

Reading Guide for Ephesians 5:1-21

Eph 5:1-21 MSG Watch what God does, and then you do it, like children who learn proper behavior from their parents. 2 Mostly what God does is love you. Keep company with him and learn a life of love. Observe how Christ loved us. His love was not cautious but extravagant. He didn't love in order to get something from us but to give everything of himself to us. Love like that. 3 Don't allow love to turn into lust, setting off a downhill slide into sexual promiscuity, filthy practices, or bullying greed. 4 Though some tongues just love the taste of gossip, Christians have better uses for language than that. Don't talk dirty or silly. That kind of talk doesn't fit our style. Thanksgiving is our dialect. 5 You can be sure that using people or religion or things just for what you can get out of them--the usual variations on idolatry--will get you nowhere, and certainly nowhere near the kingdom of Christ, the kingdom of God. 6 Don't let yourselves get taken in by religious smooth talk. God gets furious with people who are full of religious sales talk but want nothing to do with him. 7 Don't even hang around people like that. 8 You groped your way through that murk once, but no longer. You're out in the open now. The bright light of Christ makes your way plain. So no more stumbling around. Get on with it! 9 The good, the right, the true--these are the actions appropriate for daylight hours. 10 Figure out what will please Christ, and then do it. 11 Don't waste your time on useless work, mere busywork, and the barren pursuits of darkness. Expose these things for the sham they are. 12 It's a scandal when people waste their lives on things they must do in the darkness where no one will see. 13 Rip the cover off those frauds and see how attractive they look in the light of Christ. 14 Wake up from your sleep, Climb out of your coffins; Christ will show you the light! 15 So watch your step. Use your head. 16 Make the most of every chance you get. These are desperate times! 17 Don't live carelessly, unthinkingly. Make sure you understand what the Master wants. 18 Don't drink too much wine. That cheapens your life. Drink the Spirit of God, huge draughts of him. 19 Sing hymns instead of drinking songs! Sing songs from your heart to Christ. 20 Sing praises over everything, any excuse for a song to God the Father in the name of our Master, Jesus Christ. 21 Out of respect for Christ, be courteously reverent to one another.

1. Read Eph 4:32 to understand the context of 5:1. Chapter 4 told us what not to do and Chapter 5 begins to teach what we should do! What is your key thought or takeaway after you read Eph 5:1? What are ways you can begin to apply that truth in your life?
2. As you read this passage, make a list of contrasts or differences of lifestyle and actions between believers and unbelievers. Consider the areas where you are most tempted by your flesh and emotions/thoughts...What do you think the Lord wants you in response?
3. What does this passage say to you about use of time? How did the Lord speak to you and in what ways does this passage help you?
4. What are some of the signs that a believer is living and walking in the spirit? What are some of the ways God has reminded you of this in the past week as you have read and thought about this passage?

Suggest you also read in another translation or two if you have them. You can also find them on the internet at <http://www.biblegateway.com/>