

DISCUSSION GUIDE
This Is Who We Are, Part 8
One and God and Father

Text: Ephesians 4:1-6

Warming Up

1. How are you like (or not) your father?
2. What is (was) your relationship to your father? How does that color your experience of God as Father?

Digging In

Read Ephesians 4:1-6 (Or better yet – recite it from memory!)

1. How does the ancient *Shema* (Hear, O Israel, the LORD is your God, the LORD is one) inform Paul's insistence on the oneness of the church?
2. Pastor Craig noted that this is part of a longer thought that runs through Ephesians 4:16? How can we be one when we are all different?

Focus on Ephesians 4:6

1. Pastor Craig said that Paul's understanding of God as Father is rooted in Rabbinic understandings. Did that help you understand Paul's declaration? How is that understanding different than what you might initially think? (Reference Hosea 11:1 and Psalm 2:7)
2. What difference would it make if we started with our understanding of church from who God is rather than who we are?

Read Luke 15:11-31

1. How does Jesus shift the seeing our relationship with God as Father from the head of family to an intimate family relationship?
2. What are the implications of seeing who we as the church are as defined by who God is rather than what we hold as correct doctrine or practice?
3. Do you think the church is being affected by consumerism as people choose their church experience?

Read Psalm 133

1. What is it like when there is unity?
2. What metaphors would you use to describe unity among God's people?

Read Ephesians 3:15

1. Does it make a difference if we look at each other as members of one family?
2. How does understanding that we have one God and Father – of all, over all, through all, and in all?

Sending Out

God's family is who we are! What one step can you make today to live more fully as a family member?

Closing

Reread Ephesians 4:1-6.

Close in Prayer