

Discovery Group - Ephesians

Put on the New Self

Accountability

Share how your obedience commitment from last week went, and who you shared with.

Bible: Ephesians 4:17 - 5:21

Read *passage* aloud & someone retell in their own words

- What do we learn from this passage about God?
- What do we learn from this passage about people?

Read the *article* on the next page.

- What is the basis for holy living? How is it possible? Why make the effort? How important is it anyway?
- What is the role of the mind in living the Jesus life?
- Consider the behaviors and characteristics mentioned: what is particularly challenging to you personally? How can you grow in godliness in these specific areas?

Commit

What is Jesus calling you to do in *obedience* this week?

Who can you *share* this with? Who can you reach out to in order to make disciples?

Abide: Read Ephesians 5:21 - 6:9

Put on the New Self

So I tell you this, and insist on it in the Lord, that you must no longer live as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their thinking. Ephesians 4:17

In this section we are still considering how the Church fulfills its purpose. Remember, God's vision for the Church is for it to be the "fullness of Christ" in the world (1:23, 4:13). In the last section (4:1-16), we saw how this is accomplished by each member doing his part in ministry, leading to the maturing of the body of Christ and displaying the beautiful unity of God's new humanity. Now, in this section, we are exhorted to live lives of supernatural holiness.

This passage is packed with details of what it means to live a Jesus-filled life. We will point out a couple of generalities here, but it is very important to read these verses thoroughly and prayerfully, allowing the Holy Spirit to bring conviction leading to repentance. It is imperative for you to take this in line by line, and actually allow Jesus to mold your life into the pattern described.

Paul directs our attention from the outset to our minds. The Gentiles live "*in the futility of their thinking*" and are "*darkened in their understanding*" (4:17, 18). In contrast to this, we are "*to be made new in the attitude of [our] minds*" (4:23). With our minds we actively seek to understand who Christ is and decide to surrender to His way of life. A second observation is that this passage says a lot about our speech. We are warned away from lies, unwholesome talk, obscenity, foolish talk, coarse joking, etc. Instead, we are urged to speak the truth, build others up, give thanks, and proclaim worship to God. In addition to these, Paul puts his finger on a number of other sinful behaviors and highlights instead how we are to live. Again, dive into the details and be conformed to the pattern given.

Paul makes much of the fact that we used to be like the godless people of the world, but that is no longer who we are. "*You were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light*" (5:8). Sin used to be natural to us, coming out of our very nature. But not anymore. It is no longer truly you. Now you are holy and righteous, loving, kind and good. When you behave in this way you are living out of your true self. Ultimately the reason you cast aside the old and make every effort to live true lives is because you are deeply loved by the Father (5:1-2) and your desire is to please Him (5:10).