



## Life Group Study Notes

### “We Are Family: Church”

Ps. James Lowe - August 25, 2019

#### **Warm Up (10-15 minutes)**

**Choose a question to briefly answer, or ask another. No right or wrong answers.**

- How many siblings do you have? Who were or are you closest to?
- Were you closer to your mom or your dad when you were a teenager?
- Was your family relationally close or scattered when you grew up?

#### **Word (10-15 minutes)**

**Sermons can be heard online at [www.bethelworld.org](http://www.bethelworld.org)**

Today we're focusing on the fourth word in our church name: Bethel World Outreach Church.

*Ephesians 4:11-16 ESV “And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes. Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.”*

#### **Ministry**

Jesus has set apart for God everyone who believes in him. They are “saints,” which means “holy ones” or “set apart ones.” They are called and privileged to serve him, one another, and the people of the earth. This is what ministry is; it is simply serving others. Jesus has a meaningful role and ministry function for each of us.

To fulfill his purpose for us, we must be equipped. Those who equip us are specially called and gifted by God to do this. Paul identifies those called to equip us as apostles, prophets, evangelists, and pastors and teachers. Apostles can help us learn how to break new ground and to bring order. Prophets can help us learn to hear God's voice and be led by the Spirit. Evangelists can help us learn how to effectively communicate

the Gospel to others. Pastors can help us learn how to care for others. Teachers can help us learn how to understand and apply God's word to our lives.

### **Unity**

God wants us to grow together in unity. This happens as together we pursue our relationship with him and fulfill his purpose for us. As we learn together we will grow in our knowledge of Jesus and in our trust in him. We are to speak truth to one another in love. All of us need adjustment in our knowledge, character, and behavior. Love creates an environment that makes it possible to give and receive correction in addition to encouragement, exhortation, and comfort.

We will also grow in unity as we serve one another. We become more closely knitted together as each of us meets one another's needs. Giving and receiving ministry binds us together, which invites the presence, blessing, and favor of the Lord.

### **Maturity**

God's aim is to have us grow into "mature manhood," to the "stature of the fullness of Christ." God's intention is to fully restore the image of God in us, to conform us into the image of Christ. Together we are to grow throughout our years here on earth. When we pass through death, God will perfect what remains lacking in us. Until then we are to keep growing and disciple the next generation that they might grow as we have.

Maturity means we are healthy in our souls. It means that we are crucifying our sinful desires and impulses. It means we are keeping step with the Holy Spirit and are bearing the fruit of the Spirit.

### **Discussion (10-15 minutes)**

**Choose one of the points below, and discuss how the lesson applies to our lives.**

- How would you like to serve God's people in the future?
- Who are you closest to among God's people who is the most unlike you?
- How have you spiritually matured over the past few years?

### **Prayer (10-15 minutes)**

**Pray any of the following, as well as any other requests you may have.**

- Thank God for the church.
- Ask God to help us grow in ministry, unity, and maturity.
- Ask God to show us the people around us that we can help grow.