

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 Intro –

- What insight, principle, or observation from this weekend’s message did you find to be most helpful, eye-opening, or troubling? Explain.

Read as a group Ephesians 1:1-14

- Read the following quote and answer the related questions.
 - The book of Ephesians opens with praise and wonder at God’s love and grace for His people. Yet we often fail to appreciate that love and grace ourselves. The famed nineteenth-century preacher Charles Spurgeon told a story of a minister who called on a poor woman with a desire to help her out of her financial straits. Money in hand, he knocked on her door repeatedly, but she did not answer. Eventually he left. Later, he related the incident to her at church. “Oh dear,” she said, “I heard you, sir, and I’m so sorry I did not answer. I thought you where the man calling for my rent.”
- How does this story illustrate our tendency to misunderstand (and miss out on) the riches we have in Christ?
- Think about your own relationship with God. Have you ever responded or felt as this woman did? What things stop you from opening up your heart to all God has for you?
- **Stop right now**, and have someone pray for your group that in the coming weeks God will reveal to each person the riches we have in Christ through His grace. Also, pray that the knowledge of God’s grace would overflow in love for one another.

4 – Topics covered during Sunday’s Sermon

- **The Greeting**
- **The Outline**
- **The Theology of Ephesians**
- **The Purpose of Ephesians**

I. The Greeting

- According to the greeting, was Ephesians written for Christians or non-Christians?
- Read Ephesians 4:11-12 and discuss how this relates to the previous question.
- Why does Paul identify his readers as “saints”?
- Is it helpful for you to think of yourself as a saint? Explain.

II. The Outline

- The Body of Ephesians is divided up into 2 sections: The doctrinal & theological section (Ch. 1-3) and the ethical or practical section (Ch. 4-6).
- Why do you think Paul divided his letter this way?
- How is the theology of Ch. 1-3 connected to the practical living of Ch. 4-6?
 - *Leaders Cheat: The deep theology is meant to be foundational to how we live.*
- With the previous questions in mind, what is the danger in moving through Ephesians slowly? Explain.

III. The Theology of Ephesians

- Read the following passages and as a group point out all the members of the Trinity.
 - Ephesians 2:18
 - Ephesians 2:22
 - Ephesians 3:14-17

- Ephesians 4:4-6
- Ephesians 5:18-20
- Now read and discuss the following quote by Harold Hoehner.
 - Therefore the work of the Trinity is important in the letter to the Ephesians. It is the Father to whom believers direct their prayers and the one who is over all things & plans all things. It is the Son through whom believers pray and the one who carries out the Father's plan in redemption and reconciliation of believers. The Holy Spirit is the one who seals, indwells, and empowers believers.

IV. The Purpose of Ephesians

- Read Revelation 2:1-7 and discuss what Jesus praises them for and what he rebukes them for.
- With the information we have in Revelation 2:1-7 discuss as a group what you think this church was like.
- Ephesians 1:16-23 & Ephesians 3:14-19 are prayers that Paul has prayed for the church of Ephesus. Read each prayer and discuss Paul's hope for the Church. How do they apply to Country Oaks?
- Many theologians think that the overarching theme of Ephesians is unity and love.
- **Pray** for your group and COBC as a whole that this study in Ephesians would unite us in love as we study about God's grace and love poured out on us.
 - Pray for Nathan as he preaches
 - Pray for the congregation's openness to God's word
 - Pray for unity and love