



House Church Study Questions Based on the SAC Sermon on May 30,2021

Sermon: The Nature and Purpose of Church
Text: Ephesians 4:1-6

Gathering Guidelines

-Watch intro video for this week.

<https://youtu.be/Pc8h9vfvXGc>

Take some time to worship

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MHLEZzyAZrI> Stand In Your Love

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XAHpIkqyL0g> God You're So Good

Read Ephesians 4:1-6

Discussion Questions

Icebreaker Question: Imagine that you are stranded on an island in the middle of the Pacific Ocean. A box washes up in the shore and it has three locks on it with one key hanging on the side with a note attached to it. The note says: "This key will open any of these locks but as soon as it is used it will break, so the other two locks will remain. Each lock opens one section of the box. In section 1 there is a jackknife. In section 2 there is an inflatable dingy. In section 3 there is a survival guide.

"Which section would you open?"

Question #1: In Ephesians 4:1 Paul says that "as a prisoner of the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received."

Imagine a prisoner in a cell. The things you see and experience are very reduced. . .not a lot of distractions. Paul is saying here that he has his entire focus and attention on Jesus.

Do you think that it's possible to live your life with your attention on Jesus? Do you think there is a difference between having your focus *on* Jesus all the time or seeing your life *through* Jesus?

Talk about this difference.

Question #2: Verses 2-3 says that part of living our calling is to be “completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.”

It would seem that our *calling* is about personal transformation. The mission of the church (which is you and I) is to reflect Jesus more and more in things like humility, gentleness etc.

But we can't do this in our own strength, and often the church can look as divisive as anything you would see in the world. We can try and focus on attaining unity, or we can focus on the Spirit Who shapes us into unified people.

What do you think might stand in the way of growing more deeply in the 'unity of the Spirit?'

Question #3:

When God first made the church He did so by bringing Jews and Greeks together. They had hated each other for generations. God didn't say that they should try and get along, He said they are brought together in order to love each other.

In our church there are Mennonites, Catholics, Lutherans, Presbyterians, Pentecostals, Baptists, United, and others. We all bring our versions of doctrines and generations of people to back and support our views.

God calls us to not just get along with each other, but to *love each other*.

What He is teaching us in Ephesians is that the goal of the church is to learn to love each other, genuinely and deeply, as Jesus loves us. The reason for this is so that we would become an expression of the gospel to the world.

**When you hear this what thoughts come to mind?
Is this something that is attractive to you?
Is this something you think is possible?**

Question #4:

This is the last question for today: Have you thought that the primary mission of the church are the external things we do? (teaching, preaching, sharing the gospel etc). Does it seem strange to you that God would say that one of His primary goals is to *make you an expression of His gospel to the world?*

Take some time and describe how you see someone else in your group growing as an expression of the gospel? What kind of characteristics do you see in them that remind you of Jesus? (Make sure that everyone receives something here.)

Invitation and Mission for this week

This week you are invited to ask the Lord to show you three things that hold you back from allowing Jesus to transform you into loving others as Jesus loves you. Take time to pray and think this through.

You will be expected to bring your list to the next house church gathering.

(Note: If there is something on your list that is too personal to share with the group then just tell them and they will understand. But don't use this as an excuse to not seek after Jesus to discover what they are. It's important for your growth.)

Pray for each other