

COMMUNITY GROUP WEEKLY DISCUSSION GUIDE
WEEK OF JULY 27, 2009

THIS WEEK'S FOCUS
Intentional Living

"Like begets like. The product comes from the producer. The progeny recapitulates the ontogeny. Only the Holy Spirit can conceive and bear the fruit of the Spirit. We can be skilled preachers without the Spirit. We can be theological geniuses after the flesh. We can be silver-tongued orators apart from grace. But the only source of the fruit of the Spirit is the work of the Holy Spirit within us."

–R.C. Sproul, *The Mystery of the Holy Spirit*

"For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit. For to set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace. For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit to God's law, indeed it cannot."

Romans 8:5-7

THIS WEEK'S TEXT
Ephesians 5:15-21

RELATED TEXTS TO EXPLORE

1 Cor 1, 14; Rom 12:2; 1 Thes 4, 5; Titus 1:6; 1 Pet 4:4; Acts 16; Col 3:16; Jam 1, 5:13; Heb 13; Phil 2

STUDY GUIDE

- **What observations can be made about:**
 - The opening instruction in this passage (especially the first two words)
 - The duration and purpose of our "time"
 - The antithesis of "foolishness"
 - The state of being "drunk with wine"
 - The different elements of how to address another believer
 - The instruction to give thanks
 - The consequence of our reverence for Christ

- **What does each of these things mean? What did they mean for the church at Ephesus then, what do they mean for us now?**

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

Use any or as many of these questions as will be helpful for your discussion.

- What has God spoken to you about this week regarding the sermon or passage?
- What does this passage reveal to us about Jesus?
- How does this passage enhance our understanding of the Gospel?
- What does this text mean for us as a community? Individually? How does it free us to be the people God intends for us to be?
- How do we need to live out the meaning of this text in our city?
- In what ways are you consistently ignoring, grieving or quenching the Spirit?
- Do you agree with the statement that "The Spirit's presence within us is better than Jesus' presence with us"? Why or why not. Consider John 6:35-36
- How much of the abundant life that Jesus talked about do you think you've forfeited by refusing to respond to the Spirit's promptings and leadings? Did the stories about Neil McClendon or Nathan Barlow give you any aspiration to experience more abundant life? If so, what will that look like for you?

"The indwelling of Christ is not like that of a man who abides in a house and is in no sense identified with it. No, His indwelling is a possession of our hearts that is truly divine, quickening, and penetrating their inmost being with His life."

-Andrew Murray

MEMORY VERSES

Last Week: Eph 5: 15-17

This Week: Eph 5: 15-17

PRAYER FOCUS

For the Vision and Direction of the church (July):

Apostles Church wants to be a people who experience life-change together. We will seek to become more like Jesus as we experience the transforming grace and power of His Spirit.

In Response to the Text:

- Praising God for his infinite existence as three persons
- Praising the Holy Spirit for His indwelling and powerful presence
- Confessing the ways we've ignored, grieved and quenched the Spirit
- Confessing our refusal to pursue walking in step with the Spirit
- Thanking Jesus for leaving for us this counselor, advocate and helper who is the Spirit
- Thanking God for sealing us for salvation by the Spirit
- Asking the Spirit to fill us and use us in greater ways, that we would experience more of God and be used in greater ways by God
- Asking God to hear the Spirit's prayer on our behalf (Rom 8) and teach us to pray according to the Spirit

FURTHER RESOURCES FOR STUDY AND PREPARATION

- *Confessions* – St. Augustine
- *The Pursuit of God* – A.W. Tozer
- *The Mystery of The Holy Spirit* – R.C. Sproul
- *Experiencing the Holy Spirit* – Andrew Murray
- *The Holy Spirit* – Sinclair B. Ferguson
- <http://www.desiringgod.org/ResourceLibrary/Sermons/ByTopic/39/>

NEXT WEEK'S TEXT

Ephesians 6:5-9 ** (We will be skipping ahead here and coming back to finish Chapter 5 in a few weeks)**