

SMALL GROUP STUDY GUIDE



**PRINCE
OF PEACE**
Called to Connect



Encourage One Another

October 23 & 24, 2021

Imagine Prince of Peace as a community of faith that is purposeful about being the light of Christ for others, a community that encourages each other to live with open hearts; a community of faith that practices generosity and seeks ways to "learn Christ." How close to that vision are we? And how do we encourage one another to get there?

SCRIPTURE TEXT: EPHESIANS 4:17-29

Read the scripture text together as a group.

BACKGROUND INFO

We are exploring what makes a community of people a healthy, vibrant community of Christ-followers who love and encourage one another, who bear one another's burdens and forgive and honor one another. The tension, of course, is that while our culture celebrates individualism, in the Kingdom of God, community is a core value. The Christian Scriptures are filled with the Apostle Paul's language about the "Body of Christ." Paul used phrases like "each other" and "one another" to emphasize the community over the individual. Along with that, there are many commands in the scriptures which provide both the framework and the details of what it means to live in a community in which we are brothers and sisters.

Paul raises some issues that are helpful for us to notice here. First, Paul clearly calls out a community that has little or no inner compass, that gravitates toward – as Paul writes, "going along with the crowd, the empty-headed, mindless crowd," a community that has lost touch not only with God but with reality itself. Ouch! Paul was never known to mince words. But Paul is equally forceful and clear when he reminds Christ-followers that they are the community that has "...learned Christ." They are a community that has paid careful attention to Jesus and has taken on an entirely new way of life, a God-fashioned life, a life renewed from the inside and working itself into their lives, producing God's character within them.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Share about a time when you experienced encouragement from others.
- What is God teaching us in this passage?
- How might this passage change the way we think about the way we encourage one another?
- What does it look like to live in courageous community with one another?

APPLICATION: This week, consider one step you can take to help create courageous community with those around you. What might that look like in your daily life?