



RISE UP

Challenging men to live up to God's calling!

Rise and Work!

Ephesians 2:10

Men's Breakfast

Sermon given on April 15, 2023



Pastor Rick Lancaster

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Opening Comments

- Today we continue our Men's Ministry series: **RISE UP: Challenging men to live up to God's calling!**
- Let's begin with a word of prayer.
- Turn in your Bibles to **Ephesians 5**
- In the Men's Study you have been discussing the reality of evil in the world.
- As we look around our world, would we characterize these days as good or evil?
- In the future, will we look back on these days as the 'good ole days'?
- The Apostle Paul looked at the times he was living in and said they weren't good.
- **Ephesians 5:15-16**
- When Paul says the days are evil, he is not saying, 'I hate Mondays – they are evil'.
- He is saying that there is more evil happening in the world than there is good happening.
- That was almost two thousand years ago.
- Things must have gotten better since then, right?
- Even though knowledge has grown exponentially, the world is not getting better.
- No honest person can say the world is better than it was in the past.
- The question is, what should we, as men of God, do about that?
- Is there anything we can do about it?
- Paul says two things we don't want to miss as we walk through these evil days.
- First, 'walk circumspectly,' or carefully, mindfully, thoughtfully.
- We need to think about what we are doing. Don't be foolish.
- Second, Paul says, 'redeeming the time...'
- The best way to describe this might be don't waste time.
- We can't get back any time we have wasted – it is just gone.

- Paul continues with some things we should think about in these evil days.
- **Ephesians 5:17**
- Because the days are evil, godly wisdom is a requirement for a man who wants to be a faithful man of God.
- ‘understand what the will of the Lord is.’
- Because the days are evil, doing what is good is not that easy to discern.
- How do you respond to the person who wants you to use pronouns that contradict their biological gender?
- How should you behave around the person who is screaming at you because you believe abortion is the ending of a human life and is wrong?
- What do you say to the person who says they believe men can give birth to babies?
- We might all have answers to each of those questions, but do our answers reflect the love, grace, mercy, and compassion of God?
- Will our answers draw them to God or drive them deeper into their sin?
- In these and every other circumstance of evil in this world that we are confronted with, we must pause and pray and ask God what His will is for that person or situation.
- We must exercise enough self-control not to let our flesh respond until we have sought the Lord and gotten an answer from Him.
- Paul continues that thought.
- **Ephesians 5:18**
- Anything that diminishes our ability to hear from God and make wise choices in this evil world should be avoided.
- If we don’t avoid them, we will be drawn into the evil deeds of this world.
- Instead, ‘be filled with the Spirit...’
- The Holy Spirit is holy and He will lead us to holiness and God’s will.
- Paul concludes this thought by reminding us that we need each other so that we can know God’s will and make wise choices.

- **Ephesians 5:19-21**
- None of us, by ourselves, can stand against the evil days we are in.
- Skip down to **Ephesians 6:10**
- The days are evil but that doesn't mean we are going to be defeated.
- **Ephesians 6:10-13**
- The days are evil, but in Christ and in fellowship with God's people we are able to stand in the evil day.
- But we are not just to stand in these evil days.
- Turn to **Ephesians 2**
- All of us can look around and say these days are evil.
- But that was not always the case.
- There was a time when we might not have characterized the days as evil.
- We might have said they were bad days or something like that, but we wouldn't have used the word, 'evil.'
- There is a reason for that.
- **Ephesians 2:1-3**
- We used to be a part of the evil.
- Our lives added to the evil in the world.
- We wouldn't characterize the days as evil because we were evil.
- We were going the way the rest of the world was going.
- But, praise God, He didn't leave us there.
- **Ephesians 2:4-9**
- By God's grace we were saved from the darkness of our sin.

Colossians 1:13-14

He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed *us* into the kingdom of the Son of His love, ¹⁴ in whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins.

- It is only because we are children of the light that we can discern the darkness around us.
- Those who are still slaves of the darkness cannot comprehend the light.
- Paul goes on to say something about us that is very important in these evil days.
- **Ephesians 2:10**

- What should we be doing in these evil days? We should be doing good works!
- That causes us to ask the question, ‘What is a good work?’
- That takes us back to walking circumspectly and in wisdom.
- It requires a serious effort to know God’s will.
- It is encouraged and supported as we get connected to others seeking to do good works for God.
- Good works can be as simple as being kind to someone.
- It could be an offer to pray for someone who might be struggling.
- It might be a loving or gracious response to someone who says or does something that is offensive to you or someone else.
- It might be speaking truth in love when evil is being put forward as truth.
- Every day, we will be confronted with the evil in this world.
- As men of God, we are to stand in faith, stand on the truth, and do good with every word and deed.
- We should keep in mind that the world doesn’t like it when God’s people do good works. **John 15:18-19**

If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before *it hated* you. ¹⁹ If you were of the world, the world would love its own. Yet because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you.

- Because we are God’s children doing works in the name of Christ, the children of darkness hate us.
- We should be surprised by that – if they hated Jesus, and we are serving Him by doing good works, they will hate us.
- We also shouldn’t be afraid of their hate.
- The apostle Paul was well acquainted with those who hated the good works of God.
- It didn’t keep him from doing God’s will, because He knew God had his back. **2 Timothy 4:17-18**

But the Lord stood with me and strengthened me, so that the message might be preached fully through me, and *that* all the Gentiles might hear. Also I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion. ¹⁸ And the Lord will deliver me from every evil work and preserve *me* for His heavenly kingdom. To Him *be* glory forever and ever. Amen!

- We should not be surprised or afraid of the world when it hates us for doing good works.

- At the same time we cannot shrink back from those good works because the world might turn against us.
- We can't drive out the darkness – that is God's work.
- Our work is to be a light in the darkness. **Matthew 5:16**
Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.
- We are living in evil times and they seem to be getting darker every day.
- Things that we thought were horrible just a few years ago are now everyday occurrences.
- There has never been a time in the history of the world that needed men of God to rise up and get busy doing good works more than today.
- Walk circumspectly – take this life seriously and be thoughtful about how you are living.
- Don't waste this life – we need to use what time we have left to do good works to slow the darkness even just a little.
- Seek to know God's will for your life and at every encounter with those who are in the world.
- Let every day be a day for good works.
- If you can't do some good work that is big – do lots of little good works.
- Just keep doing good until you are delivered from these evil days.
- And while you are at it, look around you to find someone you can help to do good works with you.
- Rise up, men of God and do good works!
- **Let's pray!**