

Ephesians 5:1-17

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[0 : 00] I take your Bible, it's going to be to the book of Ephesians chapter 5, Ephesians chapter 5. We're just continuing to make our way through this great book of Ephesians. We are now in the application section of it, right?

Once we turned the page from Ephesians chapter 3 into Ephesians chapter 4, we went from what our worth is in Christ's first three chapters, doctrine, theology, and on all this other wondrous truths that we get, soteriology, that is man's salvation and things of that nature.

Your worth in Christ. And it's astounding to be reminded of how valuable we are in Christ and what God thinks of us, how we're his children, and we have been enriched according to his riches.

Don't forget that, right? You remember that? You weren't enriched from the riches of Christ. That is, the blessings he gave you didn't diminish his worth. You were enriched according to his riches, which means to the standard that he is rich, which is a wonderful thing.

It's a wonderful, wonderful truth. That is, in respect to the riches he has is how he's enriched us. That's our worth. Then we transition into the fourth, fifth, and sixth chapter, and that's our walk.

[1 : 10] So now we're talking about our walk. We love to think about our worth in Christ. I want to know what God thinks about me. I want to know how he sees me in Christ. But when we start talking about how he wants me to walk in light of how he thinks of me, then we go, well, wait a minute now.

Now we're getting a little touchy, right? But our worth is always connected to our walk. That is, doctrine without application is just useless information. If you know a truth about God, and you know what he has said of you and about you and to you, if you know he's redeemed you, but you don't live life differently according to it, my friend, that truth has done nothing in your life.

So we're now in the application side of it, and it started in the fourth chapter with the church, how the church is connected together, how we're all there for a purpose and a reason, and God's fit and joined us together.

Now we're in the fifth chapter, and we're going to move from the corporate identity to the individual, right? We're going to start talking about, okay, well, now you're in a church. You found your place. You're fit together as a spiritual body, and with every joint and ligament supplies, and everybody's got their part, and it's so wonderful to see the church operating when every part is doing their part, and it's astounding to see that.

And then we now come to the individual, because, I mean, let's just be honest with ourselves. It's easy to get lost in the corporate body, and it's easy to kind of blend in, but when we start looking at the individual, and we are reminded that every man as an individual will stand before his Lord and Savior and give an account, right?

[2 : 42] Every man. And we don't say that to scare us. We say that just to remind us that he's calling us to this self-inspection sometimes. So we're in Ephesians chapter 5, and if you are physically able to desire to do so, I'm going to join with me as we stand together just the first 17 verses, right?

In Ephesians chapter 5, verses 1 through 17, then we'll pray. It says, Therefore be imitators of God as beloved children, and walk in love, just as Christ also loved you and gave himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma.

But immorality or any impurity or greed must not even be named among you as is proper among saints. And there must be no filthiness and silly talk or coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks.

For this you know with certainty that no immoral or impure person or covetous man who is an idolater has an inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things, the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience.

Therefore do not be partakers with them, for you were formerly darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light, for the fruit of the light consists in all goodness and righteousness and truth, trying to learn what is pleasing to the Lord.

[3 : 58] Do not participate in unfruitful deeds of darkness, but instead even expose them, for it is disgraceful even to speak of the things which are done by them in secret. But all things become visible when they are exposed by the light, for everything that becomes visible is light.

For this reason it says, Awake, sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you. Therefore be careful how you walk, not as unwise men, but as wise, making the most of your time, because the days are evil.

Verse 17, So then do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. Let's pray. Lord, we thank you so much. Thank you for this day. God, thankful that we have the opportunity to gather together with brothers and sisters in Christ, friends and family.

Lord, just to magnify your name and lift it on high in song. But Lord, now as we have read your word, we come asking that you would speak to us through the power and presence of your spirit. Lord, that we would learn more of who you are, more of who we are.

Lord, that also that that learning would be moved to application in our lives for your glory and yours alone. And we ask it all in Jesus' name. Amen. You may be seated. We see here in this passage, this repeated refrain, this call to walk.

[5 : 13] If you look at the first half of the book of Ephesians, over and over and over again, Paul was telling us how worthy we are. He tells us how loved we are, how cared for we are, how provided for we are.

All these wonderful truths about a loving father. And then he makes that transition very quickly and very carefully. He says in chapter four, verse one, that therefore I, the prisoner of the Lord, implore you to walk in a manner worthy of your calling.

And again, he tells us in the fifth chapter again, to walk and to walk. We are surely and certainly called to walk differently because of the relationship which we enjoy with the father through Jesus Christ, his son.

And that walk is something that ought to be evident. And we'll see it in our passage this morning, ought to be evident to all around us. It isn't something that no one is aware of. It isn't something that people have to ask us about.

As a matter of fact, Jesus says, and I love this when you go through the gospel of Matthew and you know all about it right there on the Sermon on the Mount. I love what Jesus says. Jesus says, you are the light of the world.

[6 : 18] You are a city set on a hill. Jesus doesn't say you ought to be or you could be or you should be. He says that positionally, you are. You are the city.

You say, well, I just don't want anybody to notice me. What Jesus says, let your good work so shine before men that they may see them and glorify your father who's in heaven. So then live differently so that they see your father, not you.

But they still have to see something, right? And they see it in our walk. And we see here a walking imitation of the father. I want you to see in our passage this morning a walking imitation of the father that we are called into this familial relationship.

You know, the Bible tells us in the book of Romans that through the spirit of adoption, we cry out, Abba, Father. Isn't that wonderful, right? We say, Abba, Father. And then it says in the book of Mark, when Jesus in Mark 14, some of you've read it this morning, depending on which daily reading you're following, that Jesus is crying out in the Garden of Gethsemane.

He says, Abba, Abba, Father, right? So Jesus says, you talk to the father the same way I do. And he says that we're in a similar relationship because of our worth, because of what Christ has done for us.

[7 : 31] And Paul implores us, he says, therefore, be imitators of God as beloved children. Be imitators. Now, that word imitators means to mimic or to copy or to be a copycat thereof.

It is to be one who is a direct reflection of that. I remember when I became a dad, I became a dad at a very young age. I was 18 years old when our oldest son was born. And I remember, you know, I always tell people those are BC days, before Christ days.

I remember there was a lot of things that needed to change about me. And I was okay for about the first year. And I was okay with myself for about the first year. And then all of a sudden, I realized that this little fellow that was living in the house began to say the same things I said.

He began to walk the same way I walked. He began to do the same things I did. And all of a sudden, I realized that the things he was learning, he was learning from his daddy. And he began to learn good attributes and bad attributes from his dad.

And I had to make a choice because it wasn't if he was going to imitate me. The fact was he was imitating me. And therefore, I had to pay attention to what I was saying and how I was saying it.

[8 : 39] Because it began to convict me and it began to challenge me and it began to call me. Now, that was just in the flesh. How much more so, go fast forward another year or so, and I come to Christ and Christ begins to realize me, well, I'm glad you learned that lesson.

Now, let me show you everything else. Right? And all of a sudden, he saved me and he redeemed me. And then Paul makes this declaration. He says, if your children can do that and you are the children of the Heavenly Father, then you should do that too.

It says you ought to do that. He says, I am calling you and I am imploring you to be an imitator of God. That's our calling, right? To walk as copycats of the Father.

To walk behind him, to challenge him. You know, every one of our kids have done it. It's astounding how we would see this. And you've seen it laid out in your life. I've got pictures of me pushing a lawnmower and the kids behind me with a little toy lawnmower.

I've got pictures of our daughter. I coached a lot of baseball back then. I've got her with her hands on the chain link fence screaming at the boys. She was two years old. She was going, get your elbow up, swing straight.

[9 : 46] She learned all those things from her daddy, right? She never even played softball. She never played t-ball. She played t-ball, but she didn't do any of those other things. She learned them because she watched. And we're called as parents to set a good example, but we're called as children of the Father to follow a good example.

He says we ought to be imitators of God as beloved children. Isn't that wonderful? It's a lot easier to follow one who loves us. It's a lot easier to follow one when we know our worth.

And I'm so thankful that doctrine comes before practice because you don't have to think, should I do these things or can I do these things or ought I to do these things? Because if you are loved as much as the Bible tells us we are, and if God has paid such a glorious price for us as the Bible says that he does, then it is very, you know, impeding upon us to do it then as a response to his love.

It is not to earn his love. It is not to gain his favor. It is not to gain his acceptance. We walk in this way because of love. Well, how do we do that? The first thing we see, you say, well, pastor, you're just now getting to the first point.

I am. It's okay. The first thing we see is we follow the pattern before us. He says that we are to be imitators of God as beloved children. And the very first thing you do is walk in love.

[11 : 03] Walk. Walk is a very familiar and often used phrase of Paul to mean one's manner of life. It doesn't just mean to walk about doing something.

It means to live life in such a manner that this is your daily habit. Think about that. To live life in such a manner that your daily habit is to love.

Some of us say, well, my daily habit is not really love. And I don't know how to do that because naturally, I'm not a very loving person. That's okay. We don't have to operate in the natural because in Christ, we get to operate in the supernatural, right?

I learned something about myself several years ago that on the scale of all these different mind tests they did to me, they told me I scored a zero on compassion.

A zero. I mean, I scored a zero on compassion. They said, you just don't care about people. And I said, well, that's not really true. Naturally, I might not. But in Christ, I have been learned that I need to care about people because it's loving.

[12 : 04] Now, I'm just being honest with you. Some of you don't like the honesty because you're like, Pastor, you're supposed to be compassionate. Well, are we all really? Naturally, we're not. Some of us have natural inclinations towards compassion.

Some others do. And now, if you have a legitimate concern going on, yes, I'm going to be compassionate towards you. My lack of compassion is, hey, if it ain't bleeding and it ain't broke and we don't need to fix it, let's keep going on.

Let's suck it up, buttercup. Let's go, right? That type of thing. That's my no compassion. Some of you understand that. But that doesn't mean that we ought, that does not give me an excuse to operate that way because we're not called to live in the natural.

We're called to live in the supernatural. And he says that we are to walk in love, look at this, just as Christ loved us. That is the example that we are to follow in love is Christ.

We are to walk in love just as Christ loved us. How should I love the people around me? Well, as Christ loves you. How should I love my enemy? As Christ loved you.

[13 : 06] It doesn't say as Christ loved them or as Christ loved the enemies or as Christ loved those who are talking about you or as Christ loved those who are bashing you. He says you love according to the measure that Christ loved you.

And I know me better than I know anybody else and he has really loved me. I mean, and astounding. Naturally, I'm an unlovable guy when I do pre-marriage counseling.

Inevitably, I have this couple that comes in and they want to get married. I always say, why do you want to get married? Well, because we love each other. So it's good. And I hope you do by this point, right? You've already asked her to marry. I hope you love her, you know? We love her.

And there's all these ooey-goey feelings and I look at them about the third session and I said, you know there's going to come a day where you're not going to be very lovable. And they're like, no, no, no, no. That'll never happen. I said, well, it's coming. But you need a love that exceeds the emotions and the feelings because sometimes you don't feel like loving people and sometimes, honestly, you don't feel like a lovable guy or a lovable girl and sometimes you have to choose to love.

You know how Christ loved you? That while we were yet sinners, he died for us. He chose to love us when we were unlovable. It says scarcely, sometimes a man will die for a good man.

[14 : 18] But Christ loved us while we were yet sinners and we are to walk in love as Christ loved us. That is, if people sin against you, guess what? You sinned against him too. If people do you wrong, you did him wrong too.

And your measure of love to be lived out is to follow the pattern that has been displayed to you. You're not called to do something you haven't experienced. Friend, listen to me. If you don't know Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior, I don't expect you to walk in love because we don't do that naturally.

I expect you to walk according to the flesh. I expect you to walk according to the desires of this earth. And I expect you to walk according to, this is what I expect of you. But the moment you accept Jesus Christ and you surrender your life towards him, you have come to one who has loved you unconditionally.

And how can you who have been loved so much love so little? That's what we're called to do. Right? We're called to follow the pattern before us and it says that he loved you so much just as Christ loved you and he gave himself up.

Oh, don't we wish you didn't say that, right? He loved in such a manner that he gave himself up. The Bible says, for God so loved the world. But then he sent his son to show us what that love looks like.

[15 : 30] And I love that. The word God so loved, loved there in that passage is agapeo love. Some of you have heard this so much, right? Agapeo love is an active love. It's not a passionate love. It's not a responsive love.

It's not any of those things. Agapeo love means a love that chooses to do something. God so loved the world he did something. And he did something. He sent his son. His son became flesh and dwelt among men, right?

And we know how much God loves us because of what Christ did among us. We've seen the love of the Father manifested to us in the life and the position of the son.

And that love has been displayed and it tells us that he gave himself up an offering and a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma. You remember when we go through the book of Leviticus, I'm about through with this first point.

It's okay. On Sunday nights and Wednesday nights in the book of Leviticus you had all these offerings, right? You had all these different offerings and three of those offerings were considered a soothing aroma.

[16 : 26] Those were the peace offerings, the fellowship offerings. That's a favorite one. It's a bad. This fellowship offering. They'd put it on the altar. They'd take it off and then they'd eat it together, right? We love that when it's bad. This is okay.

So they had this fellowship offering because everybody come around and every one of those three soothing aromas was the offering that signified you now have fellowship with the holy God and that that fellowship was pleasing to God and it smelled good in his nostrils, right?

It was a pleasing aroma. The one that is not a pleasing aroma is the one where it says it is a substitutionary death of atonement. That lamb slain on the day of atonement, it is never because sin stinks and it does.

It is required and friend, you can't love that way because you cannot, the Bible tells us in the book of Proverbs that a man cannot pay the ransom of his brother because he cannot even pay the ransom for his own sin and so you can't pay that but you can't love that way.

Only God can love us that way that he paid that price, that awful smelling price on the cross of Calvary that made restitution and forgiveness for our sins but we can live in such a manner.

[17 : 34] We can love in such a manner that we would love people to bring them back into a fellowship with God through our relationship with them and their relationship with us. We can love the way Christ loved us.

We follow the pattern before us. Well, how are we going to do that? We need to love in truth, we need to love in compassion and we need to love to set others free from the grips of sin which leads us to the second thing, we need to forsake the past behind us.

You know the most loving thing to do for people around you is not to live the way you used to live. You do not love someone by partaking in their sin with them. You just don't.

You don't love someone by being a participant in the sins that you used to be. Paul would write elsewhere that some people count you strange because you used to run around with them in their debauchery and their evilness and now they count you strange because you don't do that anymore.

It's okay when people look at you and say well you used to but you don't and you say well praise be to the Lord God that I don't do that anymore because something different happened. He tells us that we ought to forsake the past behind us.

[18 : 39] He goes on, he says but immorality, that's any sexual impurity by the way, but immorality or any impurity or greed must not even be named among you as is proper for the saints.

I love how you put that there. He says you ought to live in a manner that is proper for the saints. We remind ourselves and I know when we're looking in the book of 1 Corinthians we saw that too that Paul writes to the saints which are at Corinth and he did it at the very beginning of that book to the saints which are at Corinth and we saw how Paul intentionally wrote the word saints there because he was about to tell them everything they were doing because we love to say well I'm not a saint I'm just a sinner saved by grace.

Well sinners saved by grace in scripture are called saints. Okay so you are a saint positionally. I know I remind you of this all the time because we use this as an excuse just to get away with what we've already done.

We are a saint positionally. If God calls you a saint then you a saint. That's really all that matters. You say well I'm a sinner saved by grace. Well you are and so am I but sinners become saints because we've been set free from the sin which so enslaved us.

So he says live as is proper according to the saints. The reason we like to remind ourselves of this false half truth that well I'm not a saint I'm just a sinner saved by grace is because we think that frees us from living like a saint.

[19 : 59] Now we're not always going to be saints in our character but the calling and the challenge is to live as is proper for the saints. To live in light of your position.

You ought to live positionally not practically. That is don't do what is your natural practice but try to live according to the new position because you've been given a new position and he said these things they shouldn't even be named among you and there should be no filthiness and silly talk or coarse guessing which are not fitting but rather giving a thanks.

That doesn't mean that you can't have light talk and casual conversation. That just means that your conversation shouldn't be debating or belittling of anyone. That you shouldn't be putting down that you shouldn't be making jokes about or shouldn't be putting down in any way.

These things it says are not fitting. Humor is not a bad thing. Right? It's not bad to laugh even though I think there are some saints who think it's a sin to laugh. It's not bad to laugh.

It's okay to smile every now and then. We used to have a music leader when I first came to Christ. I was in the choir and he used to tell the choir he said listen if you've got the joy of the Lord in your hearts you need to notify your face.

[21 : 05] Some of you catch that later. He said y'all look like you got no joy. You got to notify your face that there's something going on in your heart and there's nothing wrong with laughter. There's nothing wrong with joy. But there is wrong with laughter and happiness and silliness at the expense of someone else.

It really is. To be believing or degrading or downplaying. He says these things aren't fitting but the giving of things and not even not to be the partaker in it but also not to be a participant with it.

Not to allow it to be around you. He says that we ought to live this way. We ought to forsake the past behind us. He says in verse 5 for this you know with certainty.

This is certain. He said this is a sure fact. For this you know with certainty that no immoral or impure person or covetous man who is an idolater has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. That is those who live to practice these things.

I'm not talking about someone who falls short. I'm not talking about someone who in a moment of weakness gives way to sin. I'm not talking about that. I'm talking about the people who practice this habitually.

[22 : 10] By the way sexual immorality of any kind. Look at verse 5. Those are immoral. That's sexual immorality of any kind. Impure. That is those who are behaving in coarseness or jesting or covetous.

All of these things the Bible says are idolatry. Because in the end of the matter all sin is idolatry. You're either putting yourself on the pedestal or you're putting stuff on the pedestal.

But something's taking the place of God. You either want to please yourself or you want to give things to yourself and that's idolatry. And we see it rapid. And we fight it.

Friend listen to me. We need to come to this reality that God anything I put over priority of obedience to you is an idol. And we need to confess that idolatry.

I say we because we all get there. You know when we come to this place and we all have struggles at different places. Sanctification right? Progressive sanctification. God is shaping us and molding us and the further we walk along with him the more he'll put his finger on us and okay now I want you to get rid of that.

[23 : 11] But I really like that. I really like that. And that right there is pretty nice. And what he's telling me to get rid of maybe not be the same thing he's telling you to get rid of but we all have to come to this place because if God says get rid of that and I don't want to get rid of that then that becomes the idol.

And I've put it there because that is more important than my obedience. You say well pastor what is that? You got to walk in that relationship so he can tell you. And you need to know because sometimes the that's he's working on in my life you say that's nothing wrong with that and there might not be anything wrong with that in your life right now.

But maybe there will be in a few years. But you know because you're in that relationship right? He says we ought not to have these things that we're just raising up idols. He says let no one deceive you with empty words.

Friend listen to me in this world the enemy has a way of saying it really doesn't hurt anybody. It's not hurting anybody. It's not causing any harm.

Nobody else is here. Sin always takes you further than you want to go. And one truth that we learn in scripture is sin always affects more than the individual. Always.

[24 : 20] Always. He says let no one deceive you. You hear those whispers in your ears saying well you know nobody's going to get hurt this isn't going to do anything. He says because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience.

Friend listen to me forsake the past behind you. Number three. function as a light around you. How can you be the light if you're still walking in darkness because what he says therefore do not be partakers with them for you were formerly darkness.

You were the Bible says formerly darkness but you're not anymore. You don't have to live that way anymore. I don't have to live in Christ we're not that way anymore. You were formerly darkness. We don't never want to forget what we were but we also don't want to focus so much on what we were that we forget who we are because look at what he says you were formerly darkness but now you are light in the Lord.

The new American standard has light the L capitalized I love that. You are light in the Lord because you are one with Christ. You've been united with Christ and walk as children of light right.

We ought to function as the light around us it tells us that we were in darkness now we are in light and we are light. I love it doesn't say you are darkness in light.

[25 : 32] He says you are light because you were dark now you are light. In sin you are dark and you're walking around in the darkness groping around just trying to please yourself just like everyone else but now in Christ you are light and you are in the light and you ought to have the fruit of the light says for the fruit of light consists in all goodness and righteousness and truth and these things there's nothing to be ashamed of.

He says trying to learn what is pleasing to the Lord do not participate in the unfruitful deeds of darkness but instead even expose them. Have you ever thought about this? The fruitless deeds of sin.

What fruit does sin really bear? I mean fruit that we really want? You say well it feels good well but what comes of it? Right?

The fruitless deeds of darkness. He says we don't want to participate in those things but we ought to expose them. We ought to be the light. We'll get to this in just a minute.

He says for it is disgraceful even to speak of the things which are done by them in secret. Friend listen to me. We have to be really careful here. We have to be careful and when I was working with the teenagers and Carrie and I were doing that and even when I work with children and at times we do different things with youngers and I try to even do it with adults.

[26 : 47] I try to be real careful because you don't ever want to highlight sins to the expense of the Savior. Right? There are things in my past that I wish weren't there.

I have scars just like every one of you and I can share my testimony and I can share my story and I can but I want to speak more of the Savior who redeemed me than the sin who held me captive. We want to expose the sin.

We want to expose it but we don't need to expound upon it. Right? As lights in the world sin ought to be evident because of the way we live. That is your life in this world should shine the light on some things that ain't right but you can expose it but you don't have to expound upon it.

I don't need someone to come in here and tell me about how wretched and wicked and all these things they saw are. We don't need to spend that much time talking about it. We ought to pull people out of it but I'm afraid that we get so enraptured and caught up in the sin that we forget about the Savior.

I've read a lot of youth leaders that so wanted to touch the youth and they wanted to minister to the youth that they decided they were going to read everything the youth were reading in that day and time so they could minister to them.

[27 : 54] Lo and behold do you know those youth leaders got sucked into the same trap that the teenagers before them did and fell into sin and couldn't get out of it. Why? Because they exposed themselves to more sin than they did to Savior.

Friend listen to me just reveal the sin and walk away. We don't have to talk about it. We don't have to highlight it. We can bring it up and we can acknowledge it but we don't have to make movies about it.

We don't have to make books about it. We don't have to do all those things. We can say this is wickedness. When you focus on the truth you have no problem recognizing the false. Right? And so when you can focus on the Savior then you can look and go well that ain't right and then you can walk away.

You can expose it. You don't have to expound upon it. Some of us know more about sin than we know about our Savior. Some of us have dived into the depths of the things that are of this world and we've waded in the shallow waters of the things that are of heaven.

And we ought to be careful there because he says some of these things aren't even fit to be talked about. It's not that we don't acknowledge it. Listen there's a lot of wrong in the world.

[28 : 54] There is. If you want to know all that's wrong in the world just turn on the news. I don't ever watch the news. I hardly ever read a newspaper. I just don't.

And people say you don't know what's going on. And I know there's been some great men before me that have. Erwin Luzer, Moody Bible Church who had subscriptions to like eight newspapers around the world. Billy Graham said that any preacher worth his salt ought to have a newspaper in one hand and a Bible in the other hand so that he can reach it.

Well maybe I'm not worth my salt. That's okay. But I have found that when I began to focus I used to do those things. Those things just got me down. I mean I never walked away from that and said oh I feel better.

Never. I don't need anybody to tell me and to give me a newscast that the world is going on a downward spiral. I don't need anybody to tell me that sin is running rapid. I don't need anybody to tell me that sinners are acting like sinners.

I just need to know what the Savior says we ought to look like as saints. And then all of a sudden we call ourselves to a different cause. I'm not saying you're wrong if you read newspapers. I'm not saying you're sin. I'm just saying that's what I had to do.

[29 : 54] That's what I had to do. Because some of these things I didn't even need to look at. You say well pastor you don't know anything about what's going on. No but I know where I'm going.

I don't need I know what I'm leaving behind is not good and that's okay. But I want to be able to reach there too. So we see here that we ought to function as the light around us and if we put too much darkness in our life because what does the Bible say that if the eye is darkness then where would the body be right?

We ought to function as a light. Last one and I'm done. Last one. We ought to focus on the time allotted to us. We ought to function as the light. We ought to focus on the time allotted to us.

He tells us there in verse 13 but all things become visible when they are exposed by the light for everything that becomes visible is light. Verse 14 gives a quote it's offset most of the translations of scripture and nobody really knows where this quote comes from.

Some Bible scholars think that it may have been a hymn of the early church because they came together they sang spiritual songs and hymns right? Psalms and songs and hymns. Maybe it was that. Maybe it's a loose quotation of the book of Isaiah but I love what it says.

[31 : 11] It says for this reason it says awake sleeper. Get up. Right? Awake sleeper and arise from the dead and Christ will shine on you. It's this call to awaken. It's this call to pay attention.

And he says therefore be careful how you walk. Again there's this word right? Walk. Be careful how you walk not as unwise men but as wise. You know we are not called to walk in a foolish faith.

We are called to walk in the wisdom of God. When you come to Christ as your Lord and Savior you don't throw your brain out. As a matter of fact when you come to Christ for the first time in your life your brain is opened and you can understand things.

He can renew your mind. He can set your mind free. He can cleanse it and take hold of those strongholds. Second Corinthians chapter 11. He can gather those strongholds that Satan had in your mind and open up different realms of your mind.

You don't have to. You are to be wise in Christ. That is why we are called to study and to show ourselves approved. You say no pastors are called to do that. Yeah I believe in the priesthood of the believers. Right. And we are all saints.

[32 : 08] So we are called to do those things. And study. We are to know these things. We are to have some wisdom about us. Because we are to be wise men. Making the most. Or some translations say redeeming the time. Making the most of your time.

The wording there is to buy the time back. Paul says elsewhere you have spent enough time walking in darkness. It is time to redeem the time and walk in light. Right. To buy the time back.

And use it wisely. Making the most of your time because the days are evil. See you didn't need the news to tell you that. It tells you right here. Paul wrote it for us all the way back in the book of Ephesians.

In AD 64 he was telling us the same thing in the news. He says making the most of your time for the days of evil. So then do not be foolish but understand what the will of the Lord is.

Friend listen to me. And I'm saying this in closing. We have the same amount of time as anybody else in the world. I know you've heard me say this. Nobody in the world has more time than you.

[33 : 07] Everybody in the world if the Lord leaves them, lets them live has 24 hours in a day. There's nobody out there that gets 30 hours in a day or 36 hours in a day. Everybody has 24 hours in a day.

Nobody has more time than you. You don't know how much time you have. I don't know how much time I have. We don't know when God's going to call us home. We know there's an appointed day until man wants to die. So we know we have an appointment coming.

But all we know is that the choice that we get to make is how we use this time. When you study history and you study the history of God's people, you will find some astounding individuals that did things with their time.

And I've tried to excuse it and say, well, the world was a lot slower then. Or, well, yeah, they, you know, they didn't have all these distractions. And then I'm reminded that John Knox read the Bible, Genesis to Revelation, every 30 days.

And I'm reminded that when he did that, it was in the 1500s when he had to read it by candlelight. He made the most of his time. Any wonder why his books still sit on the shelves of so many pastors giving them a little bit of illumination of scripture.

[34 : 21] I'm reminded that there are people who, Lottie Moon and others that went all the way around the world and did some amazing things for Christ.

And I'd like to say, well, days were simpler then. No, the enemy always has his tools. We find in scripture that we're called to make the most of our time.

And you say, well, I wish you'd think about that, pastor, because you're over time. A.W. Tozer had a quote, and I love it. I love A.W. Tozer's quote.

He said, the same people who will sit in the seats of a stadium and scream like banshee Indians for three hours on Saturday are the same ones who yawn after an hour on Sunday. I know, you said, it's Super Bowl Sunday.

You shouldn't have said that. I'm not saying it's a sin to watch football. I'm just saying, time is precious.

[35 : 24] And if we want to be followers of the Father, Jesus only had three and a half years of ministry. Three and a half years.

Confined to the same 24 hours a day that we have. You say, well, he was about 30 years old when he was Christian right, but he didn't go public for about three and a half years.

None of the apostles, besides John, had a long life. They wanted John to be quiet.

They put him on the island of Patmos. He wrote the book of Revelation. He made the most of his time. He said, well, they were apostles. Well, we could go on down the list and we don't have time to come here, right?

We could go throughout the ages. It's a matter of how we use our time. We need to focus on the time allotted to us.

[36 : 19] You say, well, how much time do I have? I don't know, but you have today. You have today. I don't know if I have tomorrow, but I want to focus on the time allotted to me today.

Let's pray. Lord, we thank you so much. We thank you for this day. God, what a gift it is. Father, we ask that you would help us to walk as you've walked, to live as Christ lived among us.

Help us to be imitators of the Father in all of our ways and all of our life for all of your glory, not ours, but for your glory and yours alone. And we ask it all in Jesus' name.

Amen. Amen.