**1. Motivate**

Whom (besides Jesus) would you most like to imitate in some area of life?

* play piano like Dino
* preach as well as Franklin Graham
* fly an airplane like a friend who taught at LeTourneau
* ride a bicycle like some of those guys on the Tour de France
* catch fish like those guys on the Outdoor Channel
* chainsaw carve like those guys you see on YouTube
* cook like Bobby Flay
* play a musical instrument like \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**2. Transition**

While we might wish to have special skills like people we know of …

* The Holy Spirit enables us to live as fully devoted disciples of Jesus.

**3. Bible Study**

A video introduction to the lesson is available. View at <https://watch.liberty.edu/media/t/1_mskw1vm3> If you have no wi-fi where you teach, best to download to your computer from <https://tinyurl.com/y6t5eeta>

3.1 The Ways of the World

Listen for a contrast.

Ephesians 5:8-14 (NIV) For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light 9 (for the fruit of the light consists in all goodness, righteousness and truth) 10 and find out what pleases the Lord. 11 Have nothing to do with the fruitless deeds of darkness, but rather expose them. 12 For it is shameful even to mention what the disobedient do in secret. 13 But everything exposed by the light becomes visible, 14 for it is light that makes everything visible. This is why it is said: "Wake up, O sleeper, rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you."

Paul used contrasting imagery to describe the change that had taken place in the lives of his readers.

* Once darkness
* Now light in the Lord

How does life in darkness contrast with life in the light?

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Life in Darkness | Life in Light |
| * disobedience
* ignore God’s Truth
* lack of true joy in one’s life
* complaining, griping
* live to satisfy self
 | * obedient to God’s commands
* apply God’s Truth to your life
* trusting the Lord in all situations
* praise and worship God whatever is happening in our lives
 |

How does the apostle describe light or its fruit in Ephesians 5:9? Define each term in your own words.

* goodness ⇨ doing, saying good things
* righteousness ⇨ doing the *right* thing, living *right*
* truth ⇨ truth is that which aligns with reality, true in all situations …
 we live demonstrating God’s reality

Verse 3 of this chapter talks of the fruits of darkness … sexual immorality, impurity, and greed. Why would it not be possible to have both these qualities and the fruit of light in in our lives at the same time?

* they are opposites
* they are what we call mutually exclusive
* having fruits of light will exclude fruits of darkness
* and vice versa

Note Paul talks about the fruit of the Spirit, then things that are fruitless. That implies that they are …

* The opposite of goodness, they are evil
* They are unrighteous, not right, not just
* They are based on Satan’s lies who tries to tell us they are OK

What is to be the relationship of the believer to works of darkness?

* have nothing to do with them
* realize they are fruitless – they don’t accomplish anything good
* they are not among the Fruit of the Spirit (in fact the opposite)

How can we avoid becoming desensitized to this darkness?

* it is all around us … news, commercials, entertainment
* it fills our sight, our minds
* we must purposefully fill our minds with the Light of God’s Truth, God’s attitudes of goodness and righteousness
* pray against the spirits of darkness
* minister to people who have become trapped in this darkness

How can we expose fruitless works of darkness without saying a word?

* quietly walking away when dirty stories/jokes are being told
* when our reading material is obviously in the open for others to see and is in contrast to other people’s
* politely declining invitations to entertainment you know is unacceptable for a believer, “Sorry, it’s not my style.”
* counter such invitations with something you know is more acceptable, maybe even uplifting

3.2 Life Controlled by the Spirit

Listen for how to walk wisely.

Ephesians 5:15-18 (NIV) Be very careful, then, how you live--not as unwise but as wise, 16 making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil. 17 Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord's will is. 18 Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit.

List the admonitions in these verses?

* live carefully, live wisely
* make the most if every opportunity
* avoid foolish living
* be filled with the Spirit

Paul talks about wine or alcohol … how does alcohol control a person?

* depresses the brain, slows down its ability to control the body and mind
* this is what Paul means, “ leading to debauchery”
* acts like a sedative slows down muscle coordination, reflexes, movement, and speech.
* too much alcohol causes breathing or heart rate to reach low levels or even stop.

What other kinds of things are people controlled by in our culture?

* substance abuse – drugs, tobacco, chocolate, caffeine, …
* desire for power, influence, more material goods
* popularity
* hobbies, sports, entertainment

Paul contrasts being *controlled* by alcohol with being “filled with the Spirit” So, when you are *filled with* or *controlled by* God’s Holy Spirit you will …

* Surrender to God’s direction in your life
* Obey to His guidance
* Be aware of God’s purposes, following them
* Depend on God’s empowering influence in your life

What are some of the results of being filled with (controlled by) the Spirit?

* Fruit of the Sprit demonstrated in our lives
* each believer receives and lives out a Spiritual Gift for the benefit of the Body of Christ … fellow believers
* Spiritual armor and weapons – helmet of salvation, breastplate of righteousness, belt of Truth, shoes of the Gospel, sword of the Spirit (the Word of God), shield of Faith

3.3 Worship and Live Thankfully

Listen for impacts on worship.

Ephesians 5:19-21 (NIV) Speak to one another with psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs. Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord, 20 always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. 21 Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.

How should Spirit-controlled believers relate to one another?

* speak to one another
* praise God together with music
* songs of praise, thanksgiving, worship
* songs that encourage
* songs that challenge us to live for God
* submit to one another
* live in reverence/awe of Christ

How is this different than how the world looks at life?

* they grumble and complain
* they rarely show gratitude
* they are not in awe of who Jesus is
* instead of submitting to one another, they lord it over each other … try to take advantage of one another

Consider the one act that characterizes living in the Spirit.

* Always giving thanks
* Whatever happens in our lives, be giving thanks to God for
	+ Who He is … His power, His authority. His love
* Remember that some people have power but no authority,
* Others have authority, but no power
* God has both … *and* He loves us dearly

How are our thankfulness in the midst of hardships and our attitude of submission a witness to unbelievers?

* we demonstrate our trust in God’s love and care for His people
* they see God’s sufficiency at work
* we can share how God intervenes in our lives
* we show that God can be trusted … He does what He says … His words can be believed

Use the last page as a handout so your learners can take home the application points of this week’s lesson.

Application

Think.

* Paul describes in practical terms how to live a life pleasing to God.
* Ask the Holy Spirit to convict you of any behavior that is unpleasing to God.

Decide.

* Choose a behavior that has been brought to your attention by the Holy Spirit.
* Make it a focus of your prayer time.
* Ask the Holy Spirit to fill you with His presence regarding this issue.

Act.

* Speak with a trusted believer about this issue.
* Give them permission to hold you accountable for this behavior.

Cryptogram Puzzle





The Sports attaché from our consulate in Zerasantu found this message in a Diet Coke can in a message drop location in a subway station recycling bin. The decoding key is in the grid above. You can see the sample “Hello World” below which shows how the code works. Our decoding staff is at their middle school graduation, so we need your help. Forward the decoded message to your discipling committee. Technical assistance and other intriguing activities are available at <https://tinyurl.com/y6t5eeta>