

# EPHESIANS

## Bible Study 4:17-5:21

Questions will be posed and space will be allowed for a written response. Make every effort to answer the questions before looking below for the answer. **The answers will be in bold print at the end of the “questions” section.**

Living as Children of Light - Ephesians – 4:1-17-5:21:

1. Read verses 17-19 and list the ways in which the Ephesians' are no longer supposed to live.
2. Read verses 20-24 and list the reasons that the Ephesians should no longer do the things mentioned in verses 17-19.
3. Read 4:25-5:21 and list the things they are now to do as Christians. Apply these to your own life.
4. What is your favorite verse/phrase in this section?

### **Some Answers to the above Questions:**

1. **V – 17 “futility of their thinking”** The inner life of natural man, his thinking, willing, and desiring, is vain, useless, and purposeless. No unbeliever can have a conception of real moral values, for his mind is centered in nothingness.

**V -18 “darkened in their understanding”** Darkened suggests a blurring of moral distinctions. They cannot distinguish between good and evil. Worst of all they are ignorant of salvation in Christ.

**V – 18 “Separated from the life of God”** It means to not be allowed to participate in God's kingdom. Natural man does not have a spark of fear of God, of love for or trust in God.

**V – 18 “because of ignorance”** Man is by nature totally blind, apathetic and insensible to all that is noble, sublime and divine.

**V – 18 “hardening of their hearts”** The word translated “hardened” here, carries the picture of a rock harder than marble. With such a hardened heart, God cannot get through to us. The result is a daily life that will not be touched by God's convicting law or his appeals of love.

**V – 19 “lost all sensitivity”** What is meant is that they are no longer sensitive to the prodding of conscience.

**V – 19 “indulge in every kind of impurity”** They have willingly yielded themselves, to shameless, outrageous sensuality, and reckless, unbridled behavior. They

make it their business to indulge in every form of uncleanness, greed or covetousness.

V – 19 “continual lust” In their moral apathy they have lost all sense of chastity and modesty. The Gentiles have surrendered themselves to an excessive practice of every kind of impurity. This includes extreme desire to amass wealth.

2. V – 20 “You” is emphatic. The Ephesian Christians learned the glorious news of their salvation through Christ. They could now not continue in the sins which characterized the Gentiles. Joseph’s words (Gen. 39:9) in resisting Potiphar’s wife, illustrate how the believer’s new self can and should resist the temptations of the old self.

Genesis 39:9 “How then could I do such a wicked thing and sin against God?”

V – 21 The Ephesians received thorough instruction about Christ. The word “truth” means absolute truth. This truth is closely connected to Jesus and is always the same because Jesus does not change. It was the truth about their salvation. We have that same truth in our Scriptures.

V – 22 Paul here refers to the way his readers were before their conversion. Their former lifestyles were apart from Christ. Christians must deal every day with their old selves. For example, the sight and taste of alcohol can continue to haunt a recovering alcoholic committed to sobriety.

V -23 “Attitude” comes from the Greek word “spirit.” Our attitude is shaped by what is in our mind. The mind is the source of the thoughts which determine the actions. Renew the thoughts and the actions will also be renewed. The inmost renewal should be continual, lasting, so that the old essence does not again win room.

V – 24 The “new man” is created by spiritual regeneration. It is created in conformity to the image of God. He is not someone the Christian has brought into being. He has been brought into being by God’s almighty, creative power. Unfortunately, this restoration will not be complete here on earth, because we Christians all too often succumb to temptation, but it is a start.

3. V – 25 Get rid of “falsehood.” This includes outright untruths and subtle half-truths. There are the lies of silence and denial. Distrust can ruin a fellowship of Christians.

V – 25 “Speak truthfully.” The world is full of subliminal advertising, half-truths, and political expediency. Paul’s challenge is for truthfulness in all relationships. This we are to do with fellow Christians.

V – 26 Anger is not forbidden in the Scriptures. Christians often have a righteous anger at sin, sickness and injustice. What is forbidden, however, is to let anger carry us into sinful action or to allow anger to go unresolved, leading to bitterness and resentment.

**V – 27 Sometimes we make it easy for the devil. We put ourselves into situations where sin is more likely. Give the devil an inch, and he will take a mile.**

**V – 28 In the ancient world theft was a constant evil. For some it was their only source of income. Christianity is never just a call to give up something but rather a call to replace evil with good.**

**V – 29 The Greek, here means “rotten.” We would say “foul talk.” This implies much more than filthy language. The idea is any kind of talk which lowers the moral tone of the community.**

**The Christian not only stops saying unwholesome things; he also begins to say things that will help build others up.**

**V – 30 The Holy Spirit is grieved when people choose to deny Jesus Christ. This also happens when Christians choose to disregard or disobey the Spirit’s counsel in the Word. Most of us can recall a time from our childhood or teenage years when we did something very wrong. With the memory of the offense comes the recollection of our parents’ faces as we looked at them with our guilt. They were grieved, terribly disappointed in us. One does not forget that look. This is how the Holy Spirit must feel and when He is grieved by our sin.**

**The Holy Spirit is a seal which has been impressed upon us in our baptism. It is to reassure us that we belong to God, and preserves us for our destination, unto the day of redemption. It is then when we shall be delivered from all evil, from all corruption, also from our old man.**

**V – 31 To get “rid of” means to remove and take away. It can also mean to get rid of sin by repentance. Repentance means a change from what has been to something new and more positive.**

**V – 32 These behaviors are the opposite of the negative qualities of v. 31.**

**V – 1 Our word mimic comes from the word “imitator.” Children (including children of God) learn by mimicking their parents. God’s loving his children teaches them to love.**

**V – 2 To “live a life of love,” means to let your ordinary life be spent in an atmosphere of love. Drink it in from heaven, as plants drink in the sunshine. Then love will radiate forth from eyes and face and your hands and feet will be active in the service of God and fellowman.**

**V – 3 To not even have a “hint of sexual immorality,” means that they are not only to avoid doing evil, but they are to avoid even the appearance of doing evil.**

**V – 4 The context and the word “obscenity” indicate that it is “obscenity, foolish talk, or coarse joking.” It is not humor as such but dirty jokes and the like that are out of place.**

**In the context of marriage, sex is a blessed gift from God. Improper talk is sexual desire is displaced by thanksgiving for God’s gifts.**

**V – 5 This is true simply because continually immoral, impure, and greedy people have declared their god – themselves.**

**V – 6 Their Gentile contemporaries sought to convince the Christians that the things mentioned in v.3 and 5 were adiaphora (neither right nor wrong), therefore these activities were innocent, harmless pleasures and permissible enjoyments.**

**V – 7 To be “partners” meant that they were not to participate in the sinful life-style of unbelievers.**

**V – 8 The Ephesians had been the darkness that had misled others to practice and even enjoy gross immorality and wickedness.**

**The Ephesians were not only enlightened by knowing Christ; they themselves have become light. Not only were they influenced by his gospel, but they themselves are now examples of the gospel.**

**V – 9 “Fruit of the light” is light that is productive (consider the effect of light on plant growth). Those who live in God’s light produce the fruit of moral and ethical character (cf. Gal 5:22–23).**

**V – 10 The phrase “find out” in the Greek means “to approve after examination.” In every case Christians are to examine carefully and exactly what is pleasing to the Lord to whom they belong.**

**V – 11 “Expose” is to bring to light, to reveal hidden things. We do this by comparing everything to Scripture.**

**V -12 People hide such things because they are a disgrace to themselves. Paul is speaking of a constant way of life.**

**V – 13 By the repetition of phrase “exposed by the light,” Paul seems to be stressing the all-pervasive nature of the light of God and its inevitable effect.**

**V – 14 This verse means the Ephesian Christian will be enveloped by the rays of Christ, the Sun of salvation. This promise of grace is that which awakens the sinner from sleep and death. It also grants him power that makes him willing to obey the call of God.**

**V – 15 The RSV says: “Look carefully then how you walk.” They are not to drift along without forethought and plan. The Ephesian Christians are to give serious thought upon the way and means they live their lives. They are to study how they may help to build the Kingdom of God and advance the cause of Christ.**

**V – 16 All periods of life on earth are filled with evil. Christians are to be ready for every opportunity to witness. The foolish person has no strategy for life and misses opportunities to live for God in an evil environment.**

**“Redeeming the time,” means to take advantage of the right moment. He is to grasp the opportunity to approach opportunely get a hearing for the divine Word. Then he will do some good work and accomplish something for the Lord.**

**V – 17 The foolish person not only misses opportunities to make wise use of time. He does not understand what God’s purposes are for mankind and for Christians.**

**V – 18 “Do not get drunk ...” means an “excess” or extreme indulgence in sensual pleasures.**

**To “be filled with the Spirit,” means to repeatedly to worship, render service and give testimony. The Greek present tense is used to indicate that the filling of the Spirit is not a once-for-all experience.**

**V – 19 Paul does not specify where or how this activity is to occur. He does seem to imply that a public worship life with liturgical forms was being developed and used (1 Cor. 14:26.)**

**V – 20 “Always giving thanks,” means to have a thankful life-style. It is a good way to keep the heart in good tone. The Christian will always find some cause for thanksgiving.**

**V – 21 “Submit” means taking one’s proper role in God’s order and laying aside one’s selfish interests (Gal. 5:13). There is to be no rivalry, no self-exaltation, and no divisive pride to interfere. Each person is to subject himself, voluntarily, freely the service of others, especially to fellow Christians.**

**Reverence for Christ must be our motivating force. Otherwise we will find the responsibilities irksome and restrictive.**