

COMMUNITY GROUP STUDY GUIDE**Walking in Wisdom**

EPHESIANS 5:15-21

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 5:1-14

1. Read Ephesians 5:1-14.
2. What happens if we skip 5:1-2 and run straight to verses 3-14? Are we tempted to do this? Why? Or why not?
3. How should our status “as beloved children” inform our desire for following God’s commands? What hinders our desire to obey God?
4. How do we assess when following God’s commands flows from the truth that we are God’s children? How can we help each other remember the truth of who we are “as beloved children”?
5. What does it mean to walk in love “as Christ loved us”? What are some practical ways we can apply walking in love as a church family that fights sexual immorality, impure speech, covetousness and other sins? Why is it important to remember these words are written to a church community not just individuals?
6. What do you think of Paul’s instruction to let sexual immorality, impurity or covetousness “not even be named among you”? Is this often the way we think about sin? Why or why not?
7. How are we tempted to be “deceived with empty words?”
8. How can we be sure that we’re fighting sin with thanksgiving not just by saying “No” to what is wrong?

STUDY // EPHESIANS 5:15-21

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 5.
2. What is Paul's main point in verses 15-21?
3. What does Paul mean when he says, "Look carefully then how you walk"? What other places have we seen the idea of "walking" in Ephesians (cf. 2:1, 10; 4:1; 5:2, 8, 15). What does this repetition tell us?
4. What does Paul mean when he tells us to "make the best use of time"? (Note: This is not just a command for good time management skills!)
5. How does the "therefore" at the beginning of verse 17 inform Paul's instruction?
6. Notice the command "be filled with the Spirit." This command is *passive* (i.e. that is, it happens to us). What does that tell us about this command?
7. Since Paul compares being filled with the Spirit to being drunk with wine, what does that tell us about what it means to be filled with the Spirit?
8. In verses 18-20, discuss each action that shows the Spirit's control.
9. How do each of these actions show that we're Spirit-filled? Is this typically the way we think of being Spirit-filled Christians?
10. Paul concludes this section with the idea of mutual submission with a view toward Christ. What does Paul mean when he says we should "submit to one another?" What does it mean to do this "out of reverence for Christ"?
11. How do verses 5:1-2 inform the commands in verses 15-21?

- 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?
 - **God:** How does this passage help me hope in heaven?

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: Is your status as a beloved child compelling you to walk in love as Christ loved you/us? Praise God where this is evident. Repent and pray for forgiveness where it is absent and remember your identity.