

**PLEASE NOTE** - The references below are taken from the 86-19 Index. Many verses have additional references that have not been included due to time & space. We are encouraged to do additional personal research.

(Ephesians 4:1, 2) 4 Therefore I, the prisoner in the Lord, appeal to you to walk worthily of the calling with which you were called, 2 with all humility and mildness, with patience, putting up with one another in love,

\*\* w16 June p. 22 pars. 18-19 "Jehovah Our God Is One Jehovah" \*\*\*

18 What can help us to avoid such pitfalls? To the Christians in Ephesus, a prosperous and diversified city, Paul offered some practical counsel. (Read Ephesians 4:1-3.) Note that Paul first mentioned such qualities as humility, mildness, patience, and love. These might be likened to the pillars of a house that keep it standing. But besides having strong pillars, a house needs maintenance, which must be done regularly; otherwise, deterioration could set in. Paul appealed to the Ephesian Christians that they earnestly endeavor to "maintain the oneness of the spirit." 19 Each of us should accept it as his or her personal responsibility to contribute to maintaining the oneness in the congregation. What can we do? First, cultivate and display the qualities that Paul mentioned—humility, mildness, patience, and love. Then, put forth earnest effort to promote "the uniting bond of peace." We should work to repair, as it were, any fissurelike weaknesses that may appear. Doing so, we contribute to the maintenance of our precious peace and unity.

(Ephesians 4:17, 18) 17 So this is what I say and bear witness to in the Lord, that you should no longer go on walking just as the nations also walk, in the futility of their minds. 18 They are in darkness mentally and alienated from the life that belongs to God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the insensitivity of their hearts.

\*\*\* it-1 p. 733 Ephesians, Letter to the \*\*\*

Inscriptions uncovered at the ruins of Ephesus indicate the gross darkness in which the Ephesians lived mentally and why the apostle Paul wrote Christians in that city to "no longer go on walking just as the nations also walk in the unprofitableness of their minds, while they are in darkness mentally." (Eph 4:17, 18) The inscriptions on walls and buildings indicate that the populace would govern their lives by superstitions, divination, and the searching for omens.

(Ephesians 4:26) 26 Be wrathful, but do not sin; do not let the sun set while you are still angry;

\*\*\* w18 January pp. 10-11 pars. 15-16 "He Gives Power to the Tired One" \*\*\*

15 Read Ephesians 4:26. We are not surprised when we have to endure harsh treatment from the world. But when a fellow believer or a family member says or does something that hurts us deeply, we may be devastated. Suppose we cannot simply forget the incident. Will we allow resentment to fester for years? Or will we follow the Bible's wise advice to settle matters quickly? The longer we put off dealing with the situation, the harder it will be for us to make peace with our brother.

16 Suppose you have been offended by a brother and you cannot put it behind you. What positive steps can you take to make peace? First, approach Jehovah in earnest prayer. Ask him to help you to have an upbuilding conversation with your brother. Remember, he is one of Jehovah's friends. (Ps. 25:14) God loves him. Jehovah treats his friends with kindness, and he expects no less from us. (Prov. 15:23; Matt. 7:12; Col. 4:6) Next, review in your mind what you are going to say. Do not assume that your brother set out deliberately to hurt you; give him the benefit of the doubt. And be open to the possibility that in some way you may have contributed to the rift. You might begin the conversation by saying something like this, "Perhaps I am being overly sensitive, but when you spoke to me yesterday, I felt . . ." If the discussion does not produce the results you desire, look for another opportunity to make peace. In the meantime, pray for your

brother; ask Jehovah to bless him. Ask God to help you focus on your brother's positive qualities. Whatever the outcome, you can be sure that Jehovah will be pleased with your sincere efforts to gain your brother—God's friend.

(Ephesians 5:15) 15 So keep strict watch that how you walk is not as unwise but as wise persons,

\*\*\* km 11/07 p. 1 Walk as Wise Persons \*\*\*  
Walk as Wise Persons

1 When Jesus asked four fishermen to be his followers, they did not put their decision off but "at once . . . they followed him." (Matt. 4:18-22) When Saul of Tarsus was converted and then regained his sight, he likewise did not procrastinate but "immediately in the synagogues he began to preach Jesus." (Acts 9:20) Time constantly moves forward; once it passes, it is gone forever. That is why it is important for us to 'walk as wise persons' with regard to how we use our time.—Eph. 5:15, 16.

2 Unforeseen Occurrence: Opportunities we have today to serve Jehovah may be gone tomorrow. (Jas. 4:14) No one is exempt from "unforeseen occurrence." (Eccl. 9:11) Additionally, we are all getting older, and the "calamitous days" that accompany advancing age and that limit what we are able to do in Jehovah's service are inescapable in this present system of things. (Eccl. 12:1) Therefore, it is not wise to put off making a dedication to God or to wait for ideal circumstances before expanding our ministry to the extent presently possible. (Luke 9:59-62) Abraham found peace and serenity in his later years, dying "old and satisfied" because he had used his life wisely, entirely devoted to Jehovah.—Gen. 25:8.

3 Time Is Reduced: We also want to spend our time wisely because "the time left is reduced." (1 Cor. 7:29-31) Very soon now this old system of things will end. Opportunities to participate in the great ingathering of sheeplike ones during the "harvest of the earth" will end. (Rev. 14:15) We

must be careful not to allow life's anxieties and distractions to rob us of time that would be better spent in the ministry. (Luke 21:34, 35) How satisfying it will be to look back knowing that we had a full share in the harvest!

4 We must be watchful constantly so as not to miss out on joyous privileges of service that might come our way. Let us be determined to do all that we can to serve Jehovah "as long as it may be called 'Today.'" (Heb. 3:13) By doing so, we will show ourselves to be truly wise, because "he that does the will of God remains forever."—1 John 2:17.

\*\*\* w06 8/1 p. 9 You Cannot Save It, so Use It Well \*\*\*

Procrastination proved to be very costly for this student. But there is a Bible principle that can help people avoid a situation like hers. "Keep strict watch that how you walk is not as unwise but as wise persons, buying out the opportune time for yourselves," wrote the apostle Paul. (Ephesians 5:15, 16) Paul was exhorting Christians to use their time wisely in caring for spiritual interests, but the principle can be helpful in many important activities of life. Since we can usually decide when to carry out a task, we will see better results and will get the job done quicker by choosing to start when the time is "opportune," or most advantageous. This is a mark of "wise persons," as the scripture shows.

When would be "the opportune time" for the young student to study for the math test? Perhaps every night for 15 minutes or so, she could progressively review the material. In that way, she would not have to cram the night before, during hours better spent sleeping. On the day of the test, she would be rested and fully prepared, and a good score would be within her reach.

Therefore, when you are given a task to do, determine "the opportune time" for it and do it. Then you will avoid the snare of procrastination and its consequences. You will also find satisfaction in a job well done. This is especially important when

the task will affect other people, as is the case with assignments in the Christian congregation.

\*\*\* w16 May pp. 14-16 How Do You Make Personal Decisions? \*\*\*

### PERCEIVE JEHOVAH'S WILL

7 You may wonder, 'How can we know what Jehovah approves of if his Word provides no specific command on the matter?' Ephesians 5:17 states: "Keep perceiving what the will of Jehovah is." In the absence of a direct Bible law, how can we perceive the will of God? By praying to him and accepting his guidance by holy spirit.

8 Consider how Jesus perceived what his Father wanted him to do. On two reported occasions, Jesus first prayed and then miraculously provided food for large crowds. (Matt. 14:17-20; 15:34-37) Yet, he refused to turn stones into bread when he was hungry and was tempted by the Devil in the wilderness. (Read Matthew 4:2-4.) Because he was familiar with his Father's thinking, Jesus knew that he should not turn the stones into bread. Yes, Jesus realized that it was not God's will that he use such power for his own personal benefit. By refusing to do so, he showed that he was relying on Jehovah for guidance and sustenance.

9 If we are to make wise decisions, as Jesus did, we must rely on Jehovah for guidance. We need to act in accord with these wise words: "Trust in Jehovah with all your heart, and do not rely on your own understanding. In all your ways take notice of him, and he will make your paths straight. Do not become wise in your own eyes. Fear Jehovah and turn away from bad." (Prov. 3:5-7) Getting to know Jehovah's thinking through Bible study can help us to perceive what God would want us to do in a particular situation. The more familiar we are with Jehovah's thoughts, the more our heart will become sensitive to his guidance.—Ezek. 11:19, fn.

10 To illustrate: Imagine a married woman who is shopping. She sees a pair of shoes that she

would like to have, but they are very expensive. So she asks herself, 'How would my husband feel about my spending that much money?' Likely, she already knows the answer, even though her husband is not with her. Why does she know? Because over a period of time, she has become familiar with his way of thinking about their limited budget. As a result, she perceives what her husband's thoughts on such a purchase would be. In a comparable way, as we become progressively acquainted with Jehovah's thoughts and ways, we improve in our ability to perceive what our heavenly Father would want us to do in various circumstances.

### HOW CAN YOU FIND OUT WHAT JEHOVAH THINKS?

11 To acquaint ourselves with Jehovah's thinking, we need to make personal study a priority. When reading or studying God's Word, we might ask ourselves, 'What does this material reveal about Jehovah, his righteous ways, and his thinking?' We need to have an attitude like that of the psalmist David, who sang: "Make me know your ways, O Jehovah; teach me your paths. Cause me to walk in your truth and teach me, for you are my God of salvation. In you I hope all day long." (Ps. 25:4, 5) As you meditate on a Bible passage, you might consider questions like these: 'How can I apply this information in my family? Where can I apply it? At home? At work? At school? In the ministry?' Once we have determined where the material can be applied, it may become easier to perceive how we can put it to work.

12 Another way to become more familiar with Jehovah's thinking is by paying close attention to Bible-based guidance from his organization. For example, the Watch Tower Publications Index and the Research Guide for Jehovah's Witnesses are produced to help us learn about Jehovah's thinking on numerous situations requiring that we make personal decisions. We also benefit greatly by listening carefully at Christian meetings and participating in them. Meditating on what is being taught will help us to discern more about Jeho-

vah's thinking and to make his thoughts our own. By making diligent use of Jehovah's provisions for spiritual feeding, we will progressively become more familiar with his ways. As a result, we will be in a better position to make personal decisions that our loving God will bless.

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