

# Growth Group Leader Guide

This “growth group leader guide” is meant to be just that, a guide. Please feel free as the leader of your group to add questions or comments as you feel necessary to fit your group’s dynamics.

Also, don’t feel pressured to cover every question.

## **Ephesians** – “The depth of God’s grace lived out in love.”

### **Ephesians 1:4-6**

- What insight, principle, or observation from this weekend’s message did you find to be most helpful, eye-opening, or troubling? Explain.
  - **Leaders Cheat:** *If anyone is really struggling with the sermon from last Sunday (especially with election & predestination) please encourage them to meet with Nathan.*
- How does man’s responsibility and God’s sovereignty coexist? Read the following quotes by Charles Spurgeon to help you answer this question.
  - **Spurgeon** “That God predestines, and yet that man is responsible, are two facts that few can see clearly. They are believed to be inconsistent and contradictions, but they are not. The fault is in our weak judgment. Two truths cannot be contradictory to each other. If, then, I find taught in one part of the Bible that everything is fore-ordained, that is true; and I find that in another part of Scripture, that man is responsible for all his actions, that is true; and it is only my folly that leads me to imagine that these two truths can ever contradict each other. I do not believe they can ever be welded into one upon any earthly anvil, but they certainly shall be one in eternity. They are two lines that so nearly parallel, that the human mind which pursues them to the farthest will never discover that they converge, but they do converge, and they will meet somewhere in eternity, close to the throne of God, whence all truth doth spring.”
- What is the danger of trying to relieve the tension between man’s responsibility and God’s sovereignty in Scripture with human reasoning? What dangers are there in over-emphasizing either one of these truths to the neglect of the other?

### 3 – Points of Sunday’s Sermon

- **God the Father Chose Us**
- **God the Father Predestined Us**
- **To God be the Glory Alone**

#### I. God the Father Chose Us

- **In verses 3-14**, identify the past, present, and future aspects of God’s work in our lives. Why do you think Paul takes such a broad view?
- Go through and point out the various references to the members of the trinity – God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. What unique role does each play in the salvation process?
- Why do you think Paul adds “before the foundation of the world” in verse 4? Read the following quote to help you answer this question.
  - **Calvin** – “The very time of election shows it to be free; for what could we have deserved, or what did we merit, before the world was made?”
- Discuss the following quote by Charles Spurgeon.
  - **Charles Spurgeon** – I believe the doctrine of election, because I am quite certain that, if God had not chosen me, I should never have chosen Him; and I am sure He chose me before I was born, or else He never would have chosen me afterwards; and He must have elected me for reasons unknown to me, for I never could find any reason in myself why He should have looked upon me with special love.
- *God chose you to be holy and blameless* (v.4). What does it mean to be holy and blameless? What does this presuppose about us before God intervened in our lives? Read Ephesians 2:1-3 for help answering this question.

#### II. God the Father Predestined Us

- Discuss what it means for a child to be adopted and why this perfectly illustrates what happens to us spiritually according to Eph. 1:5.
- In light of the fact that the Old Testament only refers to God as Father 14 times and never by an individual, read and discuss how remarkable the following verses are.

- **Romans 8:15 -16**
- **Galatians 4:1-7**
- **Read Ephesians 2:1-3** and discuss what family we belonged to before being adopted.
  - *Leaders Cheat: Eph. 2:2 ... sons of disobedience, Eph. 2:3... Children of wrath*
- **Read Deuteronomy 7:6-8** and discuss why God chose Israel. Read Eph. 1-5 one more time and discuss how verse 4 relates to Deuteronomy 7.
- How should God's grace motivate us in daily life?

### III. To God be the Glory Alone

- What do you think "to the praise of the glory of His grace" (v.6) means? How is this idea also reflected in the last phrases in verses 12 & 14? Why do you think Paul is more specific in verse 6 than in verses 12 & 14?
- As a group read Acts 9:1-15 and discuss why Paul (a Jew and a Pharisee) had an acute sense that he was chosen by God. How do you think that motivated him for missions? Read the following verses for help answering this question.
  - **Romans 9:1-3 & Romans 11:13-14**
- Many people can look back on their lives and see how God has providentially taken care of them. If you have never heard each other's testimonies, take some time and share how God's gracious hand brought the gospel message to you. Share any "God knocked me off my horse" moments.
- How does God's grace in your life encourage you to share the gospel with others? Explain.
- **Read Romans 1:16** then answer the following question. If you don't share the gospel message regularly, why not? How could you as a group encourage each other to be bolder with your faith?