Connect Group Discussion Guide

LEADER
EPHESIANS - PT 7
10/25/2026

PASSAGE SUMMARY

Our bodies and lives are the home of God the Spirit. As such, we need to live that miraculous new reality.

Paul instructs these believers to "dress the part" spiritually, putting off some things and putting on more appropriate things.

We are now God's people and God's home. We don't so much live our own lives now--Christ and His Spirit live through us.

WARM UP

Open your group time with casual fellowship/questions. Taking a few minutes to connect before jumping into discussion helps create an environment where people feel known, valued, and ready to engage. See Series Introduction for tips and ideas.

READ THE PASSAGE

Ephesians 4:17-5:2

Just like last week, we're going to take it one verse at a time. Have someone read a verse and someone else summarize what was just said. They can quote back the keywords to remember or go farther and restate the verse entirely.

Either way, the goal is to comprehend the passage's basic message before diving deeper into it.

BACKGROUND

Ephesians teaches us how to discern what in our lives is from the old way, which is full of death, and the new way, which is full of life.

These new vs. old things closely mirror aspects of the Ten Commandments, dealing with stealing, anger, lying, and honoring God by not grieving His Spirit.

It's beautiful that God's desire for His people is unchanging. He wants us to Love Him and care for each other and the world around us. These verses teach us how.

TIPS FOR YOUR CONVERSATION

- You don't have to fill every silence. Ask the question, give people time to think, and resist the urge to answer it for them. Use a simple follow-up like, *"What makes you say that?"* or *"Where do you see that in the passage?"*
- Your don't have to have all the answers, just help your group discover God's truth together!
- Feel free to break down any question into parts, especially when there are terms someone in your group might not understand. This gets everyone on the same page about what is being asked.

ENGAGE WITH THE PASSAGE

1. **As you read Ephesians 4:25–32, what stands out to you about how Paul says we should treat one another? Spend some time listing out the contrasts of behavior. Do any of these surprise you?**

Falsehood/truth and being members of one another (connected). It does not say to put away anger as a sin, but be angry AND do not sin nor let it linger and become an occasion for bitterness. **Stealing/labor, do honest work, and share. Corrupting talk/building up or edifying** (as we looked at last week), giving grace with our words. **Do not grieve the Spirit of God** doesn't have a contrast. **Bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, malice, and slander vs. kind, tenderhearted, forgiving** as God forgave us.

2. **What do you notice about vv. 25-32 when you look at the big picture? If you had to describe the old way and new way, what summarizes or defines them?**

Answers may vary here. There is benefit to deep diving and looking at each thing, but there's also value to zooming out and seeing the big picture the pieces work together to create. They might note that each one gets rid of selfishness and chooses love and grace. They might note that the focus changes from what I can get for myself to what I can give. They might note that it moves from hardness and prickliness to softness and openness.

3. **Matt said, *"We are not meant for a life of do-overs, but for a life He has taken over."* Read Ephesians 4:21–24. What might a "do-over" look like when we fall into an old habit or respond in a way that doesn't reflect Christ? How is putting on the new self different from simply trying to do better?**

A "do-over" focuses on trying again through our own effort. The "new self" is the new life we have in Christ, being renewed by the Holy Spirit to reflect God's character in true righteousness and holiness. Rather than simply trying harder to change our behavior, we allow God to transform us from the inside out.

4. **What does our relationship with our own self, mind, and heart look like in this passage?**

New groups: Focus on scanning through the verses with this lens in mind. Find the phrases that relate to this and note the healing/re-creation journey from our old hearts and minds to the new ones.

Established groups: Begin with the new group instruction, then move a little closer to home: Do you trust your judgment? Has your natural inclination changed from the old way to the new way? Is your heart a wellspring of life (Proverbs 4:23) or still deceitful (Jeremiah 17:9)?

5. ***For Established Groups:*** **How can we "be angry and do not sin" and "put off anger" in the same passage? Are these describing the same anger?**

There's a lot of spots in the Bible that look confusing or tricky at first glance, and sometimes understanding what word got translated that way clears up the misunderstanding quickly. Strong's Concordance gives us the Greek or Hebrew and the translation, but it also gives us other places those words can be found. A link to this chapter can be found here. Have participants look up "anger" where it shows up in these two spaces. Then look at each word--is it the emotion or something else that each one is talking about? You can also look up other verses that use each one, just by clicking on the Greek word right there in the concordance!

NEXT STEPS

As you consider your next step, reflect on:

1) What "old clothes" are you still wearing that it's time to put off?

2) What "new clothes" do you need to put on?

Give your group a few moments to reflect on their answers to the questions above. Then have your group answer the question aloud. Feel free to separate into smaller groups of 2 or 3 for this question, so each person has others praying with them for the needs they're taking before the throne.

SPIRITUAL PRACTICE FOR THE WEEK

Last week: We worked on a "one another" verse from the New Testament. Which one did each person pick? How did that go?

This week: In the sermon, we were given five House Rules for the Holy Spirit:

1. **Traffic only in truth. (Ephesians 4:25)**
2. **Move on from anger. (Ephesians 4:26–27)**
3. **Move from being a taker to a giver. (Ephesians 4:28)**
4. **Speak only what gives grace. (Ephesians 4:29)**
5. **Put away negativity and toxicity from the church community. Be Christ to one another. (Ephesians 4:30–32, 5:1)**

At least three times this week, set aside a few minutes at the end of the day to review these rules and reflect:

- ***Is there anything I need to repent of?***
- ***Do I need to apologize to someone for my anger, disunity, or hurtful words?***
- ***What parts of my old self do I need to put off so the Holy Spirit can shape me to reflect Christ more fully?***

Take time to thank God for His grace, confess where you've fallen short, and ask the Holy Spirit to help you walk in your new life in Christ.

***Leaders - check in with your group members at least twice this week. Share your own experience with this exercise and encourage others to do the same!

RESOURCES IN THE ROCK BRIDGE APP!

Take a few minutes to explore the Rock Bridge App as a group. Tap **Daily Habits** to walk through the daily devotion, journal, gratitude, and prayer prompts. Then, show your group **Community Prayer**, found in the bubbles at the top of the home page. This feature helps you stay connected in prayer and engage with God's Word throughout the week.

Challenge: Encourage everyone to open the app at least three times this week and spend time praying for one of the requests in Community Prayer.

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