

Leader Resources for Small Groups | May 2, 2019

Anyone leading the group this week may find additional Small Group Leader Resources at <http://www.wcchapel.org/resources-for-small-group-leaders/>

Explore the Holy Spirit — The Gifts of the Holy Spirit – Part 1

Focus Passage: *Ephesians 4:1–16*

Context: *Ephesians 4:1–24*

Other Passages Referenced: *Psalm 68; John 17:20–21; Acts 2:16–18; 1 Corinthians 12, Ephesians 2:13–19;*

Sermon Recap: In Ephesians 4:1-16 the Apostle Paul says there is a gift of the Holy Spirit that is so precious, we should be willing to be in chains to open it and protect it. The Big Idea is: “We have been called to guard the Spirit’s gift of unity to the church.” We must guard the Spirit’s gift of unity because it is both derivative of God’s (The Trinity’s) unity and it displays God’s unity to a watching world. Guarding the unity can be hard because a diverse group of believers receives and exercises a diverse group of gifts. We guard that unity by exercising fruits of the Holy Spirit that Paul highlights in verse 2: humility, gentleness, patience, and love.

Background Helps

- It is helpful to remember that in the earlier part of Ephesians, chapters 1–3, God chose Gentiles and Jews to be saved (Eph 1:4). Not only did he save them but He gave both groups the same Holy Spirit that gives each of them access to the one and only Father God (Eph 2:18). God purposed to put them both in the same local churches (Eph 2:19–22), tearing down the figurative dividing wall of hostility that had previously separated them (Eph 2:14). The end goal was that the mystery and power of the gospel might be put on display even to the powers of darkness in heavenly places (Eph 3:7–10). The discussion of the Spirit’s work and our eagerness “to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace” (Eph 4:3) takes place in this context of church members coming out of very different backgrounds with very different worldviews.
- Ephesians 4:8–10 Paul quotes Psalm 68 and talks about Christ descending and ascending and giving gifts. In Acts 2:4–8, Jesus told His disciples to wait for the promised Holy Spirit to be sent just before He ascended to heaven. Before He was crucified He had told His disciples that it was to their advantage that He go away, returning to the Father or else the Spirit would not be sent (John 16:7). In the ascension of Jesus to heaven, we see this necessary precursor to the sending of the Spirit and Psalm 68 gives a foreshadowing of Jesus the victorious King giving gifts from the victory to His followers. It is worthwhile to go back and read these passages from your Bibles and to connect the dots, perhaps literally with notes in your Bible’s margins.
- NOTE – A podcast is planned to be posted this week related to “Discerning Spiritual Gifts”. It can be accessed by midweek at <http://wcchapel.org/the-cutting-room-floor/>

Hook: *Pick a Question to Help Ignite Conversation*

Can you tell us about a “re-gifting” experience you’ve had?

Look—Observing and Interpreting:

READ: Ephesians 4:1–16

1. List all of the “ones” that you find in Eph 4:4–5 beginning with “one body.”

2. What Trinitarian language do you find in Eph 4:4–7?
3. Who is credited with giving gifts in this passage?

Illustrations:

Illustrations and quotes can be found on the “Sermon Slides” link at the bottom of www.wcchapel.org

Took: *Applying the message to our lives.*

1. What do you think about the claim that the church’s unity in the Spirit both derives from the unity of the Trinity and demonstrates the unity of the Trinity? ... How do you see that working out in real time?
2. Think of a case of disunity that you have experienced with someone at church or in your family. Were one or both parties in this disunity demonstrating humility, gentleness, patience, forbearing love, and eagerness to maintain unity as described in Ephesians 4:2? ... If not, do you believe it would have made a difference if at least one party were manifesting those qualities?
3. What concrete steps can you take in the coming week to guard the Spirit’s unity in the Chapel?

Prayer: Please spend some time praying for one another.