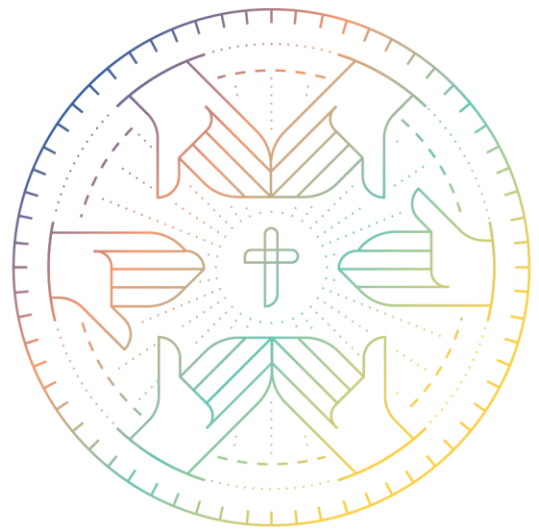


Group Life.

WE ARE BETTER TOGETHER



MEETING AGENDA

WELCOME (10 MINUTES)

Remember to take attendance via the attendance reminder email.

ICEBREAKER (10 MINUTES)

At different points in life, we experience important events that change something about how we think, behave, or look at things. What is one example that has impacted your life?

INTRODUCTION (5-10 MINUTES)

Chapter 4 begins with Paul calling the Ephesians to live out the truth as described at the beginning of his letter. In the first part of chapter 4, he focused on the importance of unity and maturity. In the latter half of Ephesians 4, Paul will focus on a third characteristic, morality. He contrasts the “new” life believers have in Christ to the “old” life of who they were previously.

INTO THE WORD (25 MINUTES)

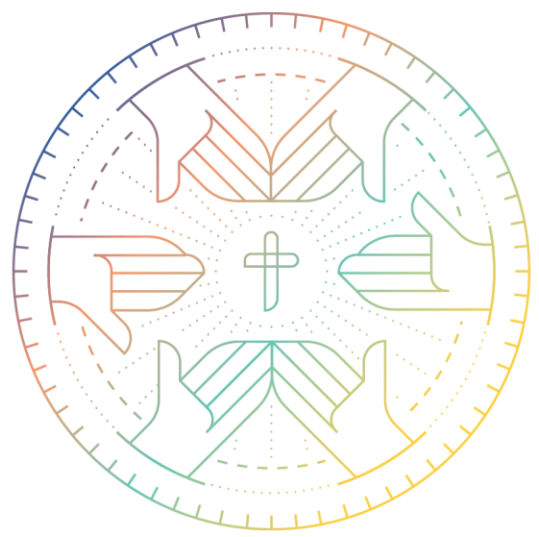
1. **Read Ephesians 4:17 and Revelation 2:1-5. In Ephesians 4, Paul tells the Gentile audience to “no longer walk as the Gentiles do”. Why do you think he phrases it this way and how does Revelation 2 help us understand why he uses this phrase?**

H.O.S.T. GUIDANCE

[Answers will vary. Our Walk with the Lord is an expression of daily conduct. Symbolically, “the Gentiles” mentioned in this context are those people who are separated from God. They are unsaved. As believers, the Ephesians were once “spiritual” Gentiles, but no longer. Paul’s point here is that believers cannot continue to live as unbelievers and expect to please God. In Revelation, we see that around 50 years later despite all the good in the Ephesian church they were not walking as they should. This is because they left their first love, God. While their walk was initially strong over time they began to walk as spiritual Gentiles.]

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2. Read Ephesians 4:17-18. Paul describes “spiritual Gentiles” as:

- Futile
- Darkened
- Alienated
- Ignorant
- Hardened

Of those listed, which one sticks out to you and why?

H.O.S.T. GUIDANCE

[Answers will vary. Futile= lack of accomplishment, meaningful purpose, or fulfillment. The unbeliever's life lacks true purpose. All pursuits lead to dead ends or ultimately do not lead to true fulfillment. Darkened= bad thinking. Alienated = lack of intimacy with God. Ignorance= moral blindness. “The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned.” 1 Corinthians 2:14 Hardness of heart = stubbornness or inflexibility]

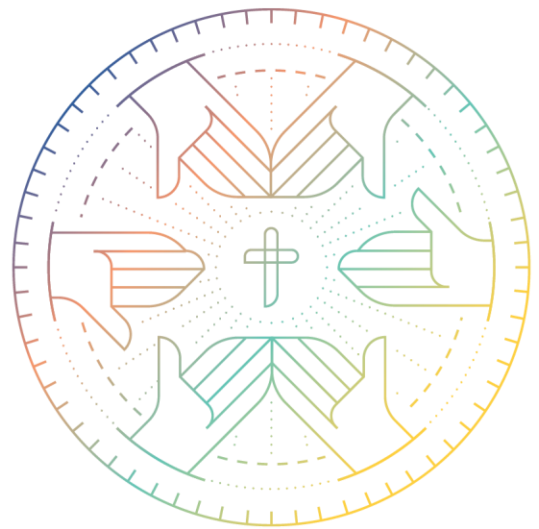
3. Read Ephesians 4:20-24 and Romans 12:1-2. In both of these passages, Paul uses the phrase “to put off your old self”. Prior to becoming a follower of Christ, what were things for you that could of been categorized as the “old self” or unhealthy things you lived for?

H.O.S.T. GUIDANCE

*[Answers will vary. Leaders note that this is not meant to glorify who we were before Christ. Instead, this question should help us see how we have changed or challenge us to reflect on areas that we need to let go of. To put off means to strip away, as in taking off old, filthy clothes. The “old self” has two characteristics. First, it “belongs” to that previous state. A believer is not to be associated with the same sinful practices he or she **lived for** prior to knowing Christ. Second, the “old self” is marked by evil brought on by misplaced, deceptive urges. As prior verses indicated, unbelievers, not only “[give] themselves up” to sin, they seem eager to go deeper and further into sin. This is not only damaging to their relationship with God, but it’s also damaging to their lives and physical bodies. Sin is deceptive making us think what’s harmful is what’s best for us. The Greek word for “corruption” here carries the idea of rotting, wasting, rusting, or being defiled. Such things are ruined and useless, with no value to themselves or others. In contrast, believers are called to serve others as useful servants of Christ.]*

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APPLICATION (25 MINUTES)

1. Read Romans 1:21-25 and Ephesians 4:17-19. Paul begins the passage in Romans by stating, “For although they knew God, they did not honor him...” How does this inform us of the importance of internal transformation?

H.O.S.T. GUIDANCE

[Answers will vary. We need to be aware that our spiritual journey is an intentional one. We can know God but if we do not honor him, we can drift into the old self. We often try to move past bad habits with behavior modification and try harder. But the truth is behavior modification rarely brings internal transformation but internal transformation always leads to behavior modification. It is important to move towards something as we move away from sin.]

2. Read Ephesians 4:25-32. Paul lists five characteristics that we need to “put on”.
 - Truth – v.25. Read John 14:6
 - Forgiveness – v.27. Read Psalm 4:4
 - Stewardship – v.28. Read 1 Peter 4:10
 - Edifying Speech – v.29-30. Read Colossians 4:6
 - Kindness – v.31-32. Read 1 Peter 3:7-9

After looking at these five attributes and the accompanying verses which attribute sticks out to you the most and why?

H.O.S.T. GUIDANCE

[Answers will vary. If time allows, take a few moments and read the verses next to the attribute as a group. If you see one of these attributes in a member of your group, call it out. We all need people reinforcing the transformation that we are seeing as we grow in our walk with Jesus.]

3. After looking at the characteristics of “the old self” and “the new self” in Ephesians 4, what is one thing that you need to “put off” and what is one thing that you need to “put on” this week?

H.O.S.T. GUIDANCE

[Answers will vary. Help your group to create action steps in how they will begin to put off the old self and put on the new self. For example, this week I want to be more edifying in my speech. I will mention something positive and affirming to at least one person each day. In addition, I want to hold my tongue instead of critiquing something I disagree with.]

PRAYER (10 MINUTES)

Dear heavenly Father, help us to walk in a manner worthy of our calling. May we no longer walk in our old ways seeking after things that do not satisfy and alienate us from you. Instead, help us to put off the old self and be renewed by your Holy Spirit in our minds. Help us to put on the new self, grounded in true righteousness and holiness. May truth, forgiveness, stewardship, edifying speech, and kindness be the foundation of who we are as we grow in our relationship with you. Help us this week to identify any area of our life that we need to “put off” in order to honor you. We pray all of this in your wonderful and holy name. Amen.