



MATURE: Be the Best Church Ever (Ephesians 4:1-16)

#6 in the series, The Game of LIFE: Ephesians Edition

October 18, 2009

Core Truth:

God uses our diversity to produce maturity and unity.

Four Foundations for the Best Church Ever

1. We deepen our fellowship by strengthening our individual character (4:1-2).

2. We maintain peace by fighting for unity (4:3-6).

3. We express our diversity by ministering with our gifts (4:7-12).

4. We mature by living and speaking the truth in love (4:13-16).

fold here



Getting to Know Each Other

1. What was one of your craziest or most wonderful experiences in a church?

Getting Started

2. How has the first three chapters of Ephesians changed you so far?

3. Do you think there is one or two right ways to structure a church (meaning line of authority, decision making, elders, deacons, etc.)? Why? Would you agree that, like everything in life, the Bible should provide the truth on what is right and wrong about a church and how to "design" it?

Digging Deeper

4. There were five character traits in Ephesians 4:2. If we all had these, what would be great about church? On a scale of 1-10, where are you with each of these traits?

5. Read Philippians 2:1-11. What is inspiring or challenging here?

6. When it comes to fighting for unity amidst conflict, which are you: (a) ostrich, I stick my head in the sand; (b) rhino, I plow and leave a wake of wounds; (c) gerbil, I accept and never challenge; or, (d) wise dog, I am loyal but will let you know when you're wrong. What needs to change?

7. Read Ephesians 4:7, 11-12. "Spiritual gifts" are abilities God gives us to serve others. (For extra work, you can look up the passages on Spiritual gifts and discuss them: 1 Cor. 12:8-10; 12:28; 12:29-30; Rom. 12:6-8; 1 Peter 4:9-11.) Why, as here in Ephesians, do you think teaching is so important to a church? See what Acts 6:1-7 adds to this.

8. How does Ephesians 4:11-12 support these two beliefs about the local church: 1) every member is a minister; and 2) we experience unity but not uniformity? If we truly led every member to unleash his or her gifts, what would happen? Are you unleashing your gifts?

9. In Ephesians 4:1, Paul begs us to "live a life worthy." Talk about what that calling feels like to you. Explain what "worthy" means and the weight it carries. What could you do this week to move in that direction?