

# Small Group Discussion Guide: Unity & Maturity in the Church

Based on Ephesians 4:1-16

## Opening Prayer & Icebreaker

**Icebreaker Question:** Share about a time when you had to "put up with" someone (or they had to put up with you), and it actually strengthened your relationship.

## Key Sermon Summary

The church exists to demonstrate God's plan to restore what is broken. Maturity comes through maintaining the unity that God has already achieved through Christ. Our immaturity fragments the church, but God gives us each other as gifts to grow into Christlikeness together.

## Discussion Questions

### Part 1: Understanding Fragmentation (Genesis 1-11)

1. The sermon walked through how the world went from perfect oneness to complete fragmentation. Which area of fragmentation do you see most clearly in our current culture?
  - a. In relationships (marriage, family, friendships)
  - b. In society (racism, nationalism, power dynamics)
  - c. Within ourselves (internal conflict, body/identity struggles)
2. How does understanding the "whole story" from Genesis help you better appreciate what God is doing through the church?

## Part 2: Signs of Immaturity

The pastor outlined four signs of immaturity. Discuss each one:

**1. Lack of Character (v. 2)** 3. Which is harder for you: humility, gentleness, or patience? Why do you think that is?

4. Do you tend to isolate when relationships get difficult, or do you only spend time with people who agree with you? How can you fight against this tendency?

**2. Being Shocked by Others' Immaturity** 5. Share an example (without naming names) when you were shocked by another Christian's behavior. Looking back, were you blind to your own immaturity in that situation?

6. How does Jesus' teaching about "removing the plank from your own eye" (Matthew 7:3-5) challenge you personally?

**3. Being Undiscerning (v. 14)** 7. On a scale of 1-10, how confident are you in your ability to tell the difference between sound teaching and error? What would help you grow in discernment?

8. What practices can you put in place to become more familiar with Scripture so you're not "tossed by every wind of teaching"?

**4. Leaning Into Personality Over Spirit Power (v. 15)** 9. Do you naturally lean more toward "truth" or "love"?

- If you lean truth: How can you grow in speaking truth with more gentleness and care?
- If you lean love: How can you grow in courage to speak difficult truths?

10. Can you think of a time when someone spoke truth to you in love? What made it effective?

## Part 3: The Source of Our Maturity

**The Seven "Ones" (vv. 4-6)** 11. Paul lists seven "ones" - one body, one Spirit, one hope, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father. How does remembering these help you when you're frustrated with other believers?

**Gifted People as Gifts (vv. 7-13)** 12. The emphasis isn't just on spiritual gifts, but on gifted *people* as gifts to each other. Who in this church has been a gift to you? How have they helped you mature?

13. How are you using your gifts to be a gift to others in the body? If you're not sure what your gifts are, who could you ask for help identifying them?

## Practical Applications

### Personal Reflection

Choose one sign of immaturity that resonated most with you. Write down:

- One specific way this shows up in your life
- One concrete step you can take this week to grow in maturity in this area
- One person you can ask to hold you accountable

### Group Challenge

- **Get Connected:** If anyone in the group isn't in a small group or serving somewhere, commit to signing up this week.
- **Practice "Speaking Truth in Love":** Is there a conversation you've been avoiding? Commit to having it this week with both truth and love. Share with the group for prayer support.
- **Scripture Memory:** Memorize Ephesians 4:2-3 together as a group. Text each other the verses during the week.

### Serve Together

- Sign up as a group to serve in the nursery, welcome team, or upcoming Trick or Treat Path event
- This puts into practice the teaching that we mature through serving each other

## Key Takeaways

- ✓ **Unity isn't something we create—it's something God has already achieved that we must maintain**
- ✓ **Maturity is the result of unity, and unity is the means of maturity**
- ✓ **The goal of maturity is to become like Jesus—speaking truth in love**
- ✓ **We are gifts to each other—isolation prevents maturity**
- ✓ **The cross is God's ultimate example of speaking truth in love**

## Closing Prayer Focus

- Pray for humility to see your own immaturity
- Pray for the church's unity
- Pray for specific people in the group who are facing challenges in relationships
- Thank God for the gift of each person in the group
- Ask God to help you speak truth in love this week

## For Next Week

Read Ephesians 4:17-32 in preparation for the next sermon/discussion. and for peace in areas of their lives that feel disjointed.