

Message Discussion Guide

DISTINCTION

The Church at Brook Hills,

Dr. David Platt, Deric Thomas, Chris Nichols,

June 21, 2009
1 Corinthians 13:14

This guide is to help you facilitate discussion with your Small Group. Use it as a resource to lead your group in discovering and owning the truths of God's Word. There may be questions you do not want to use and there may be instances where you just want to focus on a particular point or truth. Some questions may bring out emotions and cause people to dwell on their relationship with God. Your role is to facilitate this experience not to complete the discussion guide. Use this as a flexible teaching tool not a rigid teaching task list.

Connect . . .

Use one or both of the following options to introduce the discussion time to follow.

Option 1

Invite learners to think about the way that they prefer to close out letters or emails to close friends. Encourage several or all of them to share the way they close communication and to explain why.

Explain that today we'll be discussing the way that Paul closed out his second letter to the Corinthian church and the way that it reveals his heart for the community of faith.

Option 2

Encourage learners to think about any groups, official or unofficial, in life. Examples include facebook groups, college fans, civil organizations, clubs, etc. Direct learners to share as many groups as they can think of. Then ask the following questions:

What is the common thread for a group? Why do they make a group together?
How does each group illustrate the purpose of each group?

Explain that today we will discuss the common thread for a community of believers and how this community expresses itself to others.

Review the Message . . .

"The Grace of the Lord Jesus Christ"

- **The grace of Jesus Christ is the foundation of the community of faith**

Discussion Questions

- Enlist two learners to read 1 Corinthians 13:14 and Ephesians 2:1-7. How is the grace of God illustrated in the lives of believers?
- What is the purpose of God's grace?
- Looking at Ephesians 2:5, how does the grace of God unite the community of faith?
- How does the grace of God remove any personal glory from the body of believers?

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- Read 1 Chronicles 16:8-12, 24-36. Remind learners that this passage is an account of David leading the people of God in worship.
- According to this passage, who is to be the object of worship and the focus of glory from the community of faith?

Application . . .

- What are some ways that we ignore the importance of God's grace as we interact with other believers?
- How can we steal God's glory? What can our disregard for God's glory indicate about our view of Him & ourselves?
- How does God's grace provide the foundation for our community?
- How can we portray the importance of God's grace in our lives?
- How should our lives illustrate the grace of God and His glory to the nations?

“And the love of God”

- **God chose to lavish His Fatherly love on sinners.**

Discussion Questions

- Read 2 Corinthians 13:14 again.
- Enlist two learners to read Ephesians 1:4-5 and Romans 5:8. Describe the love that is illustrated in these passages.
- How does this kind of love define the relationship between God and His people?
- Do God's people earn/deserve His love?
- Enlist two learners to read Psalm 36:7 and 1 John 3:1. How is God's love described in these passages?
- How does God's Fatherly love complete the Trinitarian picture in 1 Corinthians 13:14? How is God's fatherly love illustrative of the grace He gives His people?
- Why does God's love provide a distinction for His people?

Application . . .

- How does God's identity as the Father affect how you view His love?
- How is God's love illustrated in the way that we interact within our community of faith?
- How do we show a marked distinction as the people of God by the way that we show God's love within the community of faith?
- How do we show a marked distinction as the people of God by the way that we show God's love to unbelievers and to the nations?

“And the fellowship of the Holy Spirit”

- **Fellowship is an indicator of God's work as a community of believers.**

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Discussion Questions

- Enlist three learners to read Matthew 28:19-20, John 14:16-17, and Romans 8:26. How do these passages inform our understanding of the role that the Holy Spirit plays in our personal relationship with God?
- Read Philippians 2:1-5. How does this passage describe how fellowship with other believers through the Holy Spirit should look?
- Enlist a learner to read Ephesians 1:23. Can the church be an expression of God if believers are independent of each other?
- How does fellowship personally and corporately bring glory to God?

Application . . .

- Do we ever attempt to forego fellowship with other believers through the Holy Spirit?
- What are images that we often have of “fellowship?” How do these passages inform our biblical understanding of what true fellowship is?
- How can our personal fellowship with the Holy Spirit affect our corporate fellowship with believers—positively and negatively?