

Church Growth through Spiritual Gifts

[Note: Try to focus more time on questions 5-10 than on the earlier questions.]

1. Skim the first three chapters of Ephesians, and note any phrases that address Paul's idea of "the calling with which you have been called." Based on these ("Therefore"), how does Paul implore us to respond to this calling? (4:1) State this command in your own words.
2. How will exercising the five character qualities in v. 2 preserve the unity of the Spirit in the church body (3)? How is this unity different from both "uniformity" – us all being the same – and "can't we all just get along"- despite the obvious differences in our culture?
3. After discussing unity in v. 3, Paul gives us seven "ones" (4-6) that unite believers. Try to list something about each item that helps us understand the true unity of our faith.
4. In 3:7-8 Paul talked about "the gift of God's grace which was given to me." What was this grace given to him in 3:8? In 4:7 Paul uses similar wording to describe the grace that Christ has given "to each one of us." How do these two short passages introduce the topic Paul is going to discuss in 4:11-16? (Hint: see the title of the lesson)
5. Think about the five spiritual gifts listed in v. 11. In what ways have believers with these gifts ministered to you over the course of your fellowship time at our church?
6. What key lessons do we learn about how the church should operate in v. 12? How well do you think our church is fulfilling these purposes with the spiritual gifts given to us?
7. From verse 13, what can all believers look forward to in the future when Christ returns and the church is complete? What are your thoughts on what it will be like to reach maturity as it is described here?
8. Give some examples from our culture today that are trying to deceive Christians or keep others from coming to Christ. Think about the sciences, media, entertainment, and also about trends in some other churches and religious groups.
9. What does it mean in your life to practice "truthing" (15)? With what does this need to be balanced in our lives, and why? What will be the result of practicing truth like this?
10. How does the description of a properly working human body (16) illustrate for us how God designed the church to grow? Reviewing verses 11-16, what is it that actually causes Biblical church growth? What is the final word on the topic, at the end of v. 16?