

Sermon: We Gather to Grow
Series: Gather and Scatter

Scripture: Ephesians 4:7-16
Date: September 8, 2024

OBSERVATION -- As a group, talk through and summarize the passage. Think through *Who, What, Where, When, How, Why* questions together.

INTERPRETATION -- Answer these questions together:

1. What does this passage teach us about God?

a) Take a close look at Ephesians 4:6. What does it teach us about God, especially in relation to the church's call to maintain unity amid diversity in gifts, ethnicity, race, and culture?

2. What does this passage teach us about us?

a) Elders (Pastors) equip church members to use their gifts to grow into unity and maturity in Christ.

- How have our Elders modeled this at our local church?
- Share a time when a church leader guided you in using your gifts faithfully, following Ephesians 4:12.

b) Pastor Mark emphasized the importance of church leaders teaching sound doctrine to help the congregation discern and guard against the threat of false doctrines and self-centeredness, which could divide us and stunt spiritual growth.

- In today's times, what false doctrines might the church be susceptible to?
- How have you seen our church leaders addressing these false doctrines with sound teaching?
- Considering the strengths of diverse gifts and backgrounds, what self-centered attitudes could divide us, and how can church members support each other to maintain unity?

3. What does this passage teach us about grace/salvation? How does it point to Christ? (Read Eph 4:7-8).

a) Jesus endured evident unfairness and ultimate loneliness at the cross so that we might be welcomed into God's family. How does that influence how you interact with other members of Christ's body?

b) When Christ attained glory, victory, and authority over death, sin, and Satan, He demonstrated generosity by sharing gifts with us. How does that shape your view of the believer's gifts and how the gifts should be used?

c) Jesus has given us all these good gifts so that we all (the church) may mature into His stature. How does that influence how you view the use of your gifts and how you interact with other church members?

APPLICATION

a) Discuss any that resonate with you as you think through the following application. As a member of the church:

- No member is a consumer. We all have gifts, but they are from, for, and to Christ's glory.
- Diversity strengthens unity; it allows us to use our gifts and discernments to maintain unity.
- In Christ, we can't choose between speaking "in love" or "the truth." We speak truth in love.
- Exercising our gifts and discernments is for us together to grow into the image of Christ, not to elevate our self-image.

PRAYER

- Praise God, for He has called you to be a part of His family and mission.
- Confess ways you have yet to use your gifts or utilize them to bring glory to yourself.
- Thank Christ for sharing his victory over sin and death with you.
- Ask God for wisdom and strength to discover your gifts or exercise them graciously and eagerly for his glory.