

LG | Leader

[Ephesians 4:31-32]

WARM-UP (10 mins)

God's word is like oxygen to our souls. We desperately need it. Take a moment to pray for spiritual awakening in these next moments as we encounter His word.

- After hearing the sermon from Sunday, what most resonated with you? What were the takeaways for your family as a whole?
- In light of Sunday's message, have you resolved to make any life changes?

ILLUMINATE (40 mins)

Open your Bibles to the primary text.

1. Read chapter 4. Let's gain some context for this passage. Who is the author and who is the audience? What genre of literature is this? Who recalls the theme and purpose of Ephesians?
Paul is the author of the book of Ephesians as evidenced by the Greeting. The genre of literature is New Testament epistle (letter). Paul was arrested in Jerusalem, sent to Rome and writing this letter from a Roman prison. Since this letter is not addressed to one person, it is likely that it was circulated amongst the churches located in Ephesus that Paul had planted several years earlier (see Acts 19).
2. Paul makes a significant shift in chapter 4, what did he focus on in chapters 1-3 and what is he directing his attention to now?
Paul's emphasis in chapters 1-3 is the Gospel Story, emphasizing how Christ reconciled all creation to Himself and to God. In the remaining chapters, he begins to explain how we are to live new lives that model Christ.
3. Looking at verse 31, why do you think bitterness is listed first among these sins?
It is likely that Paul listed bitterness first because bitterness gives way to the other sins that follow in this text. Bitterness is one of the chief indicators of an unregenerate heart. Bitterness is a root that must be dealt with in order for Christ to have occupancy in our lives.

4. Paul calls us to put away bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, slander and malice. How does the Bible teach us to put these things away?

Repentance and confession. Confessing to Lord, confessing to others and turning away from your sinful ways is the remedy to “putting sins away.” Proverbs 28:13 says, “Whoever conceals his transgressions will not prosper, but he who confesses and forsakes them will obtain mercy.”

5. In chapter 5:1-2, Paul synthesizes chapter 4 and expresses what he desires for the Ephesians. What two action items does he give us? [Look for verbs and similes]

Chapter 5 begins with “therefore,” which means the author has something to say about the previous chapter. He gives us these commands:

Be imitators of God – **AS** beloved children

Walk in love – **AS** Christ loved us and gave himself up

6. Many of the sins listed in this text are manifested through the tongue. What does the Bible say about the tongue? What warnings does it provide for us? Let’s recall these passages together.

[Great Place to start: Read James 3 aloud together]

7. In light of this text, how is your attitude? If you are fully transparent with yourself and others, what needs to change in your life? Would others describe you as tenderhearted?

[Opportunity to allow group to self-reflect and pray over these things before the Lord]

PRAY

Use this time to pray specifically. Pray for the needs of others; locally and abroad.