

LIVING AS WISE IN CHRIST

(Part 2: Ephesians 5:15-17)

One of the distinctive virtues of a wise person is the godly use of time. Life here on earth is short compared to eternity. We have a definite number of years allotted to us by God to fulfill His will and purpose for our lives. How we use those precious years will determine our eternal reward. The wise person then will live with this eternal perspective famously stated by the Christian missionary CT Studd: *"Only one life, it will soon be past. Only what's done for Christ will last!"* The foolish person, on the other hand, will squander and waste the years divinely entrusted to him or her and will suffer the consequence for endless years in eternity. For believers in Christ, the call of God is clear and urgent: *"Look carefully then how you live, not as unwise, but as wise"* (Ephesians 5:15). **Since God has made us wise in Christ at the moment of our salvation, we must therefore live in godly wisdom.** Ephesians 5:15-17 lays out three instructions on how we could pursue a life of godly wisdom.

1. Give careful attention to how you live as a wise believer in Christ.

2. Maximize your God-given _____.

One of the greatest acts of foolishness is the misuse of our God-given time. A wise believer then makes the best use of the time (Ephesians 5:16; Psalm 90:12). The phrase *"making the best use of the time"* literally means *"redeeming the opportunity"* (Galatians 6:10). Since God has redeemed us from the life of sin and foolishness, we must therefore redeem or buy up every opportunity God has allocated to us to live our lives for His glory. A wise Christian maximizes all opportunities to invest his or her life on what counts for eternity.

Redeeming the time recognizes that we live in an evil age that seeks to enslave us back to sinful foolishness and worldly passions (Ephesians 5:16). These last days prior to Christ's return are evil because we live in a world that is in active rebellion against God and His Word, against the gospel of Christ and against the people of God (Matthew 24:9-13). Our life is short, our time is limited and the end is near. Therefore, we must redeem the time and take full advantage of every God-given opportunity to shun sin and evil and pursue Christ, His righteousness and His kingdom purposes.

3. Understand and carry out the _____.

Understanding the will of the Lord entails discovering, discerning, obeying and carrying out the will of God (Ephesians 5:17). The will of the Lord signifies the intention, purpose and plan of God for our lives that bring pleasure to Him. The will of the Lord has a Christ-centered emphasis and a Bible-driven focus. Everything pertaining to God's will is exclusively found in God's written Word (2 Timothy 3:16-17). It is God's will for His people to be saved, sanctified, Spirit-filled, to suffer for righteousness and to say constant thanks to God (Ephesians 1:6; 1 Timothy 2:3-4; 1 Thessalonians 4:3,7; Ephesians 5:18; Colossians 3:16; 1 Peter 4:19; 1 Thessalonians 5:18). When it comes to biblical decision making, we must adopt these Scriptural principles as we discern the will of God: (a) Summon God's wisdom in prayer (James 1:5); (b) Set your heart right before God (Isaiah 59:2; Psalm 139:23-24); (c) Search the Word of God (Psalm 19:7; 2 Timothy 3:16-17); (d) Seek godly counsel (Proverbs 15:22); (e) Submit to God's sovereign purpose (Psalm 37:5,23).
