

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 4:1-6

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

I. God intends His very nature to be expressed (imaged) in our human relationships.

- **Psalms 19:1** says, *“The heavens declare the glory of God...”* but only man is made in the image of God. Carefully read Gen. 1:26-27 as a group and discuss how we image the triune God according to these two verses.
- **Read 1 John 4:19-21** and discuss why it is important that we love one another within the church.
- According to verse 19, where does love come from and what does this have to do with the Trinity?
- What does our love for one another say about our love for God? Read James 3:8-9 to help answer this question.

II. Being made in the triune God’s image tells us that we are made for community.

- What are some implications that God is a trinity not a duality?
- **Read and discuss** the following 2 quotes
 - The interconnectedness and interdependence among the members of the Trinity is such that one is hard-pressed to think of any “work of God” which does not involve various members of the Trinity working together. For example, God the Father designs what the purpose of the created order will be. In this, he designs that His Son be the one who comes and redeems sinners. The Father designs it; but His

fulfillment of that design depends upon the Son obeying the Father. And yet the Son obeying the Father depends upon the Spirit empowering the Son....

- When it comes to the church, God intends that there be a community of persons in which there is an interconnection & interdependence, so that what one does affects another, what one needs can be supplied by another, and what one seeks to accomplish may be supported by another. – **Bruce Ware**
- Do you feel interconnected and interdependent with the church body at Country Oaks? Why or why not?
- How have you seen our culture's tendency to be individualistic affect the Church? Has it affected you personally in your relationship with the church?
- **Read 1 Corinthians 12:4 and verse 11** and discuss how God expects us to interact with one another within the local body.

III. The Trinity models to us a unity that is not redundancy, and a diversity that is not discord.

- How is the Trinity unified? How is it diverse?
- How should the church be unified? How should it be diverse?
- Do you agree with the following quote? *"The first sign that a church may not be a healthy church is that it lacks diversity."* – Explain.
- How is the unity/diversity of the Trinity foundational to missions? Read Revelation 5:9-10 to help answer this question.
 - **Leaders Cheat:** Pay attention to the unity and diversity in these verses.
- How does the diversity of the church glorify God?

IV. The trinitarian relationship models to us an inherent expression of authority and submission.

- In what ways have you seen a despise for authority in our culture?
- In what ways has this hatred of authority influenced the church?

- How does the Father show us a godly way of being in authority? Read Philippians 2:9-11 to help answer this question.
- How can we model the Father's example when we are in authority?
- What can we learn from Jesus' willingness to be submissive? Read John 8:28, John 6:38 and Luke 22:42 to help answer this question.
- **Read Luke 2:48-51.** Why is verse 51 shocking?
- What can we learn from the Holy Spirit's willingness to make those in authority over him look good without taking any credit himself?

V. Marriage is meant to image the triune God: Where both members are equal in essence (value) – yet, diverse in gender and roles. This is designed by God and is a reflection of the Trinity.

- How is the culture's attack on marriage a direct assault against the glory of God?
- Marriage should model equality in value yet diversity in authority, roles and gender. Does submission mean less value? Explain your answer.
- Husbands, how can you model the Father's example of authority in your family?
- Wives, how can you better follow Christ example of submission in your marriage?
- **Read and discuss** the following quote:
 - The ultimate apologetic for the Trinity is not some cleverly crafted argument, or analogy of philosophical explanation, it is the common life of the Christian community... Jesus says that when the world sees our community life, they will know that He was sent by the Father to save the world. The challenge is this: When does the world see our community life? When do your friends see the love of the Christian community? And would they recognize our community as a work of God and a sign of His grace? Does our community reflect the trinitarian community? – Tim Chester