

## Rhema Bible Study

### Book of Ephesians Chapter 5 verses 16 thru 21

April 28, 2021

#### Verse 16

##### **Redeeming the time because the days are evil.**

In order to do this, one must take advantage of every opportunity to use time wisely! Why? The times are evil. This is true of all generations. Beware of any inclination to call the days good. We are still living in a perverse generation (Acts 2:40). We will never be able to make a paradise of this sin-sick world. One is to have great confidence in the power of the gospel but must remember that only a few of all men living at any one time have ever accepted the gospel. Some of the opportunities that come our way will only come once. We must be willing to seize the moment. Although we cannot go back and relive our past, we can take advantage of the moment. Paul regretted his past of persecuting the church (Acts 8:3; I Corinthians 15:9; Galatians 1:3), but this did not stop him from pressing on (Philippians 3:14). This is the kind of wisdom that Paul wants all Christians to walk in as we redeem (lay up for ourselves) the time.

The days are evil. The only people who do not see that the present times are full of evil are those who have acquiesce to evil themselves. They are too engrossed in the filth of this world to recognize that it is abnormal. God says be careful, take heed that you don't start thinking that sin is normal. Once a person starts thinking like that there is no guarantee that they will snap out of that mindset.

*Question...what is the reality of the quote "one must remember that only a few of all men living at any one time have ever accepted the gospel".*

*Question...what is the reality of the quote "Some of the opportunities that come our way will only come once."*

#### Verse 17

**Therefore, do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is.**

Paul expands upon the wisdom he desired for the Ephesians. Because the days are evil and are filled with great temptations, the Christian must always beware of foolish, ungodly, time-wasting conduct. Instead, he is to keep before his mind at all times the

will of the Lord. And what is the will of the Lord? His will is that the Christian should keep himself from all the works of darkness.

Christians sometimes treat God's will as if it is a mystery, but it isn't. God's will is truly clear. Do not sin. Do not sin, but if you do sin confess and repent; that's God's will. Do nothing contrary to scripture; that is God's will. You as a Christian are free in Christ to do anything within the bounds of scripture.

You don't have to go crazy trying to figure out if God wants you eat hamburger, or pizza for supper, or whether you should live in the city, or in the country. It doesn't matter. God's will is: stay within the bounds of scripture, and within those boundaries there's a lot of room to roam. Make choices prayerfully, and within the guidelines of Scripture.

*Question...that being said why do so many Christians continue to search for God's will for their lives when the will is evident?*

*Question...do Christians sometimes wish they didn't have so much freedom of choice?*

## Verse 18

**And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit.**

Drunkenness is condemned in both the Old and New Testaments (Proverbs 12:1; 23:29-35; Isaiah 5:11,22; Romans 13:13; I Corinthians 6:9,10; Galatians 5:21). Drunkenness brings *dissipation*. "Dissipation" is a translation of the Greek word *asotia*, and, according to Vine, means "prodigality, a wastefulness, profligacy," i.e., *reckless*, and *unrestrained* living. The prodigal son supposed, like many today, that wild living (which no doubt included drunkenness) was simply great. He eventually learned that such had destroyed his happiness and self-respect (Luke 15:11-32). Instead of being filled with wine, Paul calls on Christians to be filled with the Spirit (i.e., the Holy Spirit, the third person of the Godhead). Paul is talking to individuals who had already received the Holy Spirit upon conversion. Therefore, what he is talking about here is being under the influence of the Holy Spirit's teaching. Being "filled with the Spirit" is equivalent to being under the influence of (i.e., being guided and led by) the Holy Spirit. He directs us through His word, which he describes later as the sword (or implement) of the Spirit (Ephesians 6:17). Being under the influence of the Holy Spirit, as opposed to being under the influence of wine, which brings dissipation, is that one is filled with love, joy, peace,

longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control, etc. (Galatians 5:22,23). Being thus filled, believers will give jubilant expression of all this, doing what is mentioned in the next verse.

To anyone who thinks that being a drunk is a disease consider the word of God. Did you ever notice that God never commands us to not get a sore throat? He never says bring a sin offering when you get the flu. God never says thou shalt not get cancer. He doesn't say heart disease is an abomination to me. He doesn't say those things because they are illnesses, they are diseases, and you can't repent of being sick. However, God certainly does say, do not get drunk! He does say that drunks will not inherit the kingdom of heaven. Drunkenness is not a sickness, it is not a disease, and we don't do anyone any favors by telling them that it is. I can understand the world calling it a sickness because they are spiritually dead, but I do not understand how preachers can call it that. It is a sin that can be forsaken, not a disease that must be cured.

When people understand that they are committing sin, and that they do not have a disease they have hope, because the choice is theirs. A person committing sin is not locked into it like someone who is locked into cancer. A sinner simply must repent. That's the difference between a disease and sin, and by the way no one has any right to define something as a sickness once God has called it a sin.

*Question...it seems that medical science has done research to deem alcoholism a disease, but Scripture seems to dispute this. What is our response to medical science's evidence?*

*Question...should Christians be judged for taking a drink on occasions or this a personal decision between them and the Holy Spirit?*

Verse 19

**Speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord**

The term *psalms* in all probability has reference to the Old Testament Psalter. *Hymns* refer mainly to New Testament songs of praise to God and to Christ (cf. verse 14). Finally, *spiritual songs* probably refer to sacred songs about things other than direct praise to God or to Christ. The drunkard may mumble, moan, and curse, but the Christian that is filled with the Spirit will want to sing from his heart to the Lord. Since Paul mentions "speaking to yourselves," he is referring to the occasions when Christians are assembled together, and not to an individual singing alone. Singing "psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs" is one of the ways Christians are to be taught in the assembly. Those who refuse to sing, refuse to teach! The melody

is to be made in their hearts—no mechanical instruments are mentioned (they were added centuries later). In fact, nowhere in the New Testament are Christians told to play anything other than the strings of their hearts. Christians are happy people! They're happy because they're filled with the Holy Spirit. It is natural for spirit filled Christians to have the joy of the Lord which transcends circumstances. Music is a part of celebrating the joy of the Lord

*Questions...there are some denominations that don't use musical instruments, do you think they are missing out on the joy of the Lord?*

## Verse 20

**Giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ,**

Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God” (Philippians 4:6; I Thessalonians 5:18). God wants us to be thankful! When Jesus took notice that only one of the ten lepers who had been healed returned to thank Him, He said: “Were there not ten cleansed?” “But where are the nine?” (Luke 17:11-19). Where would you be classified—with the *one*, or with the *nine*? Jesus is the only mediator between God and man (I Timothy 2:5), consequently, all prayers and thanksgivings must be in His name (John 14:13,14).

Thank God for everything! Thank God for the good, that's easy enough. Thank him for the fair, that is sometimes hard to do. Thank God for the bad that happens; that's impossible to do apart from faith in his word. The bible says that God is working all things together for our good; if we believe that then we can thank him for everything, even the things that we do not like.

Sometimes we must rise above our feelings and say thank you God; I don't like it, but I trust that it has been allowed by you for some good reason.

*Question...is it normal to have sometimes of fatigue and depression as a Christian?*

*Question...what can we do to move beyond these emotions?*

## Verse 21

**Submitting to one another in the fear of God**

In the duty to be “submitting to one another,” the verb *hupotasso* means “to subject or subordinate,” and is parallel to “giving thanks always.” The general principle is that Christians must be subject to one another. This voluntary yielding to others is to be a general characteristic of the Christian community and is urged elsewhere in the New Testament. For example, in Philippians 2:3, Paul says, “Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself.” This voluntary submission is based on the example of Jesus: “who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a servant, and coming in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to {the point of} death, even the death of the cross” (Philippians 2:5-8). Jesus had always insisted that His followers would have a servant mentality in imitation of Him: “Yet it shall not be so among you; but whoever desires to become great among you, let him be your servant. And whoever desires to be first among you, let him be your slave—just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many” (Matthew 20:26-28). Furthermore, the apostle Peter instructed young men to submit to older men, and for all Christians to submit to one another (I Peter 5:4,5). This is to be done because they fear God (Christ). Some of the manuscripts read “fear of God,” others read “fear of Christ.” The teaching in all these manuscripts is the same—Christians are to submit to one another out of fear or reverence (Greek = *phobo*) for Christ, who is Himself God.

In the fear of God every Christian should treat other Christians as if they are better than themselves. Every Christian should be a servant to others especially the members of their family.

*Question...who is your family and who comes first? Natural or Spiritual??*