

Sermon Study Guide - 16 May 2021

Series: Family

Text: Ephesians 4:11-16



This guide will help you facilitate a study of the Bible passage with a focus on applying God's truth to our lives together. Look at the Big Idea and Takeaway for our CGs sections at the beginning of the guide to keep the discussion focused. For a deeper dive into the passage, refer to the [text notes](#) on the passage.

Overview

Series Overview

This is a 5-weeks series exploring how God desires for our natural families to help us grow in the faith, and how his church is the family we are all part of regardless of our natural families. Starting with a biblical theology of the family, we will then move on to explore two Old Testament scriptures on natural families, and subsequently two New Testament scriptures on the church family.

The goal of this series is to show how family is central to the mission of God, and is not an end in and of itself. We want to see how our earthly families are a gift God has given us to serve Him, and how the church is then given to us to be our truer and lasting family, that doesn't diminish our earthly families but actually empowers us to love and serve them even better.

Big Idea

God has saved us into a body and we need each other to grow in our faith and into the fullness of Christ.

CG Takeaway

To first see ourselves as 1) fundamentally incomplete and 2) having a diminished view of Christ without other members of the body of Christ; and then to meditate on how our gifts can be used to nurture and grow the body of Christ.

Fallen Condition Focus

- Thinking that we do not need each other in the family of God, or that we have nothing to contribute. Therefore we are not inclined to move toward each other and to consider how we can be speaking the truth in love to grow others in the body to become like Christ.

- Seeing our roles in the church as perfunctory rather than building up and equipping others in the body
- Becoming envious of others' gifts, or using our gifts for our own glory

Eph 4:11-16

***11** And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, **12** to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, **13** until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, **14** so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes. **15** Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, **16** from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.*

Study Guide

Icebreaker: What is one secret talent that you have, that many people don't know you have?

Observation: Paul describes us to be the body of Christ. What are some phrases associated with that metaphor of the body in this passage?

1. What does it mean for us to be "members of Christ's body?" (Gospel question)

2. If, according to Paul, the church is the body of Christ, why is it that the church is still far from being a faithful image-bearer of Christ here right now? What needs to happen for the church to live out her identity and purpose?

3a. How is both truth and love needed in the body of Christ? How have we often manifested a skewed or lopsided "truth" or "love" in the body of Christ?

3b. How have these skewed views led us to exercise our gifts and roles with the wrong goal/motivation in mind or to "build up" the body of Christ in the wrong manner?

4. What has prevented us so far from investing ourselves to build up the body of Christ? What might we fear or desire?

Large Group Activity and Prayer: Look around the CG. What can we affirm about each others' gifts and roles in the body of Christ, and how can we appreciate, challenge and encourage each other to continue to build up the body?