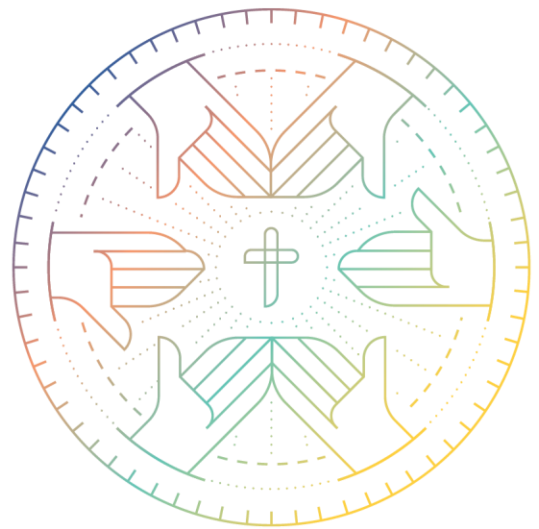


# Group Life.

WE ARE BETTER TOGETHER



## MEETING AGENDA

### WELCOME (10 MINUTES)

In this week's study, we will be covering Ephesians 5:1-14. Don't forget to take attendance via the attendance reminder email.

### ICEBREAKER (10 MINUTES)

What life experience (good or bad) have you had that you are grateful for?

### INTRODUCTION (5-10 MINUTES)

In this week's passage, Paul commands us to be imitators of God and to walk in love. To do this, we must make sure that we do not participate in things that belong to the old self discussed in chapter 4. Paul here will lay out some of those things and encourage us to be children of light.

### INTO THE WORD (25 MINUTES)

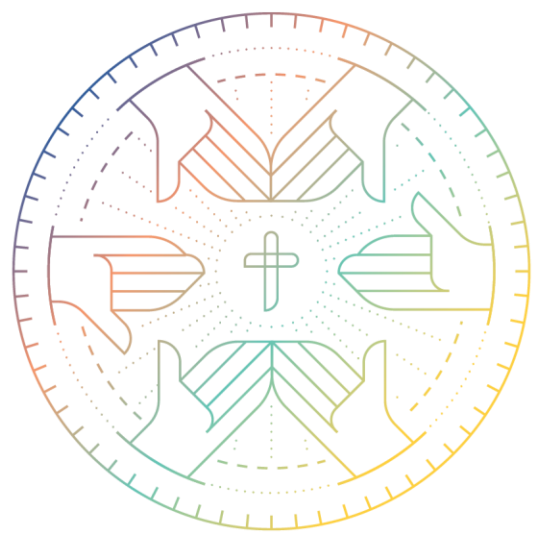
1. **Read Ephesians 5:1-2. What do you think Paul means when he says to "imitate God"?**

#### **H.O.S.T. GUIDANCE**

*[Answers will vary. Paul explains the mindset which should motivate followers of Christ towards obedience. Believers in Christ enjoy a Parent-child relationship with God. A child naturally seeks to copy what he or she sees in a loving parent. Believers in Jesus are to likewise copy what they learn about God. We see in verse 2 that we are to imitate how we walk in love reflecting how Jesus loved us. "And he said to him, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets." Matthew 22:37-40]*

# Group Life.

WE ARE BETTER TOGETHER



## 2. Read Ephesians 5:3. Paul lists 3 critical moral actions to eliminate:

- Immorality – Any sexual activity outside of marriage
- Impurity – Twisted heart of lust
- Covetousness – greed

Why do you think Paul puts an emphasis on these actions?

### **H.O.S.T. GUIDANCE**

*[Answers will vary. Immorality includes premarital sex; adultery (Matthew 19:9) Prostitution (1 Corinthians 6:12-20) Same-sex relationships (Romans 1:29) Incestuous relationships (1 Corinthians 5:1) and Sexual desire flows from our heart. (Matthew 15:19) Impurity encompasses every kind of lust. This is more than just sexual but moves into the seeking after anything that twists hearts away from Christ. (Romans 6:19) These actions are how spiritual Gentiles live as we have discussed in the last few weeks. These moral actions do not lead us toward God but rather, away from God.]*

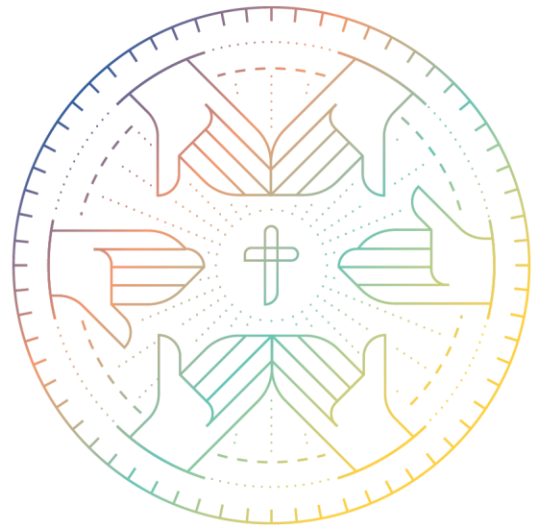
## 3. Read Ephesians 5:4-6 and Ephesians 4:29. What sticks out to you about these passages? How important is the role of our words in being imitators of God?

### **H.O.S.T. GUIDANCE**

*[Answers will vary. First, he prohibits "filthiness." This is mentioned immediately following a discussion of sexual immorality, so it may refer specifically to dirty jokes that include sexual references. The Greek term here literally means "obscenity." Such words are not only closely tied to immoral actions and attitudes, but they are also offensive and hurtful to others. Second, Paul condemns "foolish talk." This Greek term is a combination of two more common terms: moros (stupid) and lego (speaking). This makes the meaning fairly clear. Paul's idea seems to reference talk that is idiotic, absurd, or blatantly meaningless. This probably overlaps with the "filthiness" and "crude joking" also mentioned in this verse. In addition, "foolish talk" might include things like "trash talk," speaking in ignorance (Proverbs 18:13), or speaking without self-control (Proverbs 12:16; 29:20). Third, Paul mentions avoiding "crude joking." The Greek word here is a reference to vulgar, lewd, crass, or foul-mouthed humor. As Paul writes in 1 Thessalonians 5:11, believers are to "encourage one another and build one another up." Instead of being coarse and crude, Paul encourages an attitude of gratitude. This is a better alternative to vulgar speech.]*

# Group Life.

WE ARE BETTER TOGETHER



## APPLICATION (25 MINUTES)

1. **Read Matthew 12:34-37 and James 1:26. After reading these passages what sticks out to you about those who serve God but do not honor him with their words? What steps can you take this week to be aware of the words you use?**

### **H.O.S.T. GUIDANCE**

*[Answers will vary. In the passage of Matthew, Jesus is chastising the religious leaders of his day who said the right words but their actions did not line up. The heart is highlighted as the place where words flow from. Our words can give life or death. In James, we see that if we are unable to bridle or control our tongue, we are deceiving ourselves and our relationship with God is worthless. The takeaway is that our words are a reflection of where our heart is. We must guard our heart.]*

2. **Read Ephesians 5:7-14. Here Paul calls us to walk as children of light. Light allows us to be grateful because we know that God has our best interest in mind, and isn't trying to limit us. What is in your life are you truly grateful for?**

### **H.O.S.T. GUIDANCE**

*[Answers will vary. Allow each member to share making sure everyone has an opportunity to give at least one example. Encourage your group to make a list of the things they are grateful for and put it somewhere they can look at it each day.]*

3. **Paul lists four reasons why it is important to practice gratitude in our lives:**
  - **God knows the destruction that can happen. Verse 3.**
  - **There will be a terrible loss of blessing of God's reign in our lives. Verse 5.**
  - **We would ultimately experience the wrath of God. Verse 6a.**
  - **The Gospel is rooted in obedience. Verse 5:6b.**

**Of those listed, which one sticks out to you and which truth do you need to reflect on this week?**

### **H.O.S.T. GUIDANCE**

*[Answers will vary. Paul calls a pure church "proper among saints." Paul sought to avoid the kinds of problems experienced in Corinth (1 Corinthians 5). There, sexual immorality was tolerated in the church and caused problems for the entire congregation. Christians are capable of sin, even though we are saved (1 John 1:8). Thankfully, Christ is willing to forgive (1 John 1:9), and the salvation we have can never be lost (John 10:28). Those whose lives are marked by persistent sins, such as those mentioned here by Paul, however, have reason to closely examine their spiritual lives. Believers are saved from the wrath of God by the blood of Christ (Romans 5:9). Again, this is not a reference to occasional sins, but to those who "walk," or make a habit of such behaviors.]*

## **PRAYER (10 MINUTES)**

Dear heavenly Father, may we be imitators of you walking in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us. Help us this week to reflect on our lives and root out any immorality, impurity, or covetousness that may be present. Thank you for your sacrifice on the cross that frees us from our old way of living. Let us walk as Children of Light so that we may understand your will and be filled with your Spirit. We give thanks to you and pray all of this in your wonderful and holy name. Amen.