

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 4:12-16

- What insight, principle, or observation from this weekend’s message did you find to be most helpful, eye-opening, or troubling? Explain.
- The Apostle Paul calls the church the “body of Christ.” Why do you think this is a good metaphor? How does this metaphor relate to growth?
- In what ways does the church serve and work together as one body? In what ways do you think our church could grow in unity and maturity?
- In what ways can you personally contribute to the unity and maturity of the church?

3 – Points of Sunday’s Sermon

- **The Means of Growth**
- **The Marks of Growth**
- **The Beauty of Growth**

I. The Means of Growth

- **Read Acts 6:1-4** What can we learn from this passage when it comes to the priorities of church leadership?
- **Read Eph. 4:11-12** Who is called to do the work of ministry in verse 12? Are you surprised by this? What works of ministry is the body called to do?
- What contributions do members of a church make toward helping one another mature in their understanding of Christ and His will for believers?

- How has consumerism distorted the proper way a church is called to function according to Ephesians 4:11-12?
- **Read and discuss** the following quote.
 - This passage strongly supports the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers, which teaches that there is no special status of priest among Christians; all are called as priests to serve God. The professionalization of the ministry, however, threatens this important doctrinal commitment. There is often the feeling that the paid staff (the professionals) should do the work of the ministry and the laity should be served by them. Paul's (and God's) vision for the church is different. Leaders equip the church to carry out the work of ministry effectively. – **Benjamin Merkle**
- How does the proper functioning of gifts work to create unity among believers?
- **Read and discuss** the following two quotes.
 - It effectively eliminates the traditional model of the local church as a pyramid, with the pastor perched on its pinnacle, like a little pope in his own church, while the laity are arrayed beneath him in ranks of inferiority... The biblical model is the Body of Christ in which those in pastoral roles prepare God's people for works of ministry. – **Kent Hughes**

II. The Marks of Growth

- What obstacles can impede the spiritual growth and maturing of an individual Christian and/or a whole congregation?
- According to the sermon Sunday, what are the 4 Marks of a mature church found in Ephesians 4:11-16?
 - **Leaders Cheat:**
 - 1st Mark – Unity
 - 2nd Mark – Christlikeness
 - 3rd Mark – Sound Doctrine
 - 4th Mark – Truthing in Love
- **In verse 13**, how does Paul describe the unity that believers ought to share? Explain how belief both unites people and divides people.
- How does our post-modern culture promote unity that goes against verse 13?
- Should people lay down their convictions for the sake of unity? Explain your answer.

- According to Romans 8:29-30 what is the purpose of our salvation?
- How does imaging Christ glorify him?
- **Compare and contrast** the following verses:
 - Ephesians 4:13-14
 - Hebrews 5:11-14
 - 1 Corinthians 3:1-3
- Why do you think the Bible equates the lack of biblical understanding (sound doctrine) with immaturity?
- How does “speaking the truth in love” (4:15) toward brothers and sisters facilitate growing up into the head of the body?
- **In Verse 15** the word “truth” in Greek carries the idea of not only speaking the truth but also doing it. Therefore, a good translation of this Greek word is “Truthing in love.” What do you think “truthing in love” means?
- What are some challenges in speaking truth in love?
- Discuss the following quote: “Truth without love is harsh, love without truth isn’t love.”

III. The Beauty of Growth

- **Read Ephesians 4:15-16** and discuss why a church “working properly” is attractive?
- How is loving one another within the church a testimony to those outside of the church?
- How does John 13:35 relate to Ephesians 4:15-16?