

ORCHARD ROAD PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

# **BIBLE FOR ALL (BFA) MATERIAL FOR SMALL GROUPS DISCUSSION**

## **Ephesians – Walk Worthy of the Gospel**

### **Sermon Series**

<b>04 July 2021</b>	<b>Ephesians 5:3-14</b>	<b>Walk in the Light</b>
<b>11 July 2021</b>	<b>Ephesians 5:15-33</b>	<b>Walk in the Spirit</b>
<b>18 July 2021</b>	<b>Ephesians 6:1-9</b>	<b>Walk to Honour Christ</b>
<b>25 July 2021</b>	<b>Ephesians 6:10-24</b>	<b>Finally, Stand Firm in His Might</b>



**04 July 2021**

**Ephesians 5:3-14**

**Walk in the Light**

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What is your favourite kind of light (sunlight, yellow light, white light ...) and why is it your favourite?

### **OBSERVATION AND INTERPRETATION**

1. Read Ephesians 5:3-6.

(a) What does Paul say should not be found within God's holy people? What should be found instead? (vv.3-4)

(b) Why does Paul say these things should not be found within God's holy people? (vv.3b, 5-6)

(c) Verse 5 says that "no immoral, impure or greedy person ... has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God." Does this mean that we need to be entirely sinless in order to be saved and to have entrance into God's kingdom?

2. Read Ephesians 5:7-14.

(a) Paul gives three instructions for us in this section – what are these? (vv.7, 8, 11)

(b) What reasons does Paul give for his instructions? (vv.8, 9-10, 12 – notice that the reasons are marked by "for")

(c) What does Paul mean when he says in v.8 that we "were once darkness"? Consider Ephesians 2:5, 4:18 and Romans 6:1-14.

(d) What is the relationship between light and darkness? Correspondingly, what should the relationship between the children of light and the children of darkness be?

3. What is Paul saying in this section? How does it link with what he was saying in Ephesians 4:1-6, 17, 25, 29-32?
4. Paul says that there should be no sexual immorality, impurity, or greed among us. Why do you think he places so much emphasis on these? Is it still relevant today?

### **APPLICATION**

5. What behaviours are common within our society today that would be “improper for God’s holy people”? In what ways do we struggle with replacing these with thanksgiving?
6. We are “children of light”, “light in the Lord” – what does that mean for our involvement with society around us?

### **REFLECTION**

Write down a key lesson and a key verse from this study.

How should we pray and change in response to what we have learnt?

### **DISCIPLESHIP POINTERS**

- We are now children of light, saved out of darkness and disobedience – we should live accordingly.
- Sin is not a joke but has true effect on our identity. If sin is part of our identity, we are not identified with Christ and are subject to God’s wrath.
- As children of light, we should not be associated with sin or defined by sin in any way.
- As children of light, we call people to Christ through our Christ-light. In the light is goodness, righteousness, and truth.

**11 July 2021**

**Ephesians 5:15-33**

**Walk in the Spirit**

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When you became a Christian, what changes did you have to make in the way you lived? Or if you grew up as a Christian, what differences have you observed in the way you have been taught to live versus the way your non-Christian friends lived?

### **OBSERVATION AND INTERPRETATION**

1. Read Ephesians 5:15-17.

(a) What instruction does Paul give for how we should be living? (vv.15-16) What reason does he give for this? (vv.8-14, 16)

(b) What does Paul say wisdom (as opposed to foolishness) is (v.17)? What does that look like for our lives?

2. Read Ephesians 5:18-21.

(a) In v.18, Paul contrasts being drunk on wine and being filled with the Spirit (v.18). In what ways are the two different?

(b) What do our lives look like when we are filled with the Spirit? (vv.19-21)

Ephesians 5:21 introduces Ephesians 5:22-6:9 with the theme of mutual submission.

3. Read Ephesians 5:21-33.

(a) What does Paul say that wives and husbands should do respectively? (vv.22, 24, 25, 33)

(b) What does it mean to submit to the Lord (v.22, 24) and to love as Christ loved the church (vv.25, 29)?

(c) What is the significance of a husband and wife becoming one flesh? (vv.31-32, Gen 2:24)

(d) Consider the relationship between husband and wife – in what way(s) does Paul say it mirrors the relationship between Christ and the church (vv.22-24, 25-27, 29)? In what way(s) should the relationship between husband and wife mirror the relationship between Christ and the church?

(e) At the time Paul wrote Ephesians, women in general were seen as “lesser” beings without full rights in society – often required to submit to their brutal non-loving husbands. But they were now “equal” in Christ. How does this help you understand why Paul has a much longer instruction for husbands? What would he be saying to married couples today?

4. Paul has repeatedly emphasised “not this, but that” from Ephesians 4:17-5:33. What are the “do’s” and “don’ts” that Paul has said? What picture of Christian discipleship does he paint?

5. At the time Paul wrote Ephesians, women in general were seen as “lesser” beings without full rights in society. How does this help you to understand why Paul spends 3 verses instructing the women but 6 verses instructing the men?

## **APPLICATION**

6. Is Christian discipleship an easy path to follow? What challenges you most about the picture of Christian discipleship painted by Paul?

## **REFLECTION**

Write down a key lesson and a key verse from this study.

How should we pray and change in response to what we have learnt?

## **DISCIPLESHIP POINTERS**

- Christian discipleship isn't simply a once-for-all choice to follow Jesus: it is a continuous moment-by-moment, daily choice to put aside our previous way of living (the world's way of living) and walk in God's way of living.
- God has given us the gift of the Holy Spirit – we have been given the power to live in God's way of living. We can live full of thanksgiving, joy and love, reflecting Christ in all of our lives.
- Mutual submission is a mark of our Christian discipleship, showing our love for each other as we place each other's needs above our own, so that each member of Christ's body works for the overall benefit of the body.
- Marriage points to the relationship between Christ and the Church – marriage is not about fulfilling our personal needs, but serving each other in Christ so that ultimately the whole Church is presented to Christ as a perfect Bride, holy and blameless in every way.

18 July 2021

Ephesians 6:1-9

Walk to Honour Christ

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When is it hardest for you to place someone else's wishes ahead of your own? Why?

### OBSERVATION AND INTERPRETATION

1. Read Ephesians 6:1-4.

(a) What should children do, and why? (vv.1-3)

(b) How are parents to raise their children? What is surprising to you here (v.4)? (Parents: ask your children how they would like you to treat them, and if there are any ways in which you exasperate them.)

(c) How do you see mutual submission (Eph 5:21) continuing to be worked out in this passage?

2. Read Ephesians 6:5-9.

(a) What should slaves do, and how should they do it? (vv.5-7)

(b) Who are slaves serving when they serve their masters (v.6)? What difference does that make?

(c) How should masters treat their slaves (v.9a)? Why is this surprising?

(d) What reason does Paul give for these instructions? (vv. 8, 9b)

3. How does the theme "for we are members of his body" run throughout this whole section on new relationships (Eph 5:21-6:9)?

4. Ephesians 5:22-6:9 gives us three specific contexts in Ephesus in which mutual submission out of reverence to Christ is worked out. If Paul were to write similar instructions to us in Singapore today, what would he be writing?

## **APPLICATION**

5. Consider the different types of relationships you have. Which of these is the hardest for you in terms of submission to the other person? Why is it difficult?
  
6. Pray for each other as each of us commit to honouring Christ through mutual submission. Share your needs in this area for prayer.

## **REFLECTION**

Write down a key lesson and a key verse from this study.

How should we pray and change in response to what we have learnt?

## **DISCIPLESHIP POINTERS**

- Mutual submission is a mark of our Christian discipleship, showing our love for each other as we place each other's needs above our own, so that each member of Christ's body works for the overall benefit of the body.
- We honour Christ by living out mutual submission in our everyday contexts, pointing the world to Christ by showing them how Christian love is expressed.
- The defining characteristic of our relationships is no longer about authority and power, but about love and mutual service.
- Our God is our Father and our Master – our obedience and submission to earthly fathers and masters is a result of our obedience and submission to God.

**25 July 2021**

**Ephesians 6:10-24**

**Finally, Stand Firm in His Might**

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What would you bring with you into a fight for your life?

### **OBSERVATION AND INTERPRETATION**

1. Read Ephesians 6:10-13.
  - (a) Paul tells the Ephesians to “be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power.” According to Paul, what does this mean? (v.11)
  
  - (b) Why is the armour of God essential? (vv.12-13)
  
2. Paul gives seven instructions about spiritual warfare in Ephesians 6:14-20.
  - (a) What are these instructions?
  
  - (b) Romans 13:12, 14 speak of putting on the armour of light and clothing ourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ. How does this change your understanding of the armour of God?
  
  - (c) How does each piece of armour help us in our daily spiritual battles?
  
  - (d) What role does prayer play in spiritual warfare? What/who should we be praying for?
  
  - (e) Who is the primary actor in vv.17-20, in contrast to vv.14-16? Consider also how this expands on Ephesians 6:10.
  
3. Read Ephesians 6:21-24.
  - (a) What do Paul’s final instructions reveal about his relationship with the Ephesians?
  
  - (b) Ephesians begins with greetings of grace and peace (Eph 1:2) and ends with greetings of grace and peace (Eph 6:23-24). Why are these qualities so important to Paul in this letter?

4. How does Ephesians 6:10-20 summarise Paul's instruction in Ephesians? (Hint: use the armour pieces as your framework.)

## **APPLICATION**

5. How has your view on Christian community been influenced by studying Ephesians?

## **REFLECTION**

Write down a key lesson and a key verse from this study.

How should we pray and change in response to what we have learnt?

## **DISCIPLESHIP POINTERS**

- All the instructions in this passage are given to the church as a collective – it is the church as a whole which Paul is saying must be strong in God, must stand firm in obedience, and which must be equipped by God for the spiritual battle.
- We are daily involved in a spiritual battle against the devil – but God's power is greater than the devil's power. We put on the armour of God because we cannot fight spiritual battles by our own power, but only by God's power.
- Each day of Christian living is a spiritual battle for which we need to actively obey God in our thoughts and actions, exercising our faith, and being ready to speak the gospel.
- Each day of Christian living is a spiritual battle in which God protects us and reminds us through His Word that He is faithful and powerful and has given us a sure hope of salvation.
- Prayer according to the Spirit holds our Christian life together – prayer is how we rely on God's power rather than our own.
- As members of one Body with one Armour, we are not only concerned for ourselves in the battle but for each other.