



Take-Home-Study Ephesians Together...Here are some questions & conversation starters to help you grow as you talk about your faith together during the week.

Scripture for memorization & meditation: Ephesians 4:32 -

"Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you."

Questions for personal study...

- † Ask yourself: *"Is the subject of bitterness hard for me to think about?"* (If the answer is "yes" it might be because you're bitter).
- † Bitterness can come about as a result of being sinned against, a perception that someone has sinned against you, or jealousy. If you're bitter toward someone, ask where that's coming from?
- † If you sense some bitterness toward anyone, begin to pray daily for him/her.
- † Keep a 3X5 note card in your pocket and record every instance of God's kindness toward you that you think of this week.
- † Consider the question: *"Where would I be without God's kindness and forgiveness?"* Since we've received God's compassion, ask Him to help you show it to others.

Questions for group discussion...

- † Naomi blamed God for making her bitter (Ruth 1). She was wrong, but it's a common mistake. Describe a few circumstances in which a Christian might make the same mistake today.
- † *"Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry."* (v.26) If you're willing, tell the others about a time you applied this principle. If you're even braver, tell about a time you didn't, and suffered for it.
- † Ask someone in the group to write down her/his definition of "bitter." After a minute compare your definitions.
- † The word Paul uses for "kind" (v.32) is related to the word for "useful." Make a connection between both words. Give examples.
- † *"Just as in Christ, God forgave you."* (v.32) Forgiveness always requires sacrifice. List as many things as you can that Jesus gave up in order to accomplish our forgiveness. His sacrifice saves us.

- † Forgiving each other may require your sacrifice; giving up something in the process. Identify possible things a Christian may give up in the process of working out things together.

Tips for parents with young children this week...

Monday--Don't succumb to moralizing (*teaching kids to be good because they should*). Instead, let them hear you talk about Jesus' forgiveness for you and them.

Tuesday--Ask your child what makes him/her angry. Be sure to tell them anger isn't always wrong, but sin is. We can be angry and not sin.

Wednesday--Ask your child who is kind. Help him/her brainstorm examples of kind people in your life. End your talk with Jesus who was kind to all.

Thursday--Discuss Jesus' forgiveness. Then ask why we forgive. Help your child see it's because of Jesus' forgiveness for us; not because someone deserves it.

Friday--Read 5:1 to your child. Reinforce two things: you are a dear child of God. Talk about the Spirit's blessing he/she received in baptism. Second, be imitators of God. Tell them you're following Jesus and pray for them to do the same thing!

Saturday--Do some of the kid's questions online. (www.stpauldale.com) Click on the Youth Ministry link to find *"123 kid's bible questions"*)

Sunday - Spend some time praying with your children before or after church. Explain that you go to church to learn more about God, to help welcome other children, and to have fun with their friends. After church ask about things they saw or remember hearing from their time with their Savior that day.

Ephesians 4:32 - *"Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you."*

In Christ

