

# 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 2:13-16**

Read Eph. 2:11-12 and review the discussion from last week.

- Why does Paul give us the imperative (command) to “remember” in verse 11?
- Why is verse 13 such a wonderful verse?

### **4 – Points of Sunday’s Sermon**

- **Christ is Our Peace**
- **Christ Has Broken Down the Dividing Wall of Hostility**
- **Christ Has Broken Down the Dividing Wall of the Law**
- **Christ Has United Us Through the Cross**

#### **I. Christ is Our Peace (Verse 14)**

- In the beginning of verse 14 why do you think Paul put the personal pronoun “He” in the emphatic position?
- What does Paul consider “peace” according to verse 14 (also use verse 15 to help answer this question)?
- Why do you think the concept of being “one” body would have been difficult for the Jewish Christians and Gentile Christians?
- What are some ways that modern churches struggle with the concept of unity?
- What are some sins within relationships that put up barriers to unity within the church?

- How can you actively pursue unity at COBC?
- **Read and discuss James 4:1-2**
  - How and why is James encouraging the reader to take personal responsibility for their conflicts?
  - Where does sinful conflict start?
  - How can these two verses help us understand sinful conflict and fighting? How can they help us resolve them?
  - How should you respond to someone within the church or your family, even if they have sinned against you?

## II. Christ Has Broken Down the Dividing Wall of Hostility (Verse 14)

- According to the sermon, what is the “dividing wall of hostility” alluding to? Read Acts 21:27-29 to help answer this question.
  - **Leaders Cheat:** the dividing wall at the temple that separated the court of the Gentiles from the Jewish court.
    - **There were signs on the outside of this wall that read:** “Let no foreigner enter past this wall and enclosure surrounding the temple. Anyone who is caught doing so will have himself to blame for his ensuing death.”
- How offensive do you think Acts 21:28-29 would have been to a Gentile, especially an Ephesian?
- Do you think Trophimus told the church at Ephesus about this incident in Acts? How do you think that influenced Paul’s letter to the church at Ephesus?
- Read and discuss the following quote:
  - God had originally separated Jews from Gentiles for the purpose of redeeming both groups, not for saving the Jews alone. He placed the Court of the Gentiles in the Temple for the very purpose of winning Gentiles to Himself. It was meant to be a place of Jewish evangelism of Gentiles, a place for winning proselytes to Judaism and of thereby bringing them “near.” – Harold Hoehner

### III. Christ Has Broken Down the Dividing Wall of the Law (Verse 15)

- How was the Old Testament Jewish Law also a dividing wall of hostility?
- Did God originally intend the law to be a dividing wall of hostility?
- Read the following quote to help answer this question:
  - The stipulations of the law were to protect the Jews from the practices of the world. Israel was supposed to be a kingdom of priests as a testimony to God. They were to keep the law which provided opportunity to witness to their Gentile neighbors of God's wonderful deliverance, care, Holiness and grace. Rather than using the law as a witness, it became the tool that enabled them to look down on the Gentiles whom they considered sinners. Hence, this caused hostility between Jews & Gentiles. Due to this and the hardness with which they practiced their law, they were considered by the Gentiles as prideful and stubborn people. Hence, it was not the law itself that was hostile but the wrong conception and use of the law, which resulted in hostility on both sides. – Harold Hoehner
- How can we (as New Testament believers) fall into the same sin as the Jews did when it comes to obeying the Law?

### IV. Christ Has United Us Through the Cross (Verses 15-16)

- What does Paul mean by saying "One New Man"? (Use the following quotes to help answer this question):
  - Paul creates a picture of two groups (Gentile & Jew), as a single individual of a mature person. Therefore, in the present context, Paul refers to a whole new race that is formed. A new race that is raceless. – Harold Hoehner
  - For those in Christ, the only identity that matters is their identity in Him. There is no Jewish or Gentile Christianity, black or white Christianity, male or female Christianity, or free or slave Christianity. There is only Christianity. Our Lord has only one Church. – John MacArthur
- Why is the cross of Christ a true equalizer, and thus makes unity possible in the church?
- In *The Cross of Peace*, Sir Philip Gibbs has written: "Today there are all sorts of zig-zag and crisscrossing fences running through the races and peoples of the world. Modern progress has made the world a neighborhood and God has given us the task of making it a brotherhood." Is this just wishful thinking? How is this really possible?