



# WALK IN LOVE

EPHESIANS 4-6

series companion

## **GROWING IN MATURITY**

The instant we trust in Jesus as our Saviour, we are a new creature. A new creature with extraordinary privileges: we are forever declared righteous and acceptable to God. On this foundation we have an eternity of gratitude to express to God. One way that we can express this gratitude is by seeking maturity in Christ.

Maturity in Christ is a life-long process of learning and growing. It's often a slow journey of becoming more aware of who we are and how we impact those around us. While ageing is a natural process, maturity is anything but natural - it doesn't just happen automatically.

Maturity is, however, an organic process where the Spirit of God works in and through us to change us deeply in our inmost being. It is possible to resist the Spirit – even to “grieve” the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 4:30). If we do not submit to him the rate of maturing slows down or even stops.

As we continue our series in Ephesians we are going to see Paul talking lots about maturity. On this side of heaven we cannot expect we will fully “arrive”, and indeed Paul describes maturity as an ongoing process of “attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.” (Ephesians 4:13). Christ is the standard – and God's rich supplies of grace and provision towards this goal are inexhaustible. God intends for us to become people of character – in every season and circumstance, and through whatever trial or difficulty may enter our lives. Life itself can be a wonderful teacher, and in God's providence we often find ourselves in situations that are challenging us to grow up.

Often the greatest test of our maturity is how we behave in our relationships. In this series, we will notice Paul address significant relationships in the 1st Century household – husbands and wives, parents and children, slaves and masters. Indeed, relationships are the place where it is often most difficult to behave in mature ways. The battle for Christian maturity is fought on the turf of every-day ordinary relationships. These relationships are places where it is possible that we might “grieve the Holy Spirit of God” (Ephesians 4:30), or even “give the Devil a foothold” (Ephesians 4:27). Growing in maturity therefore involves us in a spiritual battle where the threats are real, but where God has provided the means for us to make choices to behave in ways that honour him. In our relationships, we can become people who reflect the grace, love, and generosity of Jesus Christ “who loved us and gave himself up for us” (Ephesians 5:2).

The real risk with seeking maturity in Christ is that you can seek to follow a set of rules. That looks like maturity, but is in fact a human being in their own strength “doing the right thing”. We have some useful diagnostic tools to help us to understand the state of our heart, but of course the way in which real maturity comes is living out the peace and security we have in Christ.

Below are five diagnostic tools adapted from Jenny Brown *Growing Yourself Up* p17-19

## **A MATURE PERSON:-**

### **1) Works on your inner guidelines; refrain from blaming**

When relationships become difficult and strained, we can become focussed on blaming the other for the

problems we experience. Growing in maturity involves learning to discern our own inner values and principles so that we can stay clear on how to manage ourselves. Rather than demanding that the other change their behaviour, we step back to see our own contribution to the relationship.

## **2) Accepts people with different views while staying connected**

Growing in maturity means learning to stay connected with people we disagree with. When relationships become conflicted by disagreements, we can quickly become reactive. Instead of retaliating or running away from the relationship, we learn to communicate our differences while staying connected.

## **3) Has feelings without letting them dominate**

Though there are times when our emotions can overwhelm us, growing in maturity means we learn to turn down the intensity of our emotional reactions. When emotions are high, there's a part of our brain that begins to take over – it's the instinctive part of the brain that either wants to fight or flee. By slowing ourselves down, we are better able to access the 'thinking brain' and resist letting the impulsive 'reactive brain' from taking over.

## **4) Is responsible for solving their own problems**

Growing in maturity means we do not expect others to solve our problems or meet our needs. It also means resisting the impulse to take over when we see someone struggling. The impulse to jump in and rescue the other is often because of our own discomfort or insecurities. Growing in maturity means we learn to tolerate pain

in ourselves, in order to fulfill our responsibilities and achieve goals. It also means learning to tolerate pain in others, to show compassion without needing to take control.

### **5) Holds on to their principles**

Sometimes it feels easier to adjust ourselves so that we fit in with the group, or to keep others satisfied with us. Growing in maturity means resisting the pressure to change simply to accommodate others or to maintain the status quo. Instead, we learn to hold our course based on what we believe is true and right.

## **HOW TO USE THESE STUDIES**

We suggest that groups begin the term by spending some time looking through the list of habits (as a guide) and doing some reflecting on where you think God is calling you to change. Write down your goal, and what you'd like to share with your growth group in Week 2. Pray for each other each week for the rest of term.

### **Connecting with Others**

As we grow deeper with one another, people begin to share more vulnerably and may raise significant issues. When this happens, the Holy Spirit is working in the person and in the group. You might wonder “How can I play my part in what is happening?”, “How can I listen and respond in a helpful way?”. The first thing we should do is point the person and the whole group to Jesus. But we also tend to jump too quickly to give advice hoping to fix people's problems and remove their pain. We respond before we've taken time to connect and understand. So if someone shares something significant, commit

to do lots of praying and more listening than talking or questioning. If you'd like to read further see:

<https://church2church.org.au/tools-resources/knowledge-base/> and search for "Introduction to CURE".

### **Connecting with Self**

Peter Scazzero, in his book Emotionally Healthy Spirituality, writes,

*"It is impossible to be spiritually mature while remaining emotionally immature." God made us to be spiritual, physical, emotional, intellectual, and social people. When we deny any of these parts we deny an important part of our humanity. By paying attention to these parts of who we are, we become better equipped to experience the healing and transformation offered to us by Jesus Christ.*

Following is a tool to help grow an emotional vocabulary. All people experience emotions, but not everyone can accurately identify them as they occur. We've all had the experience of having a "bad day". Emotionally intelligent people are able to identify whether they are feeling "anxious", "misunderstood", or "frustrated".

Review the table below and try this sample exercise:

Schedule a stop a couple of times a day and write down what emotions you are experiencing as accurately as possible. Do this for a week. What did you notice? Were there any patterns that arose? How might you start giving what you find to Jesus for the solution?

	<i>Joy/ Happiness</i>	<i>Loved/Loving</i>	<i>Sadness</i>	<i>Anger</i>	<i>Fear</i>	<i>Shame/Disgust</i>
<i>Relatively high emotional intensity</i>	Elated Overjoyed Thrilled Exuberant Ecstatic Empowered Optimistic Delighted Amazed	Loved Loving Accepted Blessed Attracted Enchanted Fascinated Passionate Adoration Devoted	Despairing Devastated Depressed In Agony Anguish Hurt Dejected Hopeless Distressed	Enraged Outraged Furious Violent Hating Mad Angry Exasperated Aggressive	Terrified Petrified Panic Shocked Frightened Frantic Threatened Paranoid	Worthless Mortified Disgraced Guilty Dishonoured Remorseful Unworthy Rejected Disgusted
<i>Medium emotional intensity</i>	Cheerful Thankful Pleased Relieved Satisfied Loved Loving Energetic Excited	Trusting Encouraged Moved Tender Caring Connected Appreciated Empathy Compassion Supported	Alone Miserable Sorrowful Heartbroken Lost Grieving Sick Misunderstood Confused Disturbed Unsafe Loss	Frustrated Annoyed Hostile Jealous Defiant Exploited Intolerant Provoked	Fearful Insecure Intimidated Anxious Helpless Suspicious Confused Disturbed Unsafe	Sorry Embarrassed Apologetic Sneaky Regretful Stupid Ashamed
<i>Relatively low emotional intensity</i>	Appreciated Glad Content Peaceful Pleasant Tender Positive Creative Hopeful Amused	Admiration Respect Sentimental Kind Caring Friendly Affectionate Warm	Disappointed Unhappy Upset Dissatisfied Discouraged Tired	Irritated Touch Uptight On edge Agitated Critical Sarcastic Selfish	Uneasy Apprehensive Cautious Nervous Worried Shy/Timid Unsure Bewildered Concerned	Uncomfortable Ridiculous Regretful Defensive Sheepish

# HABITS OF THE HEART

<i>Habit</i>	<i>What is it</i>	<i>Jesus/NT</i>
Solitude/Silence	Solitude means withdrawing in order to be with God. This is a deliberate decision to attend to the presence of God and reflect on how we can live more authentically from our relationship in Christ.	Jesus often withdrew to solitary places to be with God in silence and prayer (Luke. 4:42; 5:16; 6:12)
	Silence is a companion to solitude – we turn off our phones, get away from noise, and quiet ourselves in God’s presence.  Disconnecting from other voices and noise brings us back to who we are before God and stillness helps us to remember, “I am not what I do.”	
Rest	Rest means we stop doing what we would normally consider “work”. (This was historically the “Sabbath” - one day a week, but it can be shorter or longer than that).	Jesus instructed that it’s lawful to do good on the Sabbath (Matthew 12:8, 12)
	Rest helps us to remember our limits and that my life doesn’t always need to be about getting things done. I’m free to play and enjoy God’s creation for its own sake.	
Fasting	Fasting involves abstaining from certain things like food or drink or technology. This helps to free us from having to have what we want. It trains us so that our bodily desires need not rule our life.	Jesus fasts in the wilderness (Matthew 4:2, 4)  Paul fasts before he makes important decisions (Acts 14:23)
Frugality/Simplicity	Frugality means refraining from grasping for money or possessions to satisfy our desires for comfort, status or luxury. Simplicity means avoiding having our life cluttered with unnecessary busyness and events that distract us from our purpose in Christ.	Jesus warns about a life cluttered by the need for things (Matthew 13:22; 1 John 2:15-17)
	Frugality helps us to be content with what we have (even to be generous – to give stuff away!) Simplicity helps us to be good stewards of our time and to prioritize what’s most important.	
Study/Meditation	We read and study God’s word and meditate on the truths of Scripture.	Jesus meditated on Scripture (Matthew 4:4, 7, 10)
	This helps us to remember who God is, and who we are in Christ, and to become aware of God’s presence and work in our life.	
	You might start a Bible reading plan, commit to memorizing Scripture, and keeping a journal of your reflections.  Finding someone to share this with gives the opportunity to mutually support one another through prayer.	

<i>Habit</i>	<i>What is it</i>	<i>Jesus/NT</i>
Thankfulness	We give thanks to God for his goodness to us, for the true joy that comes from him, and his gifts of grace in every season.	Jesus tells his disciples to rejoice that their names are written in heaven (Luke 10:20)  Jesus promises his disciples a joy that will never be taken away (John 16:22)
	This frees us from defining life according to our circumstances and helps us to imagine what God might be doing in and through us.  This might also include giving thanks for others and speaking encouragement to them.	
Service	We look for opportunities to meet the needs of others by laying down our rights and desires to please ourselves and instead give generously.	Jesus' posture was that of a servant – and he instructed his disciples to do the same: “By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.” (John 13:35; Mark 10:45)
	Serving together brings into the joy of being caught up in something bigger than ourselves.	
Hospitality	Hospitality involves inviting people into your space and being a faithful presence in their space.	Jesus taught about how our hospitality reflects God's (Luke 14:12-14, 15-23)
	Hospitality is a great opportunity to build connection with non-Christian friends, and to “merge universes” (i.e. Introduce your non-Christian friends to your Christian friends)	
Prayer	In prayer we enjoy God's presence and come before his throne of grace to speak honestly from the heart, confessing sin, and asking God to meet our needs – and those of others.	Jesus spent time with God in prayer (Matthew 14:23; Luke 3:21; 5:16; 6:12)  Our posture in prayer is that of a child speaking to our Father (Matthew 6:9)
	This helps us to rest in our God who knows all things and who is in control of all things. It helps us to be honest with ourselves before God.  Praying with others is a great way to build friendships that are centered on God.	
Presence	Putting away the distractions of technology, like phones, so that we can be present and connected with the people we love.	Jesus is never distracted - he is responsive and attentive to people and their needs (Mark 1:23, 29, 32)
Community	Meeting together as family to encourage and serve each other and prepare our hearts to hear from God through prayer and in his word. We do this as we gather together as church on Sunday. Also as we meet together in Growth Group.	The early church met together regularly as an expression of their fellowship with God. (Acts 2:42-47)

# 1 THE HEALTHY SELF

## **BIG IDEA**

Since we have put on the “new humanity” in Christ, created to be like God, don’t live as if you are still enslaved under the power of your sinful nature, which corrupts and destroys the possibility of life with God.

## **EPHESIANS 4:22**

You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires.

## RELATE

This is a time to catch up and share life.

**Read Ephesians 4:17-24**

## REVIEW

Going around the room, share a reflection on the bible talk/bible reading. What was most helpful to you?

## REFLECT

1. Paul contrasts our old way of life (verse 17-18) with our new way of life in Christ (verses 20-24). What kinds of choices and behaviours characterize our old way of life?  
4:17 \_\_\_\_\_  
4:18 \_\_\_\_\_
2. As we are learning the way of Christ, what new kinds of choices and behaviours are now available to us (verses 20-24)?
3. What is the ultimate goal of living the 'new self'? How do you feel about this?
4. As Ephesians takes us into deeper reflection about the health of our relationship with God and the health of our relationships with others, where do you think God is most calling you to grow this term? You might like to reflect on the list of habits in the Series Introduction. Consider using that as a guide for weekly conversations and prayer across the term

## **REACT**

What do you feel about what is being said in this passage? How does it impact you emotionally?

## **RESPOND**

**Key application** - *Since Christ has made us to be a “new humanity”, choose to live out that new humanity through your choices and your behaviours which are forming you.*

What does this mean for you? What does it look like in your day to day?

# **PRAY**

*During the week, pray for your own journey with God, for each other, for those around you who don't know Jesus, and for mission in the world.*

# 2 HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS

## **BIG IDEA**

Christian maturity, shaped by the Spirit, is demonstrated in how we relate to one another. The way of life we are called to in the loving example of Jesus produces truly healthy relationships. When we fail to love each other we grieve the Holy Spirit who lives among us.

## **EPHESIANS 4:22-24**

You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; to be made new in the attitude of your minds; and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.

## **RELATE**

This is a time to catch up and share life.

**Read Ephesians 4:25-32**

## **REVIEW**

Going around the room, share a reflection on the bible talk/bible reading. What was most helpful to you?

## **REFLECT**

1. Here Paul presents a number of exhortations which are centered around our lives and relationships together. Looking through the passage, what are the ways in which you see a concern for “one another” at the heart of Paul’s commands?
2. The words we speak to one another matter (see verses 25, 29, 31, 32). How is speaking truth in love central in the body of Christ’s growth to maturity?
3. Look at verse 28. How does Paul re-frame the purpose and goal of our work, our efforts, our pursuits, the way we spend our time?
4. What does it mean not to grieve the Holy Spirit (verse 30)? Consider how the Holy Spirit is at the heart of our life together as God’s people – see also 1 Corinthians 12:1-14.

## **REACT**

What do you feel about what is being said in this passage? How does it impact you emotionally?

## **RESPOND**

***Key application** - If we believe the glorious, heavenly truths about us, we should live like it in how we relate to other members of the body of Jesus. A church that works out our transformed lives, depending on God, will have truly remarkable relationships.*

What does this mean for you? What does it look like in your day to day?

# **PRAY**

*During the week, pray for your own journey with God, for each other, for those around you who don't know Jesus, and for mission in the world.*

# 3 THE PRICE OF FORGIVENESS

## **BIG IDEA**

The power and strength to forgive others when we have been wronged arises from our understanding of ourselves as forgiven sinners who have received the grace of Christ.

## **EPHESIANS 4:32**

Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.

## RELATE

This is a time to catch up and share life.

### Read Ephesians 4:25-5:2

*Note this study is focussing especially on 4:32-5:2*

## REVIEW

Going around the room, share a reflection on the bible talk/bible reading. What was most helpful to you?

## REFLECT

1. When relationships breakdown, forgiveness is a painful process. Pastor and author, Tim Keller, says,

*“When someone seriously wrongs you, there is an absolutely unavoidable sense that the wrongdoer owes you. The wrong has incurred an obligation, a liability, a debt. Anyone who has been wronged feels a compulsion to make the other person pay down that debt. We do that by hurting them, yelling at them, making them feel bad in some way, or just waiting and watching and hoping that something bad happens to them”. - Tim Keller. Serving Each Other Through Forgiveness and Reconciliation*

- a) Does this resonate with your own experience?
- b) What do you think makes it so difficult to forgive?

2. Look at Ephesians 4:32. How does the example of Christ help us to face the very real cost of forgiveness?
3. In what way does the cross of Christ give us the power to grant forgiveness, even while we are hurting?

## **REACT**

What do you feel about what is being said in this passage? How does it impact you emotionally?

## **RESPOND**

**Key application** - *Grow in self-understanding about the “idols” that stand in place of your secure identity in Christ. Understand what triggers feelings of anger and bitterness. Seek safe relationships where you can be encouraged and challenged.*

What does this mean for you? What does it look like in your day to day?

### **Recommended Resources:**

Peace Wise Ministries – Forgiveness and Reconciliation

<https://peacewise.org.au/forgiveness/>

<https://peacewise.org.au/blog/2019/03/05/the-forgiveness-that-frees/>

Tim Keller, ‘Serving Each Other Through Forgiveness and Reconciliation’ [PDF]

Ken Sande, ‘The Peace Maker’ [book]

# **PRAY**

*During the week, pray for your own journey with God, for each other, for those around you who don't know Jesus, and for mission in the world.*

# **4 WALK IN THE LIGHT**

## **BIG IDEA**

God, who said 'let there be light' sent Jesus, the light of the world, to re-create us as children of the light.

## **EPHESIANS 5:8**

For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light

## **RELATE**

This is a time to catch up and share life.

**Read Ephesians 5:1-14**

## **REVIEW**

Going around the room, share a reflection on the bible talk/bible reading. What was most helpful to you?

## **REFLECT**

1. Paul's picture of how to live in this passage is a product of our having become light in Christ (verse 8). Reflect upon this metaphor of light and darkness. How does it capture what Jesus has done for us in the gospel? How does it make you feel? Does it ring true?
2. Compare Ephesians 5:11-13 with John 3:19-21. What are the opportunities and joys, and the potential challenges and struggles we may face, as we seek to walk as children of light?
3. As those who belong to Jesus, we are now light in him. Yet we still need the Spirit to expose and illuminate the dark parts of our hearts and our lives, making every part of our lives light in Christ. Such "exposure and illumination" (verse 13) of the darkness can happen in safe, godly, emotionally healthy relationships.
  - a) How can we better do relationships like this in our lives and in our church – so we can walk in the light, and in faith?
  - b) How might God be inviting you to grow in this?

## **REACT**

What do you feel about what is being said in this passage? How does it impact you emotionally?

## **RESPOND**

**Key application** - *Wake up to the light and darkness in your life, and prepare to have it exposed. We can't deal with sin by 'stopping' any more than we can get rid of darkness by turning darkness off. We can't reflect the light of Jesus in the world without being children of light, exposed and transformed before God.*

What does this mean for you? What does it look like in your day to day?

# **PRAY**

*During the week, pray for your own journey with God, for each other, for those around you who don't know Jesus, and for mission in the world.*

# 5 FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT

## **BIG IDEA**

As Spirit-filled people take every opportunity to make wise choices in relationship with others that are shaped by the Lord's will, as revealed in the gospel of Jesus, and so joyfully express this gospel to one another from the overflow of our Spirit-filled hearts (and to the Lord) when you gather together around God's Word.

## **EPHESIANS 5:15-16**

Be very careful, then, how you live - not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil.

## **RELATE**

This is a time to catch up and share life.

**Read Ephesians 5:15-21**

## **REVIEW**

Going around the room, share a reflection on the bible talk/bible reading. What was most helpful to you?

## **REFLECT**

1. Why is it important for us to live wisely, as good stewards of our time and opportunity? What does this look like?
2. Paul contrasts knowing the Lord's will with being foolish (verse 17). This suggests knowing the Lord's will requires biblical wisdom. How can we understand the Lord's will? How might we grow in Biblical wisdom, living in accordance with God's creation design and salvation story, and thus make truly wise decisions about how we spend our minutes and so our lives?
3. As Christians, we know that we have the Spirit (Romans 8:9). Yet Paul suggests, indeed commands: "Be filled with the Spirit" (verse 18). This means there is a daily, ongoing sense in which we are to live in the experience and power of the Spirit. How might we as followers of Jesus keep our lives open to being filled constantly and repeatedly by the Spirit?

4. What do we do when we sing, and why is it important? (verses 18-20). How do you feel about singing – at church, in your family? What habits of the heart and life might you seek to change so you can be a more joyful and enthusiastic participant in the Church’s life of singing together?

*When His Church sings together, voice upon voice like arms linked across a room, and indeed across all the gathering places of His followers around the globe, across history, we are doing what we were designed to enjoy – using our God-given voices to sing praises together to the One who gave us those voices. It expresses what unites us, and it reminds us of our interdependence.*

*Don’t sing primarily because you love singing, or keep quiet because you do not. Sing because you love who made you, and formed you, and enables you to sing.  
(Keith & Kristyn Getty, Sing!, p8, 10)*

## **REACT**

What do you feel about what is being said in this passage? How does it impact you emotionally?

## **RESPOND**

**Key application** - *Be conscious of how you walk into church. Assess if your words and actions in life match the words you proclaim at church.*

What does this mean for you? What does it look like in your day to day?

# **PRAY**

*During the week, pray for your own journey with God, for each other, for those around you who don't know Jesus, and for mission in the world.*

# 6 MARRIAGE

## **BIG IDEA**

How we relate to one another displays whether we are submitting to Christ as Lord. The marriage story at the heart of the Gospel is to profoundly shape all our relationships, but has a particular way of re-creating marriage around the relationship between Jesus and his bride, the church.

## **EPHESIANS 5:21**

Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.

## RELATE

This is a time to catch up and share life.

**Read Ephesians 5:21 – 33**

## REVIEW

Going around the room, share a reflection on the bible talk/bible reading. What was most helpful to you?

## REFLECT

1. How does verse 21 provide a foundation for all our relationships?
2. In the light of verse 21, how significant are the mutual responsibilities and differences of the role of husband and wife? There are lots of people who are single in the world, how does this apply to them?
3. What is the goal of all our relationships?

## REACT

What do you feel about what is being said in this passage? How does it impact you emotionally?

## RESPOND

**Key application** - *Putting others first in all our relationships is the hallmark of the loving example of Jesus. Communities and relationships where this love is at play will be dynamic and others centered rather than static and built on human power. .*

What does this mean for you? What does it look like in your day to day?

# **PRAY**

*During the week, pray for your own journey with God, for each other, for those around you who don't know Jesus, and for mission in the world.*

# 7 FAMILY

## **BIG IDEA**

In the context of the family of God, parents are called by God to the responsibility of disciplining their children.

## **EPHESIANS 6:4**

Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord.

## RELATE

This is a time to catch up and share life.

**Read Ephesians 6:1 – 4**

## REVIEW

Going around the room, share a reflection on the bible talk/bible reading. What was most helpful to you?

## REFLECT

1. How does 5:1 help us understand this section about relationships of parent and child?
2. What picture does verses 1-4 paint of the relationship between parents and children? How can we think about verses 1-4 without it being an authoritarian threat?
3. What should take priority in the training and instruction of children?

## REACT

What do you feel about what is being said in this passage? How does it impact you emotionally?

## RESPOND

**Key application** - *Parents & children should take seriously the call on parents to help their children grow to know and love Jesus, as we should as a church.*

What does this mean for you? What does it look like in your day to day?

# **PRAY**

*During the week, pray for your own journey with God, for each other, for those around you who don't know Jesus, and for mission in the world.*

# 8 WORK

## **BIG IDEA**

Whether we labour as those under authority, or as those who exercise authority, we are to undertake all our labours in service to Jesus – our lord and master.

## **EPHESIANS 6:7**

Serve wholeheartedly, as if you were serving the Lord, not people.

## RELATE

This is a time to catch up and share life.

**Read Ephesians 6:5 – 9**

## REVIEW

Going around the room, share a reflection on the bible talk/bible reading. What was most helpful to you?

## REFLECT

1. What place does Jesus take in the relationship between master and slave/servant/employee?
2. How can masters deal with the special temptations they will experience in the workplace? What has been your experience?
3. How can servants deal with the special temptations they will experience in the workplace? What has been your experience?

## REACT

What do you feel about what is being said in this passage? How does it impact you emotionally?

## RESPOND

**Key application** - *Whatever your position, work with a posture of respect, fear, and sincerity as slaves of Christ. Understand our position in the West often places us as “masters” of others, and therefore make consumer choices that do not lead to the oppression of others.*

What does this mean for you? What does it look like in your day to day?

# **PRAY**

*During the week, pray for your own journey with God, for each other, for those around you who don't know Jesus, and for mission in the world.*

# 9 OUR SPIRITUAL BATTLE

## **BIG IDEA**

Paul once again opens our eyes to the unseen reality of the Christian life; a battle to stand our ground in the victory Jesus has won, against the powers of this present darkness who want to claim us back.

## **EPHESIANS 6:10-11**

Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes.

## **RELATE**

This is a time to catch up and share life.

**Read Ephesians 6:10 – 23**

## **REVIEW**

Going around the room, share a reflection on the bible talk/bible reading. What was most helpful to you?

## **REFLECT**

1. Paul previously wrote about how we were once under the lordship of the “ruler of the kingdom of the air” ie. The Devil (Ephesians 2:2). In Ephesians 4:27 Paul warns about “giving the Devil a foothold”. And here Paul describes the ongoing spiritual battle we face (Ephesians 6:12).
  - a) In what ways are we tempted to underestimate the spiritual battle we face?
  - b) In what ways might we overestimate the spiritual battle we face?
2. While demonic opposition is a real threat, Paul calls us to take strength in God’s “mighty power” (6:10). What do we already know about God’s might and power? (eg. Ephesians 1:19).
3. At what points in our lives should we expect to have the greatest need for the “armour of God”, and his protection? When are you most conscious of your need of this protection?

4. What will we experience when we fail to take up this amour? Will it be obvious or subtle?

## **REACT**

What do you feel about what is being said in this passage? How does it impact you emotionally?

## **RESPOND**

***Key application** - We must always be alert and pray with the Spirit's help for God's family in order to stand firm together, with Jesus.*

What does this mean for you? What does it look like in your day to day?

# **PRAY**

*During the week, pray for your own journey with God, for each other, for those around you who don't know Jesus, and for mission in the world.*



In Christ, we have been united to God and brought into the fellowship of Father, Son, and Spirit. Our connection with God empowers us to be transformed in all of our relationships. We are called to pursue healthy relationships as an expression of our growth to maturity and our participation in the fullness of the Spirit.

**Living  
Church.**

**Ephesians - Walk in Love**

© 2020 Living Church. All rights reserved.

Scripture quotations are from NIV 2011.

All rights reserved. Used by permission.