

COMMUNITY GROUP STUDY GUIDE

Not Grieving the Spirit

EPHESIANS 4:29-32

OVERVIEW

Everything—literally everything—in heaven and on earth is being united in Christ (1:10). Only when we understand who Christ is can we begin to understand who we are. We often read Paul’s letters thinking about all Scripture calls us to do. But before Ephesians calls us to do anything, it reminds us what God has done in Christ.

Our identity is not based on what we do, but who we are. Our identity is not earned and achieved but declared and received. Our identity, as Christians, is found “in Christ.” We are united to Christ—and that changes everything about us! Paul’s letter to the church in Ephesus explains what we were (apart from Christ), who we are (in Christ), and then how we should live as followers of Christ, all for the glory of Christ.

APPLY // EPHESIANS 4:25-28

1. Read Ephesians 4:17-32.
2. What is ‘falsehood’ and why is it important to put it off and put on the Truth? How does being members of one another inform this reality?
3. How would one know that they are sinning in their anger? Why is this wrong in the eyes of God? How does the Gospel inform the way we handle our anger? Give some examples.
4. Why is reconciling quickly so important within the body of the church? What are some practical steps we can take in reconciling with others we sin against? With those who sin against us?
5. Why is theft seen as evil in the eyes of God? Why is working and generosity good in the eyes of God? How does honest work and generosity inform the glory of God and our joy as we do them?

STUDY // EPHESIANS 4:29-32

Study the passage of Scripture aiming to faithfully interpret and apply what you observe. Remember we study God’s word not just to increase our knowledge, but to increase our trust in and treasuring of Jesus Christ.

1. Read Ephesians 4:25-32.
 - a. Identify the commands in these verses.
 - b. How are these commands rooted in the gospel and God’s love for us?
2. Paul instructs us to “let no corrupting talk come from out of our mouths.” What does this mean? What kinds of speech are corrupting? Why are they corrupting?
3. Why are we tempted to speaking in corrupting ways?

4. Instead of corrupting talk, how are we to speak? What does Paul have in mind when he says “such as good for building up”?
 5. What does it mean we should speak “as fits the occasion”?
 6. Notice that our words “may give grace to those who hear.” What does this tell us about the power of our words? How do our words give grace? What does this tell us about the importance of our speech?
 7. In verse 30 Paul instructs to “not grieve the Holy Spirit.” What does that mean? How do we grieve the Holy Spirit?
 8. In the second half of verse 30, how does Paul explain the role of the Holy Spirit? How does this work of the Spirit enable us to live in such a way to please him (and not grieve him)?
 9. Read 4:31-32. Contract the behaviors listed in each verse.
 10. Notice the repetition of the word “all” in verse 31. What does this tell us about Paul’s instructions?
 11. Define bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, slander, malice.
 12. What does it mean to be kind to one another? Tenderhearted?
 13. What is forgiveness? Why is forgiveness often hard for us to extend?
 14. Discuss how forgiveness is not: a feeling, forgetting, excusing, a one-time event.
 15. According to the end of verse 32, what’s the foundation for our kind, tenderhearted forgiving of one another? Notice the critical word “as.”
 16. What does it say about the gospel and the character of God when you refuse to forgive?
 17. How does God’s kindness and compassion toward us, and forgiveness of us, compel us to treat others in the same way?
- General Bible study questions:
 - **God:** What does this passage teach me about the character of God?
 - **Humanity:** What does this passage teach me about myself and my need for God?
 - **Christ:** How does this passage teach me that God has met my needs in the person and work of Jesus Christ?
 - **Response:** How should I respond with my affections and my actions?

ACCOUNTABILITY

Relationships developed and deepened during accountability provide regular encouragement, and when necessary admonition, to spur each other on to delight in the supremacy of Jesus Christ. Ask one another heart-probing, clarifying questions, and help each other apply the gospel to your lives.

QUESTION: Are there areas where verses 17-32 have been especially convicting or encouraging to you? Help each other enjoy and apply the gospel as we put on the new self.