

# LIVE A LIFE OF WISDOM

August 30, 2009

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Old Testament Lesson; Proverbs 9:1-6

Epistle Lesson; Ephesians 5:15-20

Gospel Lesson; John 6:51-58

Sermon Text; Ephesians 5:15-20

The portion of scripture that we consider this morning, is the Epistle Lesson, recorded in Ephesians chapter 5, looking at verses 15-20.

Be very careful, then, how you live – not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord's Will is. Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit. Speak to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord, always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

These are Your Words, Heavenly Father. Lead us in the way of truth. Your Word is truth.

Amen

The section of scripture that our text comes from this morning is from the middle of a section, talking about Christian living. As we look at this section of scripture we should ask ourselves, How is it that we are to live our lives?

We know that we should grow in our Christian living and we should

continue growing, until the day that we die.

We also know that our living a perfect Christian life will not happen on this side of heaven, because we are sinners.

Our living a Christian life though is different from what Jesus has done for us. The Bible tells us that when Jesus died on the cross, He has made full and complete payment for all of your sin. It is a completed act. It is a done deal.

The salvation Jesus won for us is finished, our living a Christian life is not finished.

As we look at this section of scripture, this morning, a good question for us to ask ourselves is:

**How does the God who saved me from my sin  
want me to live my life?**

Last week, Pastor Bartels had us examine the verses just prior to our text for this morning. He told us to live a life of love. He reminded us that God loved us much. He sent His one and only Son to the cross. And, He wants us to love Him and others, in return. He also reminded us that God has forgiven us much. God wants us to forgive others, as we pray in the Lord's Prayer,

**“Forgive us our trespasses,  
as we forgive those who trespass against us.”**

Now, we come to this section, today, and we ask ourselves do we live a life of foolishness or of wisdom? We are told to live a life of wisdom.

In order for us to live a life of wisdom, it is imperative to know what God's Will for us in our lives is. This last week, our seventh and eighth graders began another year of studying God's Word, by going through the Catechism. And, already on the first week of school, they had some memory work to learn. Of those five passages that they memorized, there were two that reminded them what God's Will is for them in their lives. One is from 1<sup>st</sup> Timothy, chapter 2, verses 3 and 4.

“God wants all men to be saved  
and to come to the knowledge of the truth.”

Another one that they learned was from John 3:16.

“For God so love the world  
that He gave His one and only Son  
that whoever believes in Him  
shall not perish,  
but have everlasting life.”

From those passages we know what God’s will is for us.

•It is God's Will for you not to perish.

•It is God's Will for you to be saved and to spend eternity with Him.

We know from God's Word that that part of His Will is for you.

In our section of scripture for today we also hear, in a negative way, what God's Will is not. God does not want us to be filled with wine, which leads to debauchery. God does not want a man to stop at the bar, have many drinks on his way home from work, and to neglect his wife and kids. God does not want a woman to drink at home all day long. God does not want the college student to binge drink.

And God does not want the high school student to drink and break the code of contract that they signed, when the school year starts.

God does not want us to get drunk.

Today, we may sit here and say, “*This doesn’t apply to me, because I do not drink.*”

But it does apply to you. Just as a person is intoxicated by filling themselves with alcohol, so also we can break what the Apostle Paul is telling us, by intoxicating ourselves with pride, with lust, with greed. And, the Lord does not want us to fill ourselves with those things.

Instead, He tells us what He does want us to fill ourselves with. He asks us to fill ourselves with the Spirit.

The Lord wants us to fill ourselves with the Spirit.

And how is it that we fill ourselves with the Holy Spirit? Well, we fill ourselves with the Holy Spirit,

- as we gather around the Means of Grace,
- as we read God's Word,
- as we hear God's Word,
- as we receive the Lord's Supper.

I am going to put in a little plug for our upcoming Bible Studies this year. In the bulletin the next few Sundays, you are going to see an insert, or a pamphlet. This last summer, Pastor Bartels and I sat down and we put together a curriculum for Bible Study, here at Holy Cross, for the whole year. Did you know that there are Bible Studies on Sunday morning, Monday evening, Tuesday evening, two times on Wednesday and Friday morning? It is my encouragement for you to pick up one of these inserts and to look for a Bible study to attend, during the course of this next year. Say to yourself, "*I want to fill myself with the Holy Spirit.*" Find a Bible Study or Bible Studies in which you can grow in your faith in Jesus, as your Savior, and be filled with the Spirit.

We also know from our text for this morning, that it is God's Will that we sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs. Sounds like a worship service, doesn't it, where we gather together singing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, where we gather together to grow in our faith, and to filled with the Spirit.

It is also God's Will that we return thanks unto Him, and thank Him. We thank Him that He sent His one and only Son to the cross. We thank Him that He has given to us a Savior

- who died on the cross,
- who has paid for your sin,
- who has given to you the free gift of eternal life with Him in Heaven.

But, we are not just to thank Him for that, but to thank Him in everything. We should not just have a Thanksgiving Day in our

lives, we should have a Thanksgiving Year, where each and every day of our lives, we thank God in everything. It is easy to bring thanks to God, when things are going well. But, do you give thanks to God in everything? That means we can thank God even for a car accident. We can thank God for the loss of a job. We can thank God for a breakup in a relationship. If God is concerned about the sparrows of the air, if God is concerned about the lilies of the field, we know He is concerned about you. If He takes care of the sparrows and the lilies, how much more won't He take care of you and work all things out for your good?

Knowing what the Lord's Will is for us, God now encourages us to make the most of every opportunity.

“Be very careful, then how you live...  
making the most of every opportunity,  
because the days are evil.”

I don't need to tell you that the days are evil, because we hear about it everyday on the news, whether it is on the TV, or in the newspaper. But, this last week, I did save the newspapers, just to share again, how evil the days are. Here are headlines from this last week.

- .Woman accused of shoving niece's head into wall.
- .Police say girlfriend stabbed boyfriend.
- .Suspect arrested in bank robbery.
- .Wautoma boy, 14, found shot to death.
- .Suspects arrested in jogger attack case.
- .And the days are evil, not only out in the world, but the days are evil also in the church, as we see that there are church bodies, (even Lutheran church bodies) that are blatantly going against what God's Word says.

Dear fellow redeemed, the days are evil. Because the days are evil we have the encouragement from the Lord, to make the most of every opportunity. I love how the Greek says that phrase! What we

translate as 'make the most of every opportunity' in English, the Greek actually says, 'redeem the time'.

### **Redeem the time?**

**Yes, redeem the time, because time is precious.**

We should buy the time for ourselves to be filled with the Spirit, and to look for opportunities in our lives to grow in our faith in Jesus. But we should also buy the time with others that we interact with in life. They, too, are precious in God's eyes. Buy the time to make the most of every opportunity to share our Savior, Jesus, with them, so that they do not look at our Savior as someone who is foolish, but rather as someone in whom they can grow in their wisdom. There are probably youth who are sitting amongst us today who think the same thing of their parents right now, as we did when we were younger. When we were younger, we thought that there was a time in our parents' lives when they stopped knowing what it was like to be in high school, when they stopped knowing that which was wise, when we thought that everything that they said was not good advice for us. But, as we have gotten out of school, we can look back, and we can see that the wisdom that they shared with us was actually pretty good! Our parents wanted us to grow in wisdom. Our parents wanted us to grow in our faith in Jesus, as our Savior. Our parents wanted us to surround ourselves with those who led us to Jesus, as opposed to those who were taking us away from Jesus. May we learn the wisdom of those who have gone before us. They want to share wisdom with us. They have been there, done that. They know the consequences of their sin. They don't want us to fall into those same sins that they did. They give us sound advice and they want us to surround ourselves with those who are being filled with the Spirit, who are growing in their faith in Jesus, as their Savior and are walking on a journey toward eternal life in Heaven. Knowing what God's Will is for you in your life, may we make the most of every opportunity. May we buy the time. May we be filled

with the Spirit. May we encourage others to also grow spiritually.  
And may we, with the help of the Holy Spirit, live a life of wisdom,  
until our Lord calls us to himself in Heaven.  
Amen