

SPIRIT-FILLED LIVING IN EVIL-FILLED DAYS

(OR "HOW NOT TO WASTE TIME AS A CHRISTIAN IN TIME-OBSESSED SINGAPORE")

Ephesians 5:15-21

I. Rush Hour and Rushed Lives

II. Spirit-Filled Living in Evil Days (Eph 5:15-21)

- A. Summary of 5:7-14
 - 1. We must not associate with the evil works of the sons of disobedience.
 - 2. We must walk as light in the Lord.

- B. Two important features of 5:15-21 are as follows:
 - 1. The use of "*do not* do this, *but* do this" formula shows antithetical, "us-versus-them" thinking.
 - 2. Participial phrases ("addressing...", "making melody...", etc.) denotes the results of doing what Paul calls us to do.

- C. Christians must "look carefully" how they walk—not as unwise, but as wise (5:15, 16).
 - 1. This involves "making the best use of the time."
 - 2. We need to use time well because "the days are evil."
 - 3. The best use of time is a God-centered, kingdom-sensitive use of time.
 - 4. What is the application to Singapore life?
—Workaholism is not necessarily time well-spent.

- D. Christians must not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is (5:17).
 - 1. Knowing what God wants us to do is the start of regaining the time.
 - 2. What is the application to Singapore life?
—Discern God's interests in our vocations.

- E. Christians must not get drunk with wine, but be filled with the Spirit (5:18).
 - 1. To be drunk with wine leads to debauchery, a lack of self-control.
 - 2. To be filled with the Spirit is to be controlled by the Spirit.
 - a. We know this because being filled with the Spirit is in contrast to being "drunk with wine."
 - b. We know this because of other texts that talk about being "filled" (with sorrow (Jn 16:6); with joy (Acts 13:52); and with knowledge (Rom 15:14)).

- F. Being filled with the Holy Spirit (5:19-21) involves...
 - 1. Addressing one another in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs.
 - 2. Making melody in the heart to the Lord.
 - 3. Giving thanks always and for everything to the Lord.
 - 4. Submitting to one another in the Lord.

- G. But there is good news for the lazy (pretentiously overworked) Christian.
 - 1. God does not accept us because we have made good use of the time.
 - 2. But his free acceptance of us inspires us to spend our days in his holy service.

III. Spirit-Filled Living in Evil-Filled Days

God does not want us to be wasting our lives, sacrificing ourselves to our self-centered ambitions. Instead, he wants us to understand his will for our lives and be filled with his Holy Spirit. Spirit-filled living is marked by singing the songs of the Lord, both to God and to one another; by constant thanksgiving; and by humble submission to one another in reverence to the Lord.