

# DISCIPLESHIP GROUPS

*Our Mission: Reaching Out to Leaders Who Can Change the World.*

May 2013

## *Ephesians: God's Plan For His Church*

### **Lesson #8: Living As Children of Light**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

Do you think the Boston Marathon bombers were corrupted by their environment or their own minds?

#### **EXPLORATION**

Read Ephesians 4:17-32

*Note: The church at Ephesus was a small island of despised people in a giant cesspool of wickedness. Most of the believers had themselves once been a part of that paganism. They frequently passed by places where they once caroused and ran into friends with whom they once indulged in debauchery. They faced continual temptations to revert to the old ways, and the apostle therefore admonished them to resist.<sup>1</sup>*

1. In what ways were the Ephesians instructed to *not* live as the Gentiles do? Rom 1:21
2. How does one get a hardened heart? v. 18 2 Cor 3:14; Heb 3:7-13; Titus 1:15 What is the result?
3. According to verses 17-19, how do the mind, heart and conscience influence non-believers?
4. Why is the condition described in verse 19 so dangerous?
5. How does Paul contrast how the Ephesians believers and Gentiles were taught? How is this applicable to us today? Vv 20-21
6. How do you “put off” and “put on”? vv 22, 24, 25

*Note: Since the new self is created, it cannot refer to the indwelling Christ, but rather to the kind of person God produces in the new believer (sanctification). This is a new way of life that one not only “puts on” positionally at conversion (Col 3:9-10) but is also urged to “put on” experientially as a Christian (Rom 6:12-14). Christians don't lose their emotions at conversion, but their emotions can (should) become purified.*

7. How can the Holy Spirit be “hurt”? (v. 30)
8. What *positive* commands did Paul give? (v. 32)
9. Paul is saying that since Christians and unbelievers think differently they are to act differently. Why are social statistics for things like divorce, teen pregnancy, drug abuse etc. no different for church members?

#### **APPLICATION**

What step(s) can you take this week to change an old pattern of behavior that is harmful to your spiritual growth?

*The Holy Spirit is grieved not only because our conduct tarnishes God's good name, but also because He loves us and deeply desires to reward us, bless us, and see good fruit produced in and through us—not discipline us. He knows that sin injures us and saddles our lives with negative consequences. So how can we avoid grieving the Holy Spirit? We can choose to keep God's commandments and to lead a disciplined life by depending on the power of the Spirit. When we sin, we confess the sin immediately and repent of it, changing our minds and our behavior to conform to God's Word. As we ask the Holy Spirit to lead us and help us every day, we gain His help to enjoy a successful Christian walk. He keeps our footing sure.<sup>2</sup>*

<sup>1</sup> MacArthur, J. F., Jr. (1986). *Ephesians*. MacArthur New Testament Commentary (166). Chicago: Moody Press.

<sup>2</sup> Stanley, C. F. (2005). *The Charles F. Stanley life principles Bible: New King James Version* (Eph 4:30). Nashville, TN: Nelson Bibles.