

COMMUNITY GROUP WEEKLY DISCUSSION GUIDE
WEEK OF JULY 6, 2009

THIS WEEK'S FOCUS
Life in Community

"Every human wish dream that is injected into the Christian community is a hindrance to genuine community and must be banished if genuine community is to survive. He who loves his dream of a community more than the Christian community itself becomes a destroyer of the latter, even though his personal intentions may be ever so honest and earnest and sacrificial."

–Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Life Together*

"Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful. And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near."

Hebrews 10:23-25

THIS WEEK'S TEXT
Ephesians 4:25-5:2

RELATED TEXTS TO EXPLORE

Zech 8:16; Col 3, 4:6 Ps 37:8; James 4:7; Acts 20:35; Gal 6:10; Pr 21:26; Mt 6:14, 12:34; John 13:34
Rom 4, 8; Hebrews

STUDY GUIDE

- **What observations can be made about:**
 - What is to be put off
 - Why the truth should be spoken
 - The conditions and limits of righteous anger
 - The conditions of unrighteous anger and spiritual implications
 - The motivation for doing honest work
 - The motivation for speaking gracious rather than corrupt words
 - What things grieve the Spirit of God
 - The function of the Holy Spirit in redemption
 - How Christians should treat one another (as well as non-Christians)
 - Why and how to imitate God
 - Jesus' sacrifice to God

- **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 living honestly and vulnerably with others? Who has access to your life and permission to hold you accountable?
- How are you sharing what you earn with those in need? What is your motivation for working?
- In what ways are you speaking uplifting things to people in order to strengthen them?
- Who do you need to repent to and ask forgiveness of this week? Who do you need to forgive?
- Are you living "missionally"? How can you improve your outward focus?
- What will it look like for you to live in more sincere, transparent, selfless Christian community?

"On innumerable occasions a whole Christian community has been shattered because it has lived on the basis of a wishful image."

-Dietrich Bonhoeffer

MEMORY VERSES

Last Week: Eph 4:22-24

This Week: Eph 4:29

PRAYER FOCUS

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

Apostles Church wants to be a people who intentionally connect others to Jesus. We will authentically, compassionately and intelligently dialogue with the culture about the Gospel of Jesus.

In Response to the Text:

- Praising God for forgiving us in Christ
- Praising Jesus for being the offering and sacrifice for our sins
- Confessing our lies, anger, thieving, filthy and foolish talk
- Confessing our bitterness, grumbling, slander, gossip and malice
- Thanking the Holy Spirit for sealing us for redemption
- Thanking God for loving us as dear children and adopting us in Christ
- Asking God to grant us forgiving, tender hearts, diligent hands, and gracious tongues
- Asking God to empower us by his Holy Spirit that we may imitate Him, walking in love, and thereby glorify Jesus Christ in His Church

FURTHER RESOURCES FOR STUDY AND PREPARATION

- *Life Together*– Dietrich Bonhoeffer
- *The Radical Reformation* – Mark Driscoll
- *The Pursuit of God*– A.W. Tozer
- *To Live in Peace* – Mark Gornik
- *Let Justice Roll Down* – John Perkins
- *Irresistible Revolution* – Shane Claiborne

NEXT WEEK'S TEXT

Ephesians 5:3-14