

# IMITATE

SMALL GROUP  
DISCUSSION GUIDE  
PART II



# IMITATE THE CHARACTER OF CHRIST: LOVE

**Check in** – share your successes and/or struggles with the last challenge.

**Watch** *Imitate the Character of Christ — Love* video on Mt. Zion’s YouTube channel (Commit, Imitate, Replicate playlist) or on the website.

**Read** 1 Corinthians 13:4-7.

## ***Invitation***

If you were to give a definition of love, what would it be?

Do you think the world’s definition of love is different from God’s definition of love? How so?

In the sermon, it was said that Jesus often allowed himself to be “inconvenienced” to love and serve others. What are some examples of this that you see in scripture?

What are some ways you have experienced God’s love in your life? How has that changed you?

We are called to imitate the love that Christ showed us to the world around us. Something Pastor Riley said was that people should have to earn our trust, but not our love. Do you agree with this statement? Why or why not? (Romans 5:8; Romans 2:4)

Do you believe that the Church in America is doing a good job modeling Christ’s love to the world around us? How do you think that we can better show that love?

# IMITATE THE CHARACTER OF CHRIST: LOVE

## **Challenge**

Who in your life do you feel it is easy to show Christ's love to?

Who in your life do you feel it has been difficult to show Christ's love to?

Take some time to reflect on where God is calling you to grow in your love. Are you loving your family well? Are you showing the unconditional love of Christ to your "enemies?" Your "I will" statement should reflect some of these steps God is leading you to take.

**I will** \_\_\_\_\_

\* Please share your "I will" statement with your small group.

## **Pray**

1 John 4:19 says that we can love because He first loved us. We cannot love others unless we are being transformed day by day by His radical love for us. Take some time to pray for a fresh encounter with God's love that will overflow into those around us.

## **Next Steps:**

Choose a prayer partner and throughout the week, check in with each other on these "I will" statements. Encourage and pray for one another. At your next small group gathering, share your successes and struggles in your commitment to grow into a more loving, Christ-like person. share your successes and/or struggles with the last challenge.

# IMITATE THE CHARACTER OF CHRIST: FORGIVENESS

**Check in** – share your successes and/or struggles with the last challenge.

**Watch** *Imitate the Character of Christ — Forgiveness* video on Mt. Zion's YouTube channel (Commit, Imitate, Replicate playlist) or on the website.

**Read** Matthew 6:14-15; 18:21-35.

## ***Invitation***

What does it mean to forgive?

Discuss this parable and how Jesus calls us to respond to others in forgiveness. Is there a limit on how many times we should forgive?

Is there a cost to forgiveness? Is it freely given?

What are the results of forgiveness for the person who forgives and the one who is forgiven?

What happens when you don't forgive?

What does imitating Jesus' forgiving character do in our lives? What would the world think of the church if it displayed it?

Read Luke 23:34. Discuss Jesus' response to those who crucified him. How can we take on the character Christ displayed on the cross?

Will you share some practical steps on forgiving someone that have helped you and them?

# IMITATE THE CHARACTER OF CHRIST: FORGIVENESS

## **Challenge**

We are called to imitate Christ who forgave those who did not deserve it. Forgiveness does not mean one must give full access and trust to the person who hurt you. Boundaries are healthy and important, but walking in the way of forgiveness brings healing and transformation.

*“I always thought forgiveness was an unfair gift we have to give to the person who hurt us, and what I discovered is forgiveness is more about God giving the gift of healing to our hearts. Forgiveness is both a decision and a process.”*  
- Lysa Terkeurst

Who do you need to extend the grace of forgiveness to?

Who do you need to seek forgiveness from?

With these names in mind, take a moment to pray for them and yourself. Write down how you will walk out imitating Jesus in the act of forgiveness.

***I will*** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

\* Please share your “I will” statement with your small group.

## **Next Steps:**

Choose a prayer partner and throughout the week, check in with each other on these “I will” statements. Encourage and pray for one another. At your next small group gathering, share your successes and struggles in your commitment to grow into a more forgiving person.

# IMITATE THE CHARACTER OF CHRIST:

## COMPASSION

**Check in** — Share successes and/or struggles with the last challenge.

**Watch** *Imitate the Character of Christ — Compassion* video on Mt. Zion's YouTube channel (Commit, Imitate, Replicate playlist) or on the website.

**Read** Luke 10:25-37.

### ***Invitation***

What does this parable show us about compassion?

Looking at the characters of the priest, Levite, and Samaritan, what do you think was the motivation behind their responses to the injured man?

What does this show us about their character? Who was the neighbor to the injured man and why was that a shock?

The enemy is the hero in this story. The neighbor to the man who was robbed was the Samaritan. The actions of the Samaritan were compassionate, selfless, and costly. This parable opened some eyes in Jesus' day. It should still be doing the same today. The point of Jesus' parable was this: anyone in need is our neighbor, anyone who helps another in need is our neighbor, anyone who helps us is our neighbor.

***Challenge - (for challenge portion, break up into gender-based groups)***

We see compassion all across the pages of scripture. It is one of the main character attributes of God. If we were to describe our attributes in 10 words, would compassion make the list?

# IMITATE THE CHARACTER OF CHRIST: COMPASSION

There have been many times in our lives where we have needed help, haven't there? Times when someone came along and showed compassion towards us. Please share an example from your own life.

Is there a time when you showed compassion towards someone? Please share.

Jesus' example shows that serving others with a humble heart doesn't mean we have to do great extravagant things to do what Jesus would do. Sometimes we can simply touch the untouchable and share God's loving, life-changing grace. That should be our goal, and it starts with compassion.

We all probably know somebody going through a tough time or situation right now. How can you show compassion and help meet a need for them?

Take a moment to pray about how you can imitate the character of Christ in regard to showing compassion.

***I will*** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

\* Please share your "I will" statement with the group.

## ***Next Steps:***

Choose a prayer partner and throughout the week, check in with each other on these "I will" statements. Encourage and pray for one another. At your next small group gathering, share your successes and struggles in your commitment to grow into a more compassionate person.

# IMITATE THE CHARACTER OF CHRIST: HUMILITY

**Check In** – share your successes and/or struggles with the last challenge.

**Watch** *Imitate the Character of Christ – Humility* video on Mt. Zion’s YouTube channel (Commit, Imitate, Replicate playlist) or on the website.

**Read** Matthew 23:1-12; 1 John 2:15-17.

## ***Invitation***

How is all sin rooted in pride?

Jesus points out that legalism (being judgmental), hypocrisy, and the desire for status and power were roots of pride in the Pharisees. How do we deal with these issues in our own life and develop mercy, integrity, and servanthood that is rooted in humility?

What other things in our lives are rooted in pride?

Read Philippians 2:1-11 and John 13:3-5,12-17.

In Philippians 2:1-4 Paul shows how humility leads to unity. Discuss the attributes of humility and pride in this passage and how it relates to imitating Christ in the church.

In Philippians 2:5-11 Paul describes Christ’s example of humility by emptying himself. How can we imitate this and “wash the feet” of our brothers and sisters in Christ?

# IMITATE THE CHARACTER OF CHRIST: HUMILITY

## *Challenge*

Romans 12:10 calls us to outdo one another in honor. C.S. Lewis defines humility saying, “Humility is not thinking less of yourself but thinking of yourself less.” Let’s consider the call to imitate the attitude of Christ in humility (Philippians 2:5), to empty ourselves and become like a servant to others.

What will you do to crucify pride and clothe yourself in the humility of Christ? Pray about this and write down what you will do to address pride in your life and put on the humility of Jesus.

*I will* \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

\* Please share your “I will” statement with your small group.

## *Next Steps:*

Choose a prayer partner and throughout the week, check in with each other on these “I will” statements. Encourage and pray for one another. At your next small group gathering, share your successes and struggles in your commitment in growing a humble spirit.

# IMITATE THE BODY OF CHRIST: FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT

**Check in** – share your successes and/or struggles with the last challenge.

**Watch** Imitate the Body of Christ — Fruit of the Spirit video on Mt. Zion’s YouTube channel (Commit, Imitate, Replicate playlist) or on the website.

**Read** Galatians 5:13-26.

## *Invitation*

The fruit of the Spirit is rooted in serving each other (v13). How should we define “freedom” within the reality that our freedom is not for ourselves but to love others?

When the church devours one another (v15) it taints its witness. Based on this passage, what are some ways that the church gives in to the flesh, instead of walking by the Spirit?

How do we walk by the Spirit?

The fruit of the Spirit is an embodiment of Christ’s behavior and is others-focused. Discuss each fruit and how it can be displayed towards others (v22-23) in imitation of Jesus.

Read Matthew 7:15-23. How do we discern fruit in others and ourselves? Is it discerned by results, behavior, attitude, or something else?

How does someone crucify the flesh (Galatians 5:24-25)?

# IMITATE THE BODY OF CHRIST: FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT

## **Challenge**

Read Galatians 5 verses 22 and 23 again. Can you say that: \_\_\_\_\_ (your name) displays the following fruit \_\_\_\_\_ (i.e. joy, peace, self-control, etc.)? Review each fruit in the passage in your life by asking this question. Which fruit can you say that you are doing well in? What fruit do you need to work on?

Pray and ask the Holy Spirit to help you produce that fruit. Write down an “I will” statement regarding your commitment to grow in that specific fruit of the Spirit.

***I will*** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

\* Please share your “I will” statement with your small group.

## **Next Steps:**

Choose a prayer partner and throughout the week, check in with each other on these “I will” statements. Encourage and pray for one another. At your next small group gathering, share your successes and struggles in your commitment to nurturing the fruit of the Spirit in your life.

# IMITATE THE BODY OF CHRIST: GIFTS OF THE SPIRIT

**Check in** – share your successes and/or struggles with the last challenge.

**Read** Romans 12:4-8; 1 Corinthians 12:4-11.

**Watch** *Imitate the Body of Christ – Gifts of the Spirit* video on Mt. Zion's YouTube channel (Commit, Imitate, Replicate playlist) or on the website.

## ***Invitation***

What do you think is the purpose for the gifts of the Spirit in the church?

Pastor Riley said that unless our life mission lines up with Christ's mission, we may not be active in walking in our gifts. Do you agree with this? Why or why not?

What does the illustration of the hose and the sprayer have to do with walking in the gifts and purposes God has given us in the body of Christ?

Pastor Riley shared a story of when his leg fell asleep in the morning and how that impacted what he was trying to do. What would it be like to have a part of your body permanently sleeping? Do you think this happens in the church today? What are the consequences?

Read 1 Corinthians 12:7; 1 Corinthians 12:15-18. How can comparison keep someone from fulfilling their calling in the body of Christ? Have you ever found yourself affected by this?

# IMITATE THE BODY OF CHRIST: GIFTS OF THE SPIRIT

***Challenge - (for the challenge portion, break up into gender-based groups.)***

What is your mentality towards the gifts of the Spirit? Are you like a kid on Christmas morning, or are you more hesitant? Why?

Do you think you know some of the gifts that God has used you in?

How is God calling you to use your gifts in the body of Christ?

Take time to pray for each individual and help encourage them in some practical ways that they can grow based on what they shared in the group. Your “I will” statement should reflect some of these steps. (For some it may be to read/pray through the packet on the gifts.)

***I will*** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

\* Please share your “I will” statement with your small group.

## ***Next Steps:***

Choose a prayer partner and throughout the week, check in with each other on these “I will” statements. Encourage and pray for one another. At your next small group gathering, share your successes and struggles in your “I will” statement.

# IMITATE THE BODY OF CHRIST: FIVE-FOLD GIFTS

**Check in** – share your successes and/or struggles with the last challenge.

**Watch** *Imitate the Body of Christ — Five-Fold Gifts* video on Mt. Zion’s YouTube channel (Commit, Imitate, Replicate playlist) or on the website.

**Read** Ephesians 4:1-16.

## ***Reasons for and Definition of the Gifts***

The gifts of apostle, prophet, evangelist, shepherd, and teacher are given to equip the church for church in service and unity in imitating Jesus.

*Apostle* — Apostles plant new ministries and churches, go into places where the gospel is not preached, reach across cultures to establish churches in challenging environments, raise up and develop leaders, call out and lead pastors and shepherds, and much more. They often have many different gifts that allow them to fulfill their ministry. These are leaders of leaders and ministers of ministers. They are influencers. They are typically entrepreneurial and are able to take risks and perform difficult tasks. Missionaries, church planters, certain Christian scholars and leaders, and those leading multiple ministries or churches often have the gift of apostleship.

*Prophet* — Prophets were covenant enforcers in the Old Testament and helped keep God’s people in line with the truth. Prophecy is the ability to receive a divinely inspired message and deliver it to others in the church. These messages can take the form of exhortation, correction, disclosure of secret sins, comfort, inspiration, or other

# IMITATE THE BODY OF CHRIST: FIVE-FOLD GIFTS

revelations given to equip and edify the body of Christ. They do not constitute the authoritative Word of God but are the human interpretation of the revelation that was received. They are spoken in human words through a human mind which is why they must be tested against the scriptures. The Holy Spirit gives the gift of prophecy to some believers to make God's heart known and to edify the church. This gift is for the benefit of both believers and unbelievers and is a sign that God is truly among His church. Those with this gift are sensitive to both the prompting of the Holy Spirit and the needs of the church body.

*Evangelist* — Evangelists are given the unique ability, by the Holy Spirit, to communicate the gospel of Jesus Christ clearly and effectively to others. They are burdened in their hearts for the lost and will go out of their way to share the truth with them. Evangelists are able to overcome the normal fear of rejection and engage non-believers in meaningful conversations about Jesus. Their gift allows them to communicate with all types of people and therefore they receive a greater response to the message of salvation through Jesus Christ. They continually seek out relationships with those who don't know Jesus and are open to the leading of the Holy Spirit to approach different people. They love giving free treasure away for Jesus, and it brings them great joy knowing that the "feet that bring good news" are beautiful to those who believe.

*Shepherd* — Shepherds kept a lookout for predators and protected the sheep from attackers. They cared for wounded and sick sheep, nursing them back to health. They rescued them if they became lost or trapped. They spent enormous amounts of time with them, guiding them to places of nourishment and rest. The result was a trust and relationship that kept the sheep following the shepherd. In the church,

# IMITATE THE BODY OF CHRIST: FIVE-FOLD GIFTS

shepherds called and gifted to care for the spiritual well-being of a local body of God's people. Shepherds are first and foremost servants. They are servants of God and servants of His bride, the church. They are given a mixture of abilities by grace that allows them to serve the needs of an entire community.

*Teacher* — Teachers, those with the spiritual gift of teaching, love to study the Word of God for extended periods of time and communicate it to others. They consume the scriptures as food for their hearts, souls, and minds with the express purpose of knowing Him and then making Him known to others. They want to know what God has revealed of Himself and what He requires of us as people created in His image. They take great joy and satisfaction in seeing others learn and apply the truth of God's Word to their lives. They love to see how the Gospel is woven throughout the scriptures and how it glorifies and magnifies Jesus Christ in the hearts and lives of those who love Him by grace. The Holy Spirit gives certain people the spiritual gift of teaching so that they can help the church fulfill her ministry as "a pillar and buttress of the truth" (1 Timothy 3:15). Without this gift, the church would quickly fall into error and sin. Teachers are there to make sure that doesn't happen. They object when scripture is abused and used out of context or with ill intent. They love the truth and speak the truth in love.

## ***Invitation***

These five gifts are not an exhaustive list of spiritual gifts (See Romans 12 and 1 Corinthians 12) or a hierarchical list of offices in the church. Instead, this is a list of some gifts that are essential for a healthy church. What might these look like at Mt. Zion?

# IMITATE THE BODY OF CHRIST: FIVE-FOLD GIFTS

Gentleness, humility, and patience (Ephesians 4:2) are needed in the exercising of these gifts. What might it look like if a gift doesn't demonstrate these qualities? What happens when we lean too much into one gift and neglect the others? Consider each of these five gifts.

How do these gifts foster growth and maturity in the body?

Discuss the importance of the metaphor of "body" when we consider gifts of the Spirit. Read 1 Corinthians 12:12-27 and look at how all the gifts work together.

## ***Challenge***

Which of these five gifts do you see in your life? How can you exercise your gifts to build up the body of Christ into maturity? How can you start using your gifting in your small group and in the church gathering? How can you support those who don't have the same gift as you?

Pray about these questions and discuss them with your small group. Write an "I will" statement about how you will exercise your gift in the body of Christ.

I will \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

\* Please share your "I will" statement with your small group.

## ***Next Steps:***

Choose a prayer partner and throughout the week, check in with each other on these "I will" statements. Encourage and pray for one another. At your next small group gathering, share your successes and struggles in your commitment to using the gifts the Holy Spirit has given you.

# IMITATE THE BODY OF CHRIST: UNITY

**Check in** – share your successes and/or struggles with the last challenge.

**Watch** *Imitate the Body of Christ – Unity* video on Mt. Zion's YouTube channel (Commit, Imitate, Replicate playlist) or on the website.

**Read** Ephesians 4:1-6, Philippians 2:1-4, John 17:20-22.

## ***Invitation***

What does unity look like?

Humility is the prerequisite for unity. Agree or disagree?

Read Galatians 5:13-15.

God often uses people who rub us the wrong way to make us more like Jesus. Are there certain people or types of people in the church who continually irritate you? Are there people in the church that you seem to clash with? Remember, God Isn't in the business of making them more like you; He's in the business of making all of us more like Jesus.

Read Romans 14:1-5.

How can there be unity in the body of Christ when there is so much disagreement? Are there some beliefs that we have to agree on? Are there some beliefs where agreement is not essential? Remember, when someone disagrees with us, they don't necessarily disagree with God.

# IMITATE THE BODY OF CHRIST: UNITY

## **Challenge**

Read Ephesians 4:1-6 again.

How do we maintain the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace?

Here are some ideas, but please add or substitute your own.

1. Consider others better than yourself.
2. Be gentle.
3. Don't seek so much to be understood as to understand.
4. Be patient, bearing with one another in love.

In the coming weeks, what specific steps will you take to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace?

Take a moment to pray and write down what you will do to maintain the unity of the Spirit.

***I will*** \_\_\_\_\_

\* Please share your "I will" statement with your small group.

## **Next Steps:**

Choose a prayer partner and throughout the week, check in with each other on these "I will" statements. Encourage and pray for one another. At your next small group gathering, share your successes and struggles in your commitment to Unity in The Body of Christ.