

## **Ephesians 5:15-17 – Redeeming the time**

This is more teaching about the Christian life. We are children of light, not of darkness. How should we walk in the light? What does a life of light look like?

### **1. The danger – living without understanding**

Paul says we must not live as unwise (v15). The days are full of evil (v16). People are living foolishly (v17). We cannot just live as other people. We cannot say, “well, I’m as good as anyone else”, because that is not good enough! A log floating on the river gets washed out into the ocean and lost there. We must live with understanding. The Bible taught, in Genesis 1:28, that man was created with a task in God’s world. Adam was told to complete the subduing and ordering of the earth. He was to develop all he found in the world for God’s glory. That command has come down to us. We are to be doing that work – to develop all the opportunities we find in God’s world and in our lives, for God’s glory. Sadly, Adam sinned and fell, and much trouble and pain entered the world. The task became much harder. But through Christ we can go to it. The days are evil (v16) – who will fight for good, against that evil? It must be us. There are lost people to reach, and children to train in the Lord’s ways. There are poor and helpless people to encourage, and families to build up. That is our work as Christians.

### **2. Our need: to live with the greatest care**

In verse 15, God tells us to be very careful how we live. The word used in Greek means our life must always be correct, accurate or consistent. We are to be watchful, considering our own way. How do people backslide? Gradually, and without realising – because they do not watch themselves. We must examine ourselves. The standard to compare ourselves with is God’s law – in the Bible. Holiness is not easy; we must work at it day by day, with care. The athlete trains with self-discipline to win the race. The businessman looks carefully at his finances. The farmer is careful to protect his crop. So we must discipline ourselves to win the crown of life. We must deal with *every* known sin, if we are serious with sin at all. We should make this a part of our life each day, to spend time in prayer and meditating on our own walk.

### **3. Our particular duty: to redeem the time (v16)**

Now we are taught about a particular duty. We are to make the very best use of time we can, or to “redeem the time” (v16). Time is one of God’s precious gifts to us. It is loaned to us, and we must give an account to Christ on the day of judgment for our use of it (Romans 14:12). The word for “redeem” or “make the best use of” means to “buy up” or “improve”. Our use of time is a measure of our holiness. We must make sure that at every moment, we are doing something useful. We should always have a plan for each day. We must “stop the leaks”, not allowing even short periods of wasted time. We should always have something to be doing, like Jesus in the gospels and Paul in Acts. Idleness is a sin. The Bible commands diligence – see Proverbs 10:4, 12:24, 27, 13:4, 1:5, 22:29, 27:23. This is a matter of self-discipline. Nobody is godly who keeps on wasting time.