



**DISCUSSION GUIDE**  
**Week 4**  
October 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2010

**Small Group Warm-Up**

This weekend Pastor John Burke stated that it's easier to love God and love your dog than it is to love God and love other people. Any dog lovers out there? If so, tell us about your favorite canine. OK...cat lovers can share too.

**Opening Prayer**

Father God, thank you for allowing us to be part of your body. By staying willing and available to you we can experience growth and healing, and we can also extend hope and help to those around us.

**Discussion Questions:**

**Read Ephesians 4:11-16**

Pastor John Burke said that people have always been a part of God's plan for meeting the needs we encounter in our world. I don't know about you, but I often feel overwhelmed when I see the number of needy people around me. Thankfully, we are not called to meet these needs alone. When we each do our part, we can make a tremendous difference!

- In verse Ephesians 4:16 we are told that the body of Christ grows and is strengthened as each part does its work. Take a moment to write down two things you are already doing or could do to help the body of Christ grow in numbers and in strength by meeting needs you are aware of. Share your thoughts with your group.

John shared that 1 in 2 people are struggling with serious financial difficulties, 1 in 2 people have experienced the pain of divorce, 1 in 5 people are struggling with some kind of addiction, 1 in 4 women have been victims of sexual abuse, 1 in 3 women have experienced an abortion, 1 in 3 men and 1 in 2 women have had some kind of cancer and 1 in 4 people do not have one close friend.

- How do those statistics make you feel? Do you see yourself in one of these statistics?
- Is there someone close to you who is experiencing one of these kinds of pain? What act of kindness could you do that might provide someone you know with hope and help?
- Friendships don't happen by accident, they are built over time. Write down one thing you will do this week to invest in a relationship that is important to you.

**Read Matthew 9:35-38**

When Jesus looked at crowds of people he was moved with compassion and took action to extend hope and healing.

- Have you been to any big events in our community recently, such as a sporting event or a concert? What were some of your observations of the people around you?
- If you were to look at people through the eyes of Jesus, what would be different about your attitude or behavior?

**Read 1 Corinthians 12:21-23, 26-27**

Pastor John shared that when we join forces with the body of Christ we are no longer separate silos of self-will, but interdependent, uniquely gifted parts of a whole.

- Name someone who has a unique gift that is different from gifts or abilities you possess. How has knowing that person enriched your life?
- Sometimes we mistakenly believe that our gifts are less important or impressive than those of others, but this passage reminds us that we all need each other. Ask every person in your group to share one gift they have. Write these down, then read through the list of combined gifts and abilities and discuss how these gifts can multiply when they are combined.

**Closing Prayer:** Jesus, help me this week to see with your eyes, to reach out with your hands, and to join with your body, bringing hope and healing to this world.