

November 5 - Ephesians 5:3-20

Opening

What is one low (negative thing) that happened to you this past week? What is one high (positive thing)? If you're meeting with a group, take turns sharing them with one another, or write them down.

Where have you seen the Holy Spirit at work in your life over the past week?

Name a time when you have made the most of an opportunity that came your way.

Prepare

Spend a minute in silence to center yourself and prepare to hear God's Word.

Read

Read Ephesians 5:3-20 twice. If you are in a group, have two people read it, one after the other, with a brief silence in between, and after the second reading. As you read and/or listen, look for a word or a phrase that catches your eye or moves your heart. Circle it or jot it down. Linger over it and give it your attention. If you are in a group, take turns sharing your word or phrase and what it means to you or what the Lord might be saying to you through it.

Let there be no sexual immorality, impurity, or greed among you. Such sins have no place among God's people. Obscene stories, foolish talk, and coarse jokes-- these are not for you. Instead, let there be thankfulness to God. You can be sure that no immoral, impure, or greedy person will inherit the Kingdom of Christ and of God. For a greedy person is an idolater, worshiping the things of this world. Don't be fooled by those who try to excuse these sins, for the anger of God will fall on all who disobey him. Don't participate in the things these people do. For once you were full of darkness, but now you have light from the Lord. So live as people of light! For this light within you produces only what is good and right and true. Carefully determine what pleases the Lord. Take no part in the worthless deeds of evil and darkness; instead, expose them. It is shameful even to talk about the things that ungodly people do in secret. But their evil intentions will be exposed when the light shines on them, for the light makes everything visible. This is why it is said, "Awake, O sleeper, rise up from the dead, and Christ will give you light." So be careful how you live. Don't live like fools, but like those who are wise. Make the most of every opportunity in these evil days. Don't act thoughtlessly, but understand what the Lord wants you to do. Don't be drunk with wine, because that will ruin your life. Instead, be filled with the Holy Spirit, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs among yourselves, and making music to the Lord in your hearts. And give thanks for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Reflect

How have you experienced greed (overconsumption, “retail therapy,” selfishness) as an idol?

Do you know someone who lives as a person of light? How do you know this about them?

Reflect on an experience from your past or present where it was difficult to know what was pleasing to the Lord, and you had to “carefully determine” it.

In what areas of your life are you prone to acting thoughtlessly, or without care for the ways in which your life/actions affects others?

Pray

Spend time in prayer for yourself and others. If you are meeting in a group, share prayer requests and pray for one another.

Practice

Be filled with the Holy Spirit, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs among yourselves, and making music to the Lord in your hearts...

Each day this week, invite the Spirit's presence and make music. Here are some ideas to try:

Pray this prayer first thing each morning: *Come, Holy Spirit.*

Sing or practice your instrument as if in the presence of Jesus.

Sing the doxology before eating a meal.

Praise God from whom all blessings flow; praise God all creatures here below; praise God above, ye heavenly host; praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

Pick a Taize song and sing/listen to it each day : *Kyrie Eleison; Bless the Lord, My Soul; Wait for the Lord; In God Alone; The Lord is My Song/O Lord, Hear My Prayer; Come and Fill; In the Lord (I'll Be Ever Thankful); Live in Charity* (All of these can be found on youtube or spotify)

Closing blessing

Awake, O sleeper, rise up from the dead, and Christ will give you light!