



**OASIS: TRUE WISDOM
DONE IN SYNC WITH
THE “TRUE” SERMON JOURNEY**
The Passage – Ephesians 5:15-20

Preface: *These LC studies will complement the sermons, often using the same biblical texts and will help your LC go deeper in personal understanding and application. These italicized portions are meant to resource and help you in leading and not to be distributed to the entire group (it limits conversation). Please also note that not all these questions are to be asked in a single night. It’s best to consider this a head-start and customize these studies to best fit your LC.*

Introduction:

Today we are talking about the nature of wisdom and what that looks like in our lives today. Socrates told us, “The unexamined life is not worth living” and Proverbs 9:10 tells us, “the fear of the Lord is the beginning of all wisdom.” For the Christian, wisdom can be seen as the truth accompanied by right action. Here are a few questions to get us started:

A few starter questions:

What comes to your mind when you think of terms like “foolishness,” “debauchery,” and “wisdom?”

Anyone have a funny story of a foolish act they did when they were younger? What did you learn from it?

Study’s BIG Idea: Christian wisdom is to be filled with the Holy Spirit and to make the most of every opportunity.

Ephesians 5:15-20

15 Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, **16** making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil. **17** Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord’s will is. **18** Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit, **19** speaking to one another with psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit. Sing and make music from your heart to the Lord, **20** always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ

O – Identify the contrasting themes in this section.

(Wise and unwise in v.15, foolish living vs. understand the Lord’s will, Drunkenness vs. being Spirit-filled, Debauchery vs. corporate worship, making music in gratitude to the Lord.)

I – In v. 15 the word for “live” in Greek means “to walk.” How does this understanding subtly shift the idea of living wisely?

(In effect Paul is saying, “Be very careful how you walk around this world” The idea of “walking around” creates a sense of action, movement, intentionality, even urgency.)

A – What wisdom clichés and sayings do we employ today? What are your personal favorites?

O – In v. 16, “making the most of every opportunity” is a financial term that literally means “buying back” and a secondary meaning is “to redeem.” How does this help you understand the meaning in context?

I – Why does Paul personify the days by calling them evil?

(Perhaps he was speaking of the Roman persecution and the tension that would release in the Jewish revolt in Jerusalem. Though he was likely imprisoned in Rome and writing to Ephesus, the Christian persecution could be what he had in mind. Also keep in mind that he will be executed within these few 5 or so years.)

A – What can we practice doing to determine what the Lord’s will is in our lives?

O – What is Paul really saying about alcohol consumption in v. 18?

(He is not prohibiting the consumption of alcohol, but about the folly and debauchery that results from drunkenness as this was a significant societal issue of the day.)

I – Instead, Paul writes that believers should be filled with the Holy Spirit. What is the role of the Holy Spirit in the believer’s life?

(The Holy Spirit empowers – Rom. 15:19; illuminates – I Cor. 2:10-12; and among other things, is God’s presence with us – Rom. 8:9.)

O – It’s odd to find the mention of singing immediately after the idea of buying back days from evil. Why do you think Paul includes vv. 19 & 20 to finish this section?

(Because of the victory found in Christ, believers can praise God as we redeem and buy back the days from evil.)

A – How could this help us understand what we as believers do when we gather to worship together?

A – How can we allow the Holy Spirit to lead us to make the most of every opportunity, especially during these evil days?

Key: O – Observation. I – Interpretation. A – Application

- a. **Please note that not all these questions are to be asked in a single night.** Take some time and select and reword the questions that best fit your voice and your LIFE Community group. Certain questions work better for certain groups. You are encouraged to prayerfully discern what will serve your LC the best.
- b. Complement OIA questions with “process questions” (what else? what more? what do others think?).
- c. When you ask questions, give people ample time to think and respond. Wait. Take your time; don’t rush people but encourage their participation. And avoid answering your own questions!
- d. Timing/pacing: allocate your time and move forward gently, with a steady pace.
- e. Application: Pace the study to conclude with “difference making” application.
- f. Secondary texts—use other texts sparingly, even if they are relevant. Such texts will push you into “teaching,” rather than facilitating. It can cause people to feel distracted or de-powered.