**Scripture and Background Information for November 17-23**

***Made for More***

During this series, we are looking through the book of Ephesians. We’ll discover that although our childhood desire to be significant or important may have been misplaced, it was never intended to be *re*placed. Far from just the immature dream of a childlike mind, your Life, purpose, and significance may be *bigger*and *nearer*than you ever dreamed.

To prepare for your group discussion each week**,** group members should use the **Community Group Discussion Guide** to complete the **GOD’S WORDS** and **MY WORDS** columns using the scriptures at the bottom of this page.

**Background for Ephesians 5:1-2, 14-17**

Ephesians is addressed to a group of believers who are indescribably rich in Jesus Christ but are not realizing their full potential in Christ. In many ways, they are living in spiritual poverty when they have the ability to live as those with amazing wealth. Paul describes this small church’s wealth by reminding them of their adoption, acceptance, redemption, forgiveness, wisdom, inheritance, the seal of the Holy Spirit, life, grace, citizenship, and every spiritual blessing. As Paul describes these benefits given to the believer, he instructs them in how to live out their full potential.

In Ephesians 5:1-2, 14-17, reminds the Ephesians of their responsibility. Throughout the letter, Paul has been reminding them and us of all of the blessings we find in Christ. In verses 1 and 2, Paul says “Therefore…” considering everything he has been saying throughout the whole letter. His message is simple. We aren’t called to do these things to get proper standing with God; however, we are called to do these things because of our standing freely given us in Jesus Christ. Out of the overflow of what Christ has done, we choose to live a life that is alive. We choose to live a life that is alive and not dead, wise and not unwise, using our time and not wasting time, and by doing the will of God and not being foolish.

\*”a fragrant offering” v2- This phrase can sound bizarre to modern ears, but to a culture familiar with sacrifices commonly offered to God, this was meant to communicate a simple idea—that is, Christ’s sacrifice on the cross was completely sufficient and totally pleasing to God in His perfect and holy justice.

\*”the days are evil” v16- Paul is referring to the fact that we are living in a broken world. A world that we inherited from the fall recorded in Genesis 3 when man first decided that he knew better than an all-knowing God. Paul reminds the Ephesians that this is still true—that just as evil entered into the world through one man (Adam) long ago, evil still runs rampant as people everywhere, every day choose evil rather than God’s best for them.

**Scriptures for the upcoming weeks:**

**November 24 Ephesians 6:10-12, 18-20**

**December 1 Luke 10:1-11; 17-21**

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**One Next Step**

*“Be very careful, then, how you live... making the most of every opportunity” Ephesians 5:15-16*

**What one step will I take *this week* for someone who needs to know the love of Christ?**

**Begin with Prayer:**

Fill in your Block Map and pray each day for a different neighbor.

Do a prayer-walk in your neighborhood or somewhere else that you go frequently.

Skip one meal and use the time to pray for friends or family who don’t know Jesus.

Pray for an “Unreached People Group” without access to the gospel. [Joshuaproject.net/pray](https://joshuaproject.net/pray)

**Listen:**

When you see a neighbor, walk over and ask a question instead of just giving a friendly wave.

Ask a neighbor or co-worker how you can pray for them.

Ask a neighbor or co-worker a question about their stresses or challenges, or about their spiritual story.

**Eat:**

Of the 21 meals that you will eat this week, invite a co-worker or neighbor to join you for one.

Set a date for a Firepit Party to invite neighbors to roast marshmallows or to make s’mores.

On your way to work pick up a craft coffee for your co-worker and then ask them about life.

**Serve:**

Meet a need for a neighbor or co-worker.

Write an encouraging note or make a meal for someone who is going through a difficult time.

Do an act of kindness for someone who you want to know better.

Attend the mission team interest meeting or fill out the interest card today.

**Share:**

Share with someone a lesson that God is teaching you about a common life challenge.

Share with someone a way that your faith has shaped your life.

Share with someone how you discovered God’s grace and forgiveness.