

August 8, 2021

“Make The Most of Every Chance”

Our text from Ephesians today tells us, “...*watch your step. Use your head. Make the most of every chance you get.*” Pretty down to earth direction from a book in the Bible which can feel abstract.

It is easy in a media and celebrity saturated culture to think *nothing we do matters*. Most all of us are neither famous nor celebrities – and yet, when we consider life from a faith perspective – by God’s choice - what we do matters. We are **not biding our time** as we wait for heaven – God has given us lives to live and it is ours to pay attention to our choices and our living. “Watch your step” can be a warning in our culture that you need to straighten up. Here, it means we have a wonderful opportunity to make the most of our lives. But if we are going to do it – we have to believe that watching our step as God’s children will make a difference.

When life is hard, we add insult to injury to believe God is the author of our suffering – or that we deserve whatever is our challenge at any given moment. Our text today inspires us not to focus on what isn’t quite right in our world...but to focus instead on those around us – to discover the *privilege of offering a hand up to someone else*: Less about us, more about them. To know we are becoming more like God who loves us who specializes in caring for those needing a hand up. To make the most of our lives is to discover what God would have us do. Which is often clearer when we think in large rather than small terms. God calls us much more to a kind of life than a specific expression of life. We are wise to follow the gifts we have been given in life – but God is probably less concerned with whether we want to be a butcher, a baker or a candle stick maker...but God cares a great deal about what kind of butcher or baker or candle stick maker we are. Use your head.

Making the most of every chance we get means we do things it won't be a problem if others find out about it. Which, according to Jesus, they will. You are kidding yourself if you believe what happens in Vegas really does stay in Vegas...or anywhere else. When someone starts a sentence with "*Don't tell your mother, but...*" you stop them – tell them you don't want to know what you can't tell your mother. Yes, there is private information – but everything else really needs to be on the table.

Do you find it intimidating to have scripture ask us to be wise? I do. From my youth, my elders told me to stop being a wise-a(cough). But that's not really the same thing, is it? If we understand wisdom properly, we understand that a master carpenter has wise hands. *We know wisdom by what it creates.* Our God is a creator and a redeemer whose life in us draws us to build on the reality of God. To be enlivened by the spirit. This is why we are warned not to deaden our senses through self medication – because we want to have our senses and self enlivened by God living in us. How do we make the most of every chance we get? We embrace the grace of God's presence in every circumstance.

Watch our step, use our head, make the most of every chance we get. These are the very down to earth ways we bring the presence and influence of God into our corner of the world. Let's take our chances, to make the most of the lives we have.

So watch your step. Use your head. Make the most of every chance you get. These are desperate times!

17 Don't live carelessly, unthinkingly. Make sure you understand what the Master wants.

18-20 Don't drink too much wine. That cheapens your life. Drink the Spirit of God, huge drafts of him. Sing hymns instead of drinking songs! Sing songs from your heart to Christ. Sing praises over everything, any excuse for a song to God the Father in the name of our Master, Jesus Christ.