

## Small Group Questions

Week 5 – Where has God positioned me?

In the Church

October 14-20, 2018

In our small groups this week, we're going to look at the same passage Pastor Steve preached from this past Sunday. This passage begins the practical application of Paul's message to the church of Ephesus. In Chapters 1-3, Paul addresses profound spiritual truths for these new believers. Truths like:

- God knew them before they ever believed in Him.
- The Holy Spirit lives in every believer.
- The same power that raised Jesus from the dead is at work in them.
- Where once they were dead in their sins, now they are alive in Christ.
- They are ONE in Christ.
- Through Christ, they now have peace with God.

In chapters 4-6, Paul shifts his focus to helping them connect these spiritual truths to the struggles they face in their everyday lives and relationships. Realities like:

- Living out their calling in the context of the church.
- Dealing with temptation and sin.
- Working out marriage, parenting, and relationships where there is a huge imbalance of power (slavery).

Interestingly, Paul opens the application of spiritual truths by addressing what it means to function as a body of believers.

- ❖ Read Ephesians 4:1-16 out loud in your group. Then re-read verses 1-6.
- ❖ Why do you think Paul emphasizes humility, gentleness, unity? What might this imply about the church in Ephesus? Does this encourage you in any way, given the struggles you may have witnessed during your involvement with the Church?

Now read verses 7-13.

Paul tells his readers that part of God's provision to help them live in unity is the various "gifts" He has given. (I'll refer to these gifts as motivations from this point forward because I believe they have less to do with skills/aptitude than with passion/motivation.)

- ❖ Take a few minutes to discuss the two different ways of reading the word "some".
  - He chose "some" (a few out of the many) to be apostles, prophets, . . . . .
  - All were chosen but "some" were given the motivation of an apostle, some were given the motivation of a prophet, . . . . .
  - Which of these seems to be most consistent with Romans 12:4-8?

- ❖ Briefly review the various motivations.
  - Apostle – desire to make advances for God’s Kingdom by going beyond what is already established. This may mean leaving existing relationships in order to start something new.
  - Prophet – desire to see God’s people walk rightly with God. The prophet sees ways God’s people compromise their commitment to Him and are willing to challenge this “drift”.
  - Shepherd – (In your Bible it may read “pastor”.) A pastor or shepherd wants to see the people of God grow and remain safe. They do this best by nurturing those who are under their care.
  - Teacher – desire for truth to be understood and embraced. Teachers have the ability to understand and clearly communicate God’s Truth. They are students and value knowledge.
  - Evangelist – desire to see men, women and children respond to the Good News of salvation through faith in Jesus. They sense an urgency to reach others because they are aware people are dying apart from Christ every minute of every day.
  
- ❖ Take some time in your group to identify the motivation you experience most deeply. Tell others where you see this surfacing.
- ❖ Next, identify the motivation that you experience least. How does this dynamic affect the way you relate to people who are most motivated by what motivates you least? Or vice versa.
- ❖ Finally, if you see a specific motivation in someone else in the group, highlight that.

Read verse 14-16.

- ❖ Pause for a moment to let the picture Paul is painting sink in. Imagine what it would be like if our church made steady progress toward this goal. What sort of an impact might we have on our community?
- ❖ How do the motivations listed in verse 11 serve to fulfill God’s purpose of seeing His people become mature? Is there a motivation you think is missing within your small group? Or within Pine Knolls? How might the absence of this motivation weaken us as we seek to grow and become mature?

Closing

- ❖ Take some time pray – thanking God for the different gifts/motivations He has placed within your group and church. Ask Him to enable your group and our church to fully embrace each motivation; allowing it to influence our spiritual development.