

MOTIVES OF THE HEART

Sabbath School Bible Studies

Five Questions for Life Change

Study Text: Ephesians 5:15-17

The Habits of a Steward

Open

Read the following quotation Ellen White makes about learning. In the context of this week's bible study on the theme of habits. How do you and members of your study group relate to the first line? How true is it for you in your life?

"We have many lessons to learn, and many, many to unlearn."

God and heaven alone are infallible.

Those who think that they will never have to give up a cherished view, never have occasion to change an opinion, will be disappointed.

As long as we hold to our own ideas and opinions with determined persistency, we cannot have the unity for which Christ prayed."

(The Review and Herald, July 26th, 1892)

Dig

1. Read *Ephesians 5:15-21*.

Paul refers to the believer as "*walking wisely*." (*verse 15*). In his letter to the Corinthian Church, he talks about how God has made "*foolish the wisdom of the world*." (*1 Cor 1:20*). In your world of work (or college), how do people see you as a Christian? Are you seen as a little strange? In what ways do you think you are 'walking wisely'?

2. *Verse 16* refers to 'making the best use of time'. Why is time an important matter to Paul, and for the believer in Christ?
3. Bill and Melinda Gates (The Microsoft Foundation) are incredibly optimistic about the future, not least because they believe science and technology has the power to make the future better. They work tirelessly to help make the world a better place, not least by contributing their personal resources. In contrast Paul says that "*the days are evil*" (*verse 17*). Even though the days past and present are evil, what does the Christian have to share that's incredibly optimistic, and even more credible? Back up your reason with scripture. Is it possible to reconcile the two worldviews?

4. *“Do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery.”* Why does Paul and other bible writers make such a big thing about alcohol? Adventists take a non-negotiable teetotal position on the matter. But many Adventist youth (and some adults) challenge this position. List together, as many reasons as possible, why drinking alcohol is the very opposite of ‘walking wisely’.
5. *“Be filled with the Spirit.”* (verse 18). Describe what that means to you.

Reflect

The number one habit of a steward is to put God first, permitting Him to take over your life, by becoming your manger (*Galatians 2:19-20*). Share together how this works in practise daily. What habits do you have which help?

End by sharing together what we most urgently need to unlearn, to allow God to be first in our lives?

To get the most out of this inductive Bible study:

Read the study text together (taken from the adult Sabbath School Lesson study).

Use question 1, as the icebreaker, an introduction to the discussion.

Use questions 2, 3, and 4, to dig as deep into scripture as your group wishes to go.

Question 5 is for reflection/application.

Surround the study with prayer.