

NEW CREATION

: A new way to relate [Ephesians 5:1–6:9]

God's new creation community is to be shaped by:

1. Self-giving love (Ephesians 5:1-14)

Paul reminds us that God's new creation community is shaped by the self-giving, cross-shaped love of Christ, calling us to live out our new identity rather than simply follow rules. Because our culture constantly pulls us in other directions, we are called to stay spiritually awake, carefully discern what pleases the Lord, and live as people of light rather than sleepwalking into the values of the world.

2. The continuous filling of the Spirit (Ephesians 5:15-20)

Paul urges believers to seek God's wisdom continually and to be continually filled with the Holy Spirit, rather than controlled by anything else, because we cannot live as God's new creation people in our own strength. As God's Spirit fills us day by day, thankfulness and heartfelt worship naturally overflow, expressing the new life he is forming within us.

3. Mutual submission (Ephesians 5:21-6:9)

Paul applies the gospel to everyday relationships by calling the whole church to "submit to one another out of reverence for Christ"—a radically counter-cultural vision of mutual submission that challenges the use of power for self-interest. Through the examples of husbands and wives, parents and children, and slaves and masters, he consistently gives dignity to the less powerful and calls those with greater authority to reflect Christ's self-giving love, using their influence to serve rather than dominate.

DISCUSS

Starter: Why might more people are turning to AI for some form of relationship? What does it reveal about our humanity and our culture right now? *(don't get sidetracked by AI in general!)*

1. Where have we experienced cross-shaped, self-giving love in the past year? How would we characterise it and what affect did it have on us?
2. Why for Paul does he use the imperfect tense 'go on being (continuously) filled by the spirit'? What might this look to ask God every day for more of His spirit?
3. What might Paul's called to mutual submission look like in our situations? Where might that lead to us seeking the interests of others, or challenging the missuse of power?

Digging Deeper: Read Tom Wright 'The Vision of Ephesians' (there are copies in Springfield office).

We believe our God-given vision is see: thriving communities springing up, where everyone can belong and find hope in Jesus.

Group Sunday message notes 2026

