

Connection Group Discussion Questions

For the week of December 6, 2015 Ephesians 4:22-24, 26-27, 29-32

These questions are to be used as a spring board for discussion.

Answers may or may not be found in the sermons.

New Revised Standard Version (NRSV)

²² You were taught to put away your former way of life, your old self, corrupt and deluded by its lusts, ²³ and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, ²⁴ and to clothe yourselves with the new self, created according to the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.

²⁶ Be angry but do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, ²⁷ and do not make room for the devil.

²⁹ Let no evil talk come out of your mouths, but only what is useful for building up, as there is need, so that your words may give grace to those who hear. ³⁰ And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with which you were marked with a seal for the day of redemption. ³¹ Put away from you all bitterness and wrath and anger and wrangling and slander, together with all malice, ³² and be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ has forgiven you.

Connection Questions:

1. Have you dealt with people in your life that possessed characteristics similar to the Grinch's in Dr. Seuss' story? If so, describe what they were like.

2. Would you agree that we all possess the possibility of being Grinches ourselves? What causes people to act like a Grinch?

3. Paul stayed longer at the church at Ephesus than any other church. The church had started to grow but while he was away, he says they were falling back into some old negative patterns. What are some unhealthy patterns of churches that can hinder their ability to help people to grow in their faith?

4. What are some positive patterns that churches can possess that can enhance the church's ability to grow?

5. What role does the Holy Spirit play in encouraging us to overcome some of our Grinch-like character traits?

6. Paul says to the church at Ephesus not to let "any evil come from your mouth." Is this possible? Can we as human beings eradicate or overcome our problem with sin?

7. Nelson Mandela says, "Resentment is like drinking poison." Describe what you think he means by resentment and why is it like poison.

8. Nelson Mandela says no one is born hating or holding on to our mistakes. Why is it so destructive to the human soul to hate? How can we let go of our mistakes in a healthy way?

9. The Whoville people were able to celebrate Christmas even after having all their possessions taken from them. Would you still be able to celebrate Christmas if you lost everything? Why or why not?

10. How does the theme of peace play itself out in how the Grinch responds ultimately to the people in Whoville?