

# Sermon-Based Small Group Bible Study

## Glorious Church: One Body, One Purpose (Ephesians 4:1–16)

### Open

Select one of these “ice breakers” to get the conversation going toward the study.

- Have you ever done something for which you wore a uniform? What did putting on the uniform mean for you?
- Have you ever had a memorable experience of teamwork? Describe it.
- Do you have an unusual or distinct physical talent, sublime or ridiculous? Tell about it.

### Dig

After reading Ephesians 4:1–16 together, discuss these questions.

1. The text begins by urging readers to “walk worthy of the calling” they’ve received, to live in a way that fits the gospel. What is the gospel all about as you understand it? What kind of life fits for one called by the gospel?
2. In verse 2 we see the character a life that fits the gospel. How do these fit with the story of Jesus and what he has done for his people?
3. Verses 3–6 emphasize the unity of the church and the necessity of preserving and enhancing it. What makes unity difficult? What nurtures unity? Note anything you see in our text that strengthens unity when faithfully practiced.
4. Verses 8–10 describe Christ like a victorious leader after battle who shares the spoils of battle with his people. Then verses 11 and following describe the spoils of battle as gifts for serving one another in strengthening one another in faith and unity. How are those gifts like the Lord who gives them and the victory he brought by his death and resurrection?
5. Verses 13–16 contrast the effect of exercising the Lord’s gifts (verses 13, 15–16) with the condition of God’s people without those gifts (verse 14). How would you describe this difference?

*Summary: Because we are saved by Christ’s gracious sacrifice on the cross, we are called to a life like his, in which we love and serve one another. The Lord empowers us to do that very thing, and as we exercise that power, we see the people of God drawn together, made strong, and so more fully express Christ’s victory. In that we become one church, united by our common salvation, honoring our one Lord.*

### Reflect

Use any of these prompts to encourage group members to apply the text to their own experiences.

- Disunity in the church is painful and discouraging. But unity in the church is a source of strength and comfort. This can be a good time to reflect on those experiences and what we’ve learned from them.

- Consider the virtues in verse 2: humility, gentleness, patience, bearing with one another, love. To which of these may the Lord be calling you for growth?
- Our text is an example of the way right belief should lead to right practice. What in the Christian faith do you need to put into more consistent practice?

## Pray

Invite the group to pray together using any of these suggestions.

- What needs have you heard from others in the group that we can pray about?
- Let's pray for the unity of our small group and of our church, that we can be one in our purpose and our love for each other.
- This text puts a special emphasis on the role of leaders in the church. Let's spend part of our prayer time praying for our church's leaders (and maybe even the leader of our group).