



Trail Guide – July 13, 2020:

Ordinary Time

The poster tacked to the bulletin board in the college student center had one large word in the middle of it: SEX. Underneath, in small print, it said, “Now you’re interested, how about joining the College Rowing Club?” Whoever designed the poster wasn’t suggesting that taking up rowing had anything to do with sex. They were simply exploiting the fact that in our Western culture people are bombarded with messages and images so much that the very word attracts people’s attention. What gets your attention?

When we read the scriptures, the repetition of a word or phrase in a passage should attract our notice. Depending on which translation you read, you may find that the word “walk” appears 7 times in the Epistle of Ephesians: twice in chapter 2, twice in chapter 4, and three times in chapter 5. Some bible translators use the word, “live” in some of these verses. Why should this get our attention? Well, as you read through chapter 5, note what Paul has to say about a Christian’s “walk”. The repetition of this word functions as a set of hangars in this chapter on which rest Paul’s exposition of a life that is “worthy of the calling you have received” (4:1).

Wright, N. T.. Ephesians (N. T. Wright for Everyone Bible Study Guides) (p. 4). InterVarsity Press. Kindle Edition.

Mon, 7/13 – [Ephesians 5:1-2](#) – These verses actually form the logical conclusion to chapter 4. To walk in love is to walk, or to live, in a manner that is “worthy” of our calling. Love is not simply a feeling, it is action and attitude. Each day this week, let these words be a check on your actions, your attitude, your words, etc. toward others.

Tues, 7/14 – [Ephesians 5:3-10](#) – These verses contain proscription, warning, and positive direction with the second occurrence of “walk”. Walk in love refers to behavior. Walk as children of light speaks to our identity that flows from our relationship with God. Hence, the qualifier: “trying to learn what is pleasing to the Lord”. Here’s a second check on our attitudes and actions – who are you seeking to please? In whom is your identity based?

Wed, 7/15 – [Ephesians 5:11-16](#) – Here is the third occurrence of “walk”. This time, we are to walk with wisdom, or wisely. Wisdom is the ability to process, discern, understand, make sense of, and ultimately respond appropriately. For the Christian, wisdom is grounded in the will and love of God. Thus to walk wisely is to walk with a view to understanding and applying God’s will and God’s love in every encounter.

Thur, 7/16 – [Ephesians 5:17-20](#) – Paul is wrapping up his principle points on how a Christian should walk and live in the world generally prior to turning to specific examples. The power, the motivation, the encouragement and the reminder to walk as a Christian comes from the Holy Spirit. “Be filled” carries the sense of a continuing, ongoing, repeated action – day by day, moment by moment. It is a constant reliance on, and openness to, the leading and empowering of the Spirit

Fri, 7/17 – [Ephesians 5:21](#) – This verse is the hinge that connects what precedes with what follows. Those who are filled with the Spirit, who speak, sing, give thanks are those who the Spirit enables to walk and live as a Christian. Look up the word submit, or “be subject”. What positive and negative definitions/connotations do you find?

Sat, 7/18 – [Ephesians 5:22-33](#) – Herein we find some of the most misunderstood, misapplied, and even despised (too strong a word?) statements in the New Testament. Go back to the definitions and connotations you found that pertain to the word “submit”. Insert some of them instead. Also, take the next step in your walk and consider deeply what it means to love someone as Christ loved the church.

Feel free to share reflections, reactions, questions, inspirations – jim@leesburgumc.org. Looking forward to next Sunday!