

Small Group Discussion Questions

Ephesians 4:7-16

1. Serving other believers is a privilege, not a chore. Paul says that God has given each one of us a supernatural capacity to serve the body of Christ: '*grace was given to each one of us according to the measure of Christ's gift*' (Ephesians 4:7; cp. 1 Corinthians 12:7; 1 Peter 4:10). As you contemplate your service in this or some other church, did you jump at the opportunity to serve God? Or did you do it grudgingly? How should your perspective on ministry change in light of Paul's perspective?
2. It is important to serve in our area of giftedness. That is where we get the biggest "bang for our buck." Rather than draining us, our spiritual gifts energize us. Do you know how the Lord has wired you to serve in his church? Familiarize yourself with the various gifts by reading the lists in Romans 12:3-8; 1 Corinthians 12:28; Ephesians 4:11; 1 Peter 4:10-11. Have any of these ever been manifested in your life and ministry? If so, which ones?
3. If you do not know how God has gifted you, here are some questions to help you sort through the options: (i) Do you gravitate toward speaking opportunities or serving opportunities? (ii) What needs do you tend to notice in the church? (iii) What types of ministry energize you? (iv) How have mature believers affirmed your ministry? (v) How has God blessed in your efforts to serve the church—what has been the most fruitful?
4. Paul says that the purpose of pastors is not to do all of the work of the ministry themselves, but rather '*to equip the saints for the work of ministry*' (Ephesians 4:11). Do you think of Pastor Trent as the sole "minister" of the church? Or do you see yourself as

a minister too? Are you willing to let him and other mature believers in the church train you for ministry? What effect would it have on the church if Pastor Trent had to do it all himself? What if everyone chipped in?

5. Are you serving in some capacity at Harvest-Granger? If so, in what? How is that working out? Is it a good fit for you? If you are not serving, how would you like to get involved? As a greeter-usher? Children's ministry worker? Setup or teardown teams? Worship or production? Some other ministry? Do not sit on this. Make your desire to serve known to your small group leader or Pastor Trent.

6. Now some believers have an inflated view of their own giftedness. They claim to possess a gift that is not theirs, or else think they are further along in the development of that gift than they really are. They may try start at the top with a prominent public ministry. But Scripture says that we must be faithful over little before we will be entrusted with much (cf. Matthew 25:21). Are you willing to start small and work your way up, as you prove yourself faithful? Are you open to constructive feedback from more mature believers?

7. Some churches teach that the certain spiritual gifts have ceased, such as tongues, prophecy and healing. Others affirm that these gifts are still in existence today. What were you taught in your previous church? What implications does Ephesians 4:13 have for the debate, regardless of your position?