

“We Never Outgrow the Basics”

“Ephesians” — Part 15

Ephesians 5:15-21

Five Basics of the Christian Life

The basics are not something we learn to get a passing grade before we move on to other subjects. The basics are something we spend a lifetime developing, refining, and improving.

1. The Conduct Principle

Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise...

Ephesians 5:15

***Lacking wisdom means:
living as if God didn't exist.***

The fool says in his heart, "There is no God."...

Psalm 14:1

***Walking in wisdom means:
acknowledging the Lord in all your ways.***

Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight.

Proverbs 3:5-6

...I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.

Ephesians 4:1-3

2. The Time Principle

...making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil.

Ephesians 5:16

Special note: making the most of every opportunity: The word here is redeeming or rescuing time. To redeem means to buy back, or cash in. Jesus rescued us from a futile existence, enslaved to sin, and empowered us to live lives of purity and purpose. When we relate this to time, we rescue our everyday opportunities and invest them for eternal purposes.

Love does no harm to its neighbor. Therefore love is the fulfillment of the law. And do this, understanding the present time. The hour has come for you to wake up from your slumber, because our salvation is nearer now than when we first believed. The night is nearly over; the day is almost here. So let us put aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light.

Romans 13:10-12

So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God.

1 Corinthians 10:31

Why should we make the most of every opportunity?

Answer: Because the days are evil.

- We make the most of our time to counteract evil in the world.
- We make the most of our time because evil tempts us toward wasting our time.
- We make the most of our time because the days are short.

3. The Decision-Making Principle

Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord's will is.
Ephesians 5:17

- We live foolishly to the degree that we live as if God is not present in our lives, not interested in our decisions, and not worthy of our attention.

Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will. Romans 12:2

To the degree that you are conformed to the thoughts and customs of this world, to that same degree you will be unable to understand God's good, pleasing, and perfect will.

Seeking God's will requires: Prayer, humility, patience, and an open and willing heart.

- Seek wise counsel.
- Listen closely to those who have nothing to gain or lose by your decision.
- Walk forward in faith.

4. The Control Principle

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.

Ephesians 5:18-20

Characteristics of those controlled by the Spirit:

- Their minds are clear.
- Their hearts are filled with joy.
- Their lips overflow with praise.
- Their souls are filled with spiritual songs.

How are we filled with the Spirit?

Each Christian has all of the Holy Spirit. When a person comes to faith in Christ they are baptized with the Spirit. Being filled with the Spirit means that the Spirit has control of all of the believer.

5. The Submission Principle

Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.

Ephesians 5:21

We are not meant to do life alone!

- We are meant to subject ourselves to one another, bearing one another's burdens. Galatians 6:2
- We are meant to encourage one another with love and good works. Hebrews 10:24-25
- We are meant to look out for one another's interests. Philippians 2:3-4

Application: If our Christian walk does not lead us into deeper more meaningful relationships with fellow believers, we've missed the mark.

The Basics are not something we learn to get a passing grade before we move on to other subjects. The basics are something we spend a lifetime developing, refining and improving. Like many skills, if you don't keep growing in these areas, you will slide backwards.

...He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.

Philippians 1:6

...it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose.

Philippians 2:13