

COMMUNITY GROUP WEEKLY DISCUSSION GUIDE
WEEK OF JUNE 22, 2009

THIS WEEK'S FOCUS

The Five Fold Ministry of the Church

"The implication of preaching is plain: when God sends his emissaries to declare, 'Your God reigns!' his aim is not to constrain man's submission by an act of raw authority; his aim is to ravish our affections with irresistible displays of glory. The only submission that fully reflects the worth and glory of the King is glad submission. Begrudging submission berates the King. No gladness is the subject, no glory in the King."

–John Piper, *The Supremacy of God in Preaching*

"Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it. And God has appointed in the church first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healing, helping, administrating, and various kinds of tongues. Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles? Do all possess gifts of healing? Do all speak with tongues? Do all interpret? But earnestly desire the higher gifts."

1 Corinthians 12:27-31

THIS WEEK'S TEXT

Ephesians 4:7-16

RELATED TEXTS TO EXPLORE

1 Cor 12; Heb 5:14, 13:9; James 1:6; Col 2:19; Rom 12:6-8; 1 Pet 4:11

STUDY GUIDE

- **What observations can be made about:**
 - Grace – its distribution and measure
 - Jesus' ascension and descension
 - The five offices of ministry named here
 - The purpose and goal of those offices
 - The purpose and goal of "ministry"
 - How to avoid "every wind of doctrine", "human cunning", and "deceitful schemes"
 - Means of growing "into Christ"
 - The functioning of the "body"
 - The effects of a properly working body
- **What does each of these things mean? What did they mean for the church at Ephesus then, what do they mean for us now?**

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

Use any or as many of these questions as will be helpful for your discussion.

- What has God spoken to you about this week regarding the sermon or passage?
- What does this passage reveal to us about Jesus?
- How does this passage enhance our understanding of the Gospel?
- What does this text mean for us as a community? Individually? How does it free us to be the people God intends for us to be?
- How do we need to live out the meaning of this text in our city?
- What do you sense is (are) your spiritual gift(s)? Do your aspirations, affections and affirmations point to that (those) gift(s)?
- Do you ever experience "gift lust"? Do you despise your gifts, or are you content with them?
- How are you currently exercising your spiritual gifts for the good and health of the church? How do you need to be exercising them?
- Are you "doing the work of ministry", or are you simply watching others do it?

"Although [the Church] is not to be identified as the kingdom, it is called to be the community here on earth that demonstrates the glories of God's reign. As the body of Christ, the church is called to live for the peace, love, and joy of God's reign."

-Mark Gornik

MEMORY VERSES

Last Week: Eph 4:4-6

This Week: Eph 4:15-16

PRAYER FOCUS

For the Vision and Direction of the church (June):

Apostles Church wants to be a people devoted to prayer. We will pray as Jesus taught us, seeking God's presence, power and favor to accomplish His purpose.

In Response to the Text:

- Praising Jesus for ascending far above the heavens and filling all things
- Praising God for granting us grace in Christ
- Confessing our lack of unity and faith
- Confessing our immaturity and propensity to stray
- Thanking God for overcoming our reluctance and coldness towards him and saving us
- Thanking God for making Christ our head and joining us (the Church) together as one body
- Asking God empower us to speak the truth in love, that we might become fully mature and that our city might hear and embrace the beauty of the gospel
- Asking God to strengthen and protect our pastors and teachers, and to help them in equipping us for the work of ministry

FURTHER RESOURCES FOR STUDY AND PREPARATION

- *Life Together*– Dietrich Bonhoeffer
- *The Pursuit of God*– A.W. Tozer
- *Discover Your Spiritual Gifts*– C Peter Wagner
- *The Supremacy of God in Preaching*– John Piper
- http://theresurgence.com/series/spiritual_gifts?page=1 – Mark Driscoll Blog

NEXT WEEK'S TEXT

Ephesians 4:17-24