



Growth Group Discussion Guide

"Growing Upward, Inward, Outward, and Forward"

For the Week of January 31, 2016



1 Corinthians 1:4-17

Thanksgiving

4 I always thank my God for you because of his grace given you in Christ Jesus. 5 For in him you have been enriched in every way—with all kinds of speech and with all knowledge— 6 God thus confirming our testimony about Christ among you. 7 Therefore you do not lack any spiritual gift as you eagerly wait for our Lord Jesus Christ to be revealed. 8 He will also keep you firm to the end, so that you will be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. 9 God is faithful, who has called you into fellowship with his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

A Church Divided Over Leaders

10 I appeal to you, brothers and sisters, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree with one another in what you say and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly united in mind and thought. 11 My brothers and sisters, some from Chloe's household have informed me that there are quarrels among you. 12 What I mean is this: One of you says, "I follow Paul"; another, "I follow Apollos"; another, "I follow Cephas"; still another, "I follow Christ."

13 Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Were you baptized in the name of Paul? 14 I thank God that I did not baptize any of you except Crispus and

Gaius, 15 so no one can say that you were baptized in my name. 16 (Yes, I also baptized the household of Stephanas; beyond that, I don't remember if I baptized anyone else.) 17 For Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the

Sermon Outline

- In this week's passage, Paul gives thanks for the church's faith and spiritual gifts but also attempts to redirect their pride toward humility in recognition that all they are and all they have come from God.
- Beginning in verse 10, Paul confronts the issue of their divisiveness and pleads for unity.
- He urges them to focus on Christ rather than their different preferences lest they empty the cross of Christ of its power.

WELCOME – Getting to Know Each Other Better

- What style car do you prefer and why? Sedan? Convertible? SUV? Truck? Minivan? Performance?
- How did God initially get your attention?

WORD - Applying Scripture to Our Lives

1. What was one of the causes of division in the Corinthian church according to today's passage?
2. Have you ever experienced division within the church based on people's preferences? Examples?
3. What do you think causes us to take on a consumer mentality at church? (Meaning that we become focused on what we personally like and view church from the standpoint of "What's in it for me?")
4. How do we balance wanting certain things in a church and understanding that church is not about our personal preferences?

gospel—not with wisdom and eloquence, lest the cross of Christ be emptied of its power.

Ephesians 4:11-16

So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, ¹²to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up ¹³until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.

¹⁴Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of people in their deceitful scheming. ¹⁵Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ. ¹⁶From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.

John 17:20-21

“I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, ²¹that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me.”

5. What gifts of God did Paul remind the church that they had received in verses 4-9? Who sustains these things?
6. How was Paul able to give thanks for this church when so much was wrong with them? What can we learn from this regarding how we treat others in the body of Christ?
7. What is the goal of pastors (and church members) according to Ephesians 4:11-13?
8. Why does Jesus say unity in the body is important in John 17:20-21?
9. What would you say you are currently doing to build up the body of Christ? As a member of the church, do you feel that it is your obligation to help build up the church?
10. What are some ways we can “empty the cross of Christ of its power?” (v. 17)
11. How would you define unity?
12. What is the primary thing we should unite around as a church? In times of disagreement, how can we remind ourselves of this?

WITNESS - Prayer Concerns from my Growth Group:

- Who has God placed in your life who does not know Christ?
- How can we pray for your spiritual growth tonight?
- What other prayer concerns do you have?