

UNITY THROUGH DIVERSITY
EPHESIANS 4:15-16

LESSON PREP

In the passage for this week, Paul encourages Christians to live in unity with one another for the sake of growth within each individual as well as the whole. Without this challenge the church would only be focused on itself and would lose the importance of diversity in its unity. Lived out in the context of Jesus-centered community, we can experience unity in the midst of diversity. God can change the entire community through our relationships at home, class or work.

**PRE-LG TEXT
MESSAGE
QUESTIONS**

What are you doing to be different? Tell us about how being different can unify Christians at small group tonight.

How are you using your spiritual gifts within the body of Christ? Tell us about it tonight at small group.

**SCRIPTURE
MEMORIZATION**
EPHESIANS 4:15-16

1ON1 FOLLOWUP
Build new relationships this week and see how they can get connected into community according to the natural gifts they personally possess.

INTRODUCTION

- *Tell me about the best team experience you've ever had. What made it so positive and so memorable for all the right reasons?*
- *What about your worst team experience? Why was it so negative?*
- *What factors made the difference between those two kinds of experiences?*

Read Ephesians 4:1-16 together as a group.

1. God wants us to walk with honor.

- *Why do you think it is essential for us as Christians to live according to our calling?*
- *Why do you think Paul includes specific characteristics in verses 2-3 of someone who is walking according to their calling in Christ? Are these characteristics of your life?*
- *Look at verse 7. In what ways have we been given grace through Christ to walk with honor?*

SAY SOMETHING LIKE: *It is important for us to remember what Christ accomplished for us on the cross. When we forget, we start to live according to our fleshly manner of life, which Paul addressed earlier in his letter, in Ephesians 2. If we live out our lives in the manner to which we have been called, then we will experience unity in the Spirit and live according to our calling.*

2. God calls us to pursue and develop unity.

- *Look at v. 4-6. Why is it important for us to understand the unity of the Spirit?*
- *What do you think creates disunity?*
- *When you read through these verses, why do you think Paul lists so many "ones," and what do they say about our commitment to live as one body?*

SAY SOMETHING LIKE: *Paul wants us as Christians to understand that an appropriate walk with Christ helps to overcome any disunity in the body. By specifically defining these seven distinctives—body, Spirit, hope, Lord, faith, baptism, and Father—Paul is teaching us that it is simply about the oneness of the body in all areas and that this oneness needs to permeate throughout our entire life and our understanding of Scripture.*

3. God creates unity from our diversity.

- *According to what Paul is saying in v.7-16, what did Christ accomplish on our behalf by ascending and descending?*
- *After Christ showed his authority to give us these specific gifts, what stands out to you concerning the purpose of these gifts? Why are they given?*
- *In verse 16, Paul tells us that when every joint is equipped and working properly, the body grows. That means you are important to the growth of the person sitting next to you. How do you think this role you have can impact the relationships you have with other Christians—including the people in this group?*

APPLICATION

Discover an area where God has gifted you. How can you use this gift to bring unity to the body, even the smaller body represented as your Lifegroup?