 2532 [e] | 3361 [e] | 3182 [e] | 3631 [e] | 1722 [e] | 3739 [e] | 1510 [e] | 810 [e] | 235 [e] |
| kai | mē | methyskesthe | oinō | en | hō | estin | asōtia | alla |
| 18 καὶ | μὴ | μεθύσκεσθε | οἴνω , | ἐν | ᾧ | ἐστὶν | ἀσωτία . | ἀλλὰ |
| And | not | to be drunk | with wine | in | which | is | debauchery | Instead |
| Conj | Adv | V-PMM/P-2P | N-DMS | Prep | RelPro-DMS | V-PIA-3S | N-NFS | Conj |

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| 4137 [e] | 1722 [e] | 4151 [e] |
| plērousthe | en | Pneumati |
| πληροῦσθε | ἐν | Πνεύματι , |
| be filled | with | [the] Spirit |
| V-PMM/P-2P | Prep | N-DNS |

1. “Drunk”

- a. Is this referring to a problem in the Ephesian church? Is this similar to the Corinthian church? Probably not. It would seem out of place to be correcting the Ephesian church suddenly when nothing of their errors has been mentioned so far.
- b. Is it a reference to the mystery religion celebration of the Dionysian cult? Dionysus was the Greek god of wine and drunkenness along with ritual madness and religious ecstasy. Probably not. Although the Ephesians would be familiar with Dionysus.
- c. Is Paul telling the Ephesians that alcoholic drunkenness is not the way to deal with this evil age, and instead Paul is telling the Christians they have another alternative to alcoholic abuse to deal with the pressures of life. This is a truth, but probably not Paul’s point.
- d. It is likely this is another contrast building on the previous contrast. The contrast here is drunken influence of the old age of the cosmos with influence of the new age of the Holy Spirit.
 - i. Drunkenness is a prime characteristic of the darkness:
 1. 1 Thessalonians 5:4-9 – “But you, brothers and sisters, are not in darkness so that this day should surprise you like a thief. You are all children of the light and children of the day. We do not belong to the night or to the darkness. So then, let us not be like others, who are asleep, but let us be awake and sober. For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk, get drunk at night. But since we belong to the day, let us

be sober, putting on faith and love as a **breastplate**, and the hope of salvation as a **helmet**. For God did not appoint us to suffer wrath but to receive salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ.

2. Romans 13:11-14 – “And do this, understanding the present time: The hour has already come for you to wake up from your slumber, because our salvation is nearer now than when we first believed. The night is nearly over; the day is almost here. So let us put aside the deeds of darkness and put on the **armor of light**. Let us behave decently, as in the daytime, not in carousing and drunkenness, not in sexual immorality and debauchery, not in dissension and jealousy. Rather, clothe yourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ, and do not think about how to gratify the desires of the flesh.”
3. Matt. 24:49; Luke 12:45; 1 Cor. 5:11; 6:10; 1 Tim. 3:8; Titus 2:3; 1 Peter 4:3

2. Overindulgence in the cosmos would be the opposite. “drunk with wine” would be an example of not being focused, not even trying, and a continuation in the rebellion of darkness and stupidity.
3. Coming under the control of another power: drunk from this age or filled with the Holy Spirit.
4. This comparison is even made on the day of Pentecost.
5. Filled with the Spirit would be the beginning of “making every effort”.
6. Present tense, imperative...this means it is a continuing experience to be sought after.
7. Indwelling, baptism, sealing, filling:
 - a. Indwelling – Romans 8:9
 - b. Sealing – Ephesians 1:13 and 4:30
 - c. Baptizing – 1 Corinthians 12:13; Ephesians 4:4-5
 - d. Gifting – 1 Corinthians 12, 1 Peter 4:10
 - e. Filling – Acts 4:8; Acts 4:31; Acts 9:17; Acts 13:9; Acts 13:52;

Ephesians 5: 19 – “Addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with your heart,”

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| 2980 [e] | 1438 [e] | 1722 [e] | 5568 [e] | 2532 [e] | 5215 [e] | 2532 [e] | 5603 [e] | 4152 [e] |
| lalountes | heautois | en | psalmois | kai | hymnois | kai | ōdais | pneumatikais |
| 19 λαλοῦντες | ἑαυτοῖς | [ἐν] | ψαλμοῖς | καὶ | ὑμνοῖς | καὶ | ὠδαῖς | πνευματικαῖς , |
| speaking | to each other | in | psalms | and | hymns | and | songs | spiritual |
| V-PPA-NMP | RefPro-DM3P | Prep | N-DMP | Conj | N-DMP | Conj | N-DFP | Adj-DFP |

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| 103 [e] | 2532 [e] | 5567 [e] | 3588 [e] | 2588 [e] | 4771 [e] | 3588 [e] | 2962 [e] |
| adontes | kai | psallontes | tē | kardia | hymōn | tō | Kyriō |
| ᾄδοντες | καὶ | ψάλλοντες | τῇ | καρδίᾳ | ὑμῶν | τῷ | Κυρίῳ , |
| singing | and | making melody | in the | heart | of you | to the | Lord |
| V-PPA-NMP | Conj | V-PPA-NMP | Art-DFS | N-DFS | PPro-G2P | Art-DMS | N-DMS |

1. This is the list of things that result from being wise, understanding and being filled with the Spirit. These are not things you do to get filled with the Spirit. These are results.

2. Drunkenness leads to disorderly; filled with Spirit produces useful results towards others, towards self and towards God.
3. Col. 3:16 – “teaching and admonishing one another”
4. Notice all are blessed by your being filled with the Holy Spirit:
 - a. First the edification of other believers
 - b. Second, singing to the Lord
 - c. Third, edification of yourself in your heart

Ephesians 5: 20 – “Giving thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ,”

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| 2168 [e] | 3842 [e] | 5228 [e] | 3956 [e] | 1722 [e] | 3686 [e] | 3588 [e] | 2962 [e] | 1473 [e] |
| eucharistountes | pantote | hyper | pantōn | en | onomati | tou | Kyriou | hēmōn |
| 20 εὐχαριστοῦντες | πάντοτε | ὑπὲρ | πάντων | ἐν | ὀνόματι | τοῦ | Κυρίου | ἡμῶν |
| giving thanks | at all times | for | all things | in | [the] name | the | Lord | of us |
| V-PPA-NMP | Adv | Prep | Adj-GNP | Prep | N-DNS | Art-GMS | N-GMS | PPro-G1P |

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| 2424 [e] | 5547 [e] | 3588 [e] | 2316 [e] | 2532 [e] | 3962 [e] |
| Iēsou | Christou | tō | Theō | kai | Patri |
| Ἰησοῦ | Χριστοῦ | τῷ | Θεῷ | καὶ | Πατρὶ . |
| Jesus | Christ | to the | God | and | Father |
| N-GMS | N-GMS | Art-DMS | N-DMS | Conj | N-DMS |

Ephesians 5: 21 – “Submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ.”

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| 5293 [e] | 240 [e] | 1722 [e] | 5401 [e] | 5547 [e] |
| Hypotassomenoi | allēlois | en | phobō | Christou |
| 21 Ὑποτασσόμενοι | ἀλλήλοις | ἐν | φόβῳ | Χριστοῦ : |
| Be submitting yourselves | to one another | in | reverence | of Christ |
| V-PPM/P-NMP | RecPro-DMP | Prep | N-DMS | N-GMS |

1. This verse, 5:21, likely introduces the next section because:
 - a. Without 5:21 verse 5:22 lacks a verb. See interlinear below:

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| 3588 [e] | 1135 [e] | 3588 [e] | 2398 [e] | 435 [e] | 5613 [e] | 3588 [e] | 2962 [e] |
| Hai | gynaikes | tois | idiois | andrasin | hōs | tō | Kyriō |
| 22 Αἱ | γυναῖκες , | τοῖς | ἰδίοις | ἀνδράσιν , | ὡς | τῷ | Κυρίῳ ; |
| - | wives | to the | own | husbands | as | to the | Lord |
| Art-VFP | N-VFP | Art-DMP | Adj-DMP | N-DMP | Adv | Art-DMS | N-DMS |

- b. The ending of 5:20 is a perfect closing formulation: “in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to our God and Father.” This obviously seems to close the thought.