

Title: LOOK CAREFULLY HOW YOU WALK, EPHESIANS 5:15-21
(Chatham, NJ; 08/16/15, AM) [Pc – Exegesis]

Theme: Numerous exhortations in Ephesians help us make the best use of our limited time on earth.

Purpose: To inform the audience of the importance of using our time wisely.

Introduction:

1. "Walk as children of light." (Eph. 4:8)
2. Fruit of light is all that is good and right and true, 9.
3. "Discern what is pleasing to the Lord." (10)
4. These are the focus of a life that chooses God.
5. Ephesians 5:15-21 concludes with a few more items.

I. Speak to One Another/Give Thanks, 19-20

A. Psalms, Hymns, and Spiritual Songs

1. Colossians 1:16 is a companion verse.
2. We fill our minds with spiritual food.
3. Matthew 12:33-34, we speak out of our abundance of heart
4. The Ephesians' passage fills the heart and makes the tree good
5. Jesus warns us not to leave our spiritual houses empty, Mt. 12:43-45
6. When the dark powers attack our minds, fill them with spiritual nourishment

B. Give thanks

1. Cynics cannot see much good in anything
2. Mockers make fun of everything
3. Gratitude changes all that; it fills the mind with a positive attitude
4. "Always and for everything," 20
5. This is a habit whose by-product is happiness and contentment
6. Doing so "in the name of Jesus" helps us focus on grace for which we can be thankful

II. Make the Best Use of Your Time, 15

A. Our Outlook

1. Determines how we deal with works of darkness, 11
2. Acceptance of an evil world is the beginning of action
3. If we see a poisonous snake about to bite someone, we kill it; accepting the nature of evil means taking action: don't wait for the world to change, kill the snake! (from *Resilience*, 38)
4. Recognize that change occurs over time; see *Resilience*, p. 39 (read)

B. Look for possibilities

1. Bad and painful situations can lead to the best things
2. You've heard some of the clichés (they still work):
 - When life gives you lemons, make lemonade.
 - See stumbling blocks as stepping stones.
3. How a roadblock opened the way for Paul, Acts 16:6-8
4. He was given a new possibility, which turned into very successful work

III. Submit to One Another, 21

A. Submitting Is Humility

1. Associate with 4:2

2. 1 Peter 5:5 affirms this relationship with other people
3. Starting a new job, picking up your life after a tragedy, or some other new thing begins with humility: recognizing that you don't have it all together and need the help of others
4. See *Resilience*, p. 33 (read): this is the starting point for anything as well as for making good choices
5. It opens our minds to others and to learning from them

B. Reverence for Christ: the Foundation

1. Philippians 2:3-4, we adopt the same attitude because Christ did it
2. The Peter passage reminds us also that God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble
3. Humility reminds us of each other's rights and of our obligations to serve them, Galatians 5:13b
4. Not only do we serve others but we learn from them and see them as someone deserving our respect
5. On the other hand "Arrogance is the armor worn by shallow men." (*Resilience* 33)

Conclusions:

1. Fill your mind with the Word of God, hear the beauty of spiritual songs, and block out the noise of evil ideas.
2. Give thanks.
3. Use your time for the things that matter.
4. Approach everyone with humility, not arrogance.
5. This is the way of Christ; people who revere him live like him.