

[THE GOSPEL HAS ALWAYS BEEN about change and choice. *Change* from an old way of life without Jesus Christ to a new way of life with Jesus Christ is a staple of God’s message to us in Scripture. Choice, however, regarding what we do with our new status in Jesus Christ has been an equally important part of the message. Does it really make a difference, this new status, in the way we live? Do choices really reflect the change adequately? Change and choice might be called the twin pillars of the Good News. This talk about changes and choices does indeed make Ephesians read like a contemporary letter. Almost everything in it rings a bell for anyone concerned about modern culture. The words themselves—change and choice—are buzz words in contemporary self-help psychology, education, and vocational guidance.]

-- Klyne Snodgrass, “Ephesians” NIV Application Commentary

The JP family is taking a look at the words of Paul in Ephesians today! If you were present for worship this morning, then some of what you will be asked to think about *should* fit right in. As stated above, Paul’s letter to his friends in Ephesians fits so well for modern culture and how a church community of Jesus followers makes changes and choices. Not merely to worship experiences and time spent together at the church house—instead, more about how our lives are formatted to follow Spirit as it guides our hearts and minds for life ahead. This comes to us as we lead families, grow relationships, and strive for excellence and usefulness in our vocations and citizens of our local communities.

So, here are a few exercises you can do with your family tonight to continue the conversation from today and make connections to the application that is still relevant today from Paul’s letter to the Ephesians.

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1. Get out some older pictures of you and the family. Draw attention to how much change has taken place. Have fun with it! Talk about growth and how we will continue to change in terms of height, hair, etc. [MAKE CONNECTIONS TO HOW WE CHANGE IN CHRIST AS WE GROW]
 2. Choices. This is probably a familiar conversation in most of our families. Remind each other of the reality and value of choices. Emphasize things that we speak and the actions that we take, especially toward other people. Talk about how church is a place where they should be able to find similar people that make the same choices that they are encouraged to make. [MAKE CONNECTIONS OF HOW GOD ALLOWS US TO CHOOSE OUR BEHAVIORS, BUT GIVES US A MODEL IN JESUS/SCRIPTURE]
 3. [MAKING CONNECTIONS TO PAUL] Open up Ephesians. Find the examples in Paul’s letters of where Paul demonstrates changes and growth through his talk to Ephesians. (Hint: toward the end of Chapter 4, there are at least 4 or 5 specific things mentioned).
 4. MEMORIZE THE CORE VERSE OF TODAY! (Maybe post it in the house for the rest of the week)

“Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.” Eph. 4:32

BONUS! Watch “Ephesians” by the Bible Project Guys on YouTube.