

REaLiTY ChECK

Divide into groups of two or three. Ask the following questions, pausing as needed to allow time for discussion:

- If you were hooked, what would you need (or want) to hear from a friend? What could they say or do to start you toward getting "unhooked"?
- What would be the *wrong* thing for a friend to say to you or do for you? What would you definitely *not* want them to say or do?
- When have you tried to help a friend who was struggling with substance abuse? What was the result? What helped? What didn't help? What did you learn?
- As a group, come up with three suggestions for someone trying to help an addicted friend.

Gather participants and invite volunteers from each group to share their best ideas and insights. Ask:

- How do we know when a situation is beyond our ability to help?
- When it's beyond our ability to help, to whom do we turn?

LiViNG CaREFuLLY

Distribute **Bibles** and ask a volunteer to read aloud Ephesians 5:15. Discuss:

- Give drug- or alcohol-related examples of
 - "being careful how you live"
 - "living like ignorant people"
 - "living like wise people"

Ask a volunteer to read aloud Ephesians 5:16. Discuss:

- What do you think the author of Ephesians means by, "These are evil days"? What kinds of "evil days" do we see in our culture?
- In what ways can drugs and alcohol keep us from "making good use of every opportunity"? What opportunities can be missed because of drugs or alcohol?

Ask a volunteer to read aloud Ephesians 5:17. Discuss:

- What alternative to abusing alcohol does the author suggest?
- What do you think it means to be "filled with the Spirit"?
Practically speaking, how do we accomplish this?

■ What's involved in making decisions about using drugs and alcohol? What part do each of the following play:

- the law
- peer pressure
- God and faith
- respect for others
- self-esteem
- fear of consequences
- your hopes for your future
- knowledge of the dangers
- stress