

READING: Ephesians 5:15-20

SERMON

The text verse for the sermon is verse 15: “Be very careful, then, how you walk — not as fools but as wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil.”

In chapter 15 the author mentions different walks. In verse 1 & 8 he says that believers should walk in the love, in the light of Jesus Christ and to walk according to the will of God.

It is remarkable that the author carefully organises his message around these three walks. He writes to the congregation in Ephesus and he is urging them to focus on the truths of Jesus Christ in opposition to all the philosophies of their day. In the congregation it seems as if there were people who follow Gnosticism which was a philosophy that said that between heaven and earth are evil spirits and that you could only pass them by having “knowledge” or in the Greek “Gnosis”(which was only meant for a few). There were also followers of the Dionysus cult, which served Dionysus the god of wine.

In our text the author clearly emphasizes that none of these philosophies or cults are true. He says that every believer belongs to God through Christ and because of their relationship with Christ they should walk differently in the world.

They should follow the LOVE of God and by acting in God’s love, they are doing the will of God. They should walk in His light because the world is consumed with darkness. They should be the light of Christ to everyone. In verse 15 he then

summarises everything when he says when you do follow God and walk with HIM – you will be filled with God’s Spirit and you will live a life of thanksgiving.

So what is our message?

Our reading this morning offers us another perspective of life. Instead of just surviving or managing everyday life, we can live a life in relation with God. Yes we can choose to have faith. And I have to be very clear today, to all of you who do not know me. I am not talking about religion. I am talking about faith, because there is huge big difference between religion and faith. Religion to me is the reason why more and more people choose not to be involved in the life of the Church. Religion has all to do with dogmas and doctrines that divide people, where people are being judged either by their skin colour or their religious inclination. To have faith means fellowship with God and other people. To have faith is not to focus on the differences that so often divide but to love all people unconditionally. To have faith means to walk in the LIGHT and LOVE of God doing His will.

And walking after all is as easy as falling out of a tree – that maybe true of walking in general, but not when it comes to walking IN and THROUGH faith. Why? Well as believers we are being tested every day. As one elder always says: It is really hard to be a Christian when people insult or accuse you wrongfully, when illness strikes, when innocent people die in wars, when our family members are taken away from us, when we lose our jobs, when we face trials and tribulations, when we struggle with forms of abuse, when other people make fun of our faith.... But we are called by God to

persevere and walk in HIS light, in His LOVE according to His Will. We are called to sing songs of praise to the glory of God. We are called to live lives of thanksgiving despite our circumstances, despite the “evil” we face every moment of every day.

Douglas and Fiona today is, in many ways, the beginning of the FIRST WALK for RORY. You have been walking in this race for a long time. It is now time that you teach, show and tell RORY how to walk in the race of life so that he too can reach the finish line in the arms of God through faith alone. May the Lord bless all your words and actions when you help RORY to walk in the ways of God. Maybe your dedication and commitment to love and follow God show RORY and others how to walk in God’s light, **and lead others to have faith in God.**

Amen