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## EPHESIANS 4:14-16

Ephesians: Recognizing Who You Are in Christ

Open your Bibles to Ephesians 4. We're going to pick up the lesson today in verse 15 because we're studying verse by verse. We're just going right through the book of Ephesians in God's word. We're asking questions. How does this apply to us? What can we do about this? You're coming today on a very interesting Sunday because we're learning more about what the church is, how it operates. This may be helpful for you as you're trying to understand what God's church is all about according to the Bible.

Let's pray together before we jump into this passage.

[PRAYER] Heavenly Father, we thank you for the opportunity to open your word. Thank you for speaking to us through it. We ask, Lord, that you would teach us straight from the Bible, that we would understand what you have for us this morning. In Jesus' name, amen.

I'm going to pick up the lesson from last week's teaching just to catch you up so you can see where we are in the passage. Ephesians 4:11 is where we're going to start.

It says this: *So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers (so God has given leadership to the church), to equip his people for works of service. Who's doing the work of the church? It's the people, not just the paid professional; it's the people who are doing the work, so that the body of Christ may be built up. That's the goal; that maturity can happen in the church until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.*

So here's the idea. You have church leadership that Christ has given to the church and their job is to equip the body so that all of us then are working together. When we do that something supernatural takes place among us and spiritual growth starts to happen inside. That happens inside of the individuals because the individuals are growing spiritually and it also happens within the church where the church could be that effective church in the area.

Church is not defined as a meeting that we have on Sundays. Church is defined as this connection, this interaction that takes place. That's what he's talking about so far. We have to understand that that's what the church is. The church is a connecting place; a place that when we get together and do what we're supposed to do as the church, something supernatural takes place inside of our lives and through us as we reach out to others.

Now as we enter verse 14, where we are today, we have two pictures that help us understand this idea. The first picture is one about babies, very appropriate for us today on a day when we're doing a baby dedication. The other is a picture of a ship on a sea.

If you look at verse 14 you'll see what it says there. It says *then*. In other words, once the church is doing what it's supposed to do and people are growing in Christ, they're becoming more mature in their spiritual lives. Spiritual maturity inside of a person, *then*, verse 14, *we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of people in their deceitful scheming.*

When the church is functioning as it should then the leadership is equipping people, ministry is taking place, and people are growing on the inside, growing spiritually.

I want you to take some time today and look at yourself and evaluate. Are you growing spiritually? We're going to talk about what that growth is, what it looks like, and what God's desire is for us. If you're growing spiritually in your life then good things will happen inside of you. That's what we're talking about today.

The first illustration is about babies. One of the most exciting times in a family's life is when a new baby is born. You got all the "oohs" and the "ahs" and all the excitement about that baby being born. Everything is really great until you take the baby home from the hospital and then you have to figure out what are you going to do with these diapers and how do you get them on this baby? You lose sleep trying to figure out what's going on and taking care of this baby. There are responsibilities involved in that. There's joy in the childbirth and it's followed by this responsibility that takes place in raising that child.

The same thing's true when it comes to God's family, the church. When people get saved (we use that term to refer to when people accept Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior or they say, "I want to be a Christian") we go, "Yea! That's great!" Ooh and ah, a new person comes into the faith. It's like they've become a baby in Christ. But then comes the responsibility of helping that person grow. Whose responsibility is that? It's all of our responsibility to be caring for each other and connecting each other and growing and helping people get disciplined and so on in order for that growth to take place.

Some people say, "Oh wow. I become a Christian; I have to be a baby? That's kind of humbling to think that I become a Christian, I become a baby. What am I now?" Well, the Bible says that now if you're not saved that you're dead spiritually. So you go from being dead spiritually to being a baby. That's not a bad idea. Moving into this new spiritual growth plan and growth experience inside your life. There's this transformation that takes place from not having Christ in your life to accepting Christ into your life that turns you into this baby that's starting to grow spiritually.

I love babies. Babies are always beautiful, even if they're ugly. I love being with babies. They're a lot of fun. They're exciting. I love the old kids and I love toddlers too. You see Joseph running around up here. He's a fun little guy. It's fun to watch babies, toddlers running around, doing their thing.

But if a child doesn't grow up, doesn't learn to talk, doesn't learn to walk, then we start having some serious concerns. We call in the professionals. Why? What's going on? The growth isn't taking place. We're going to talk about that growth today because it's spiritual growth that needs to take place in every one of our lives.

How are you doing in growing spiritually? This is your opportunity to evaluate yourself, kind of do a report card on your life and say, "How am I doing in my own spiritual growth?" God may speak to you this morning and encourage you to move to the next step in that spiritual growth in your life. Something supernatural takes place when God's people get together and when God's church is functioning, so you can expect that to take place in your life today. God may do something supernatural in you while you're here today. He may speak to you.

The second idea that he talks about besides babies is this idea of being *tossed back and forth on the waves*. This idea is that there are some people who in their spiritual growth rely on going to events. This event, that event. Or they're easily susceptible to scheming and ideas. People say, "Oh, I can help here! I can help here!" and so they're moving all over the place to try to get their spiritual growth to take place.

There's nothing wrong with going to events at other churches, this church, or other places. But if we rely on those for our spiritual growth, then something's wrong. Spiritual growth takes place in a person's life when they're connected to God's church and what's happening. That's what it's talking about in the passage. Something supernatural takes place in your life when you're part of a functioning church that's growing and developing and being the church that God wants it to be. You become part of that. In the midst of that, something amazing happens inside of the church itself, but also in your individual life. You have spiritual growth that takes place and it's then that you get connected.

So real spiritual growth doesn't happen by events or by running around to the latest thing that's going on; it happens by digging in, getting committed to a group, and watching that thing called the church take place in your life and the development take place in some important ways.

Teaching the word is an important part of that. I spend time each week preparing what I am going to teach to you from the word and looking at the study myself. I'm trying to understand what does the Bible say, how does it apply to me in my own life first, and then how can I share with you something that will be helpful for your life as you're trying to grow spiritually as well.

So this being connected is part of what he's saying here in Ephesians 4:14. We're connected together, something's happening, and we're growing together.

Verse 15 continues on. Let's go to the next verse. It says, *Instead* (that is, instead of being tossed back and forth by the waves or instead of just being an infant), *speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ.*

There are two things he says that are going to help you to grow up spiritually. Truth and love. Both of those are going to be important and you'll use both of those in your relating to other people. Truth and love; both are important.

Too much truth without love results in harshness or inconsideration. Too many of us engage in the sin of thoughtless unkindness. We justify it because we're right. "That person needs to hear what I have to say and I'm going to tell it to him." How many times do we regret not that the person needed to hear it, not even that we said it, but we said it in the wrong way. Too much truth, not enough love can get us into trouble. It's very important for us to balance those two kinds of things.

There are people who air on the other side. Too much love and not enough truth. Too much love is peace at any price. We won't bring anything up that's conflict because we don't like to deal with conflict, so we'll just deal with the love to keep peace at any price.

Truth and love must be balanced like two wings on a bird to make that thing fly. That's what we're talking about here. We need truth and love in our lives in order to develop the growth that needs to take place. Both of those become important.

Let me just show you one verse in the Bible. I love this verse. It just reminds me when I think, "Boy, that person. I got to go tell him, give him a piece of my mind." Galatians 6:1 says this: *Brothers and sisters, if someone is caught in a sin (that is, they've got a problem of some kind), you who live by the Spirit should restore that person gently.*

First of all, *you who live by the Spirit* means I need to be looking at my own life. I need to be sure that I'm on the right track before I go and start correcting somebody else. And secondly, when I do it, I need to do it gently. That's a word for all of us that we need to be careful about just using truth to come and challenge someone. We must balance that with love and be careful how we do it.

I want to talk about this idea of being mature. That's what's mentioned in the verse several times. I want you to look at verses 11-16. I want to go through 11-16 and I want you to see how many times this idea of growing, maturing, building up exists.

Back in verse 11 it says, *So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up.* That's verse 12. Verse 13: *until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature.* Do you see it says right there in the passage: *become mature.*

Verse 14: *Then we will no longer be infants.* The desire is we will be maturer than babies. That is the mention there. Verse 15: *Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body.* Again, talking about growth.

Verse 16 says, *From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament (important word for you. I know it'll mean something to you), grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.*

God is concerned about maturity. We're not just talking about responsibility here, physical responsibility, or just being a responsible person; we're talking about spiritual maturity. We're talking about the spiritual part of your life. Is it growing? Are you still a baby or are you growing in some significant ways?

This is such an important idea that I want you to understand the difference between two concepts. I think this will be helpful for you as you're trying to understand what spirituality and spiritual maturity are.

I want to compare those two things. What is spiritual maturity and how is it different than spirituality? Two different terms or terminology that I want you to understand.

The first one I want you to look at is spiritual maturity and that's what we're seeing in Ephesians 4:13. Spiritual maturity, not infants growing and so on. The way we look at that is in terms of growth. There's spiritual growth, different levels that we're moving on, and this is something that's more or less. In other words, it's a growth process. We're on different levels.

You probably know someone who's more spiritually mature than you are (that means they're further along) and someone who's less spiritually mature than you are. It's a progressive line or a continuum. It could be considered a ladder moving up. Just in the same way we talk about infancy and toddlerhood and preschool, just as in physical development, we spiritually grow and develop. That's spiritual maturity.

I don't want you to confuse that with another concept and that is spirituality. We're going to talk about spirituality in the next chapter when we get to Ephesians 5:18 because spirituality is different. Spirituality means letting the Spirit of God control your life. This is not more or less; this is all or nothing. You're either in or you're out. Either or. Spiritual means that you're letting the Holy Spirit run your life at any given moment. Carnal or fleshly (the other side of this) is when you're not allowing the Spirit to run your life.

When you're allowing the Spirit to run your life; right now this is how I like to think about it. At any given moment, like right now, at this time and this day, are you spiritual at the moment? You are if you're letting the Holy Spirit run your life right at this moment. If you're not then just while I'm talking pray and say, "Lord, I want you to control me right now." If you do that then you are just as spiritually filled or just as spiritual as Billy Graham or whoever else might be more spiritually mature than you are. Anybody can be on the same level when it comes to this spirituality. God, I want you to run my life at this moment right now.

Can I be spiritual for five minutes? In other words, can I let God run my life for five minutes and do okay? Yes, I think I probably could for five minutes until someone interrupts me and then I give them that dirty look and whoops! I've just moved into the carnal side because I've taken control. I now have moved out of the spiritual circle into the carnal circle. Fleshly. I'm starting to

run my life based on my flesh and not on the Spirit. How long can I stay in that spiritual circle? That's the goal. How long can I stay there? How often can I be there? That's our goal. If we want to be spiritual, that's Spirit-led, Spirit-controlled. Very important idea.

If you're having a prayer time at the end of your day confessing your sins before you go to bed, I think you might be making a mistake. Because if you're carnal at a moment, the way to get back into the spiritual side is to say, "Lord, forgive me for that. Would you fill me again?" That's why the words in Ephesians 5:18 say, *Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit.* The idea is continually be filled.

I like to say confession on the run. You sin or maybe it's not just a sin in the sense of disobeying one of the Ten Commandments, maybe it's just taking control of something. Saying, "I'm going to solve this problem my way. God, I don't need you on this one. In fact, step back. I'm going to take over." We start doing it our way and we've moved into the fleshly side.

I think that people who are really smart or really skilled at what they do live in the fleshly side a lot. "I can take care of this." Where people who are weak say, "I cannot do this." It's hard for people who are really skilled or really smart to live on the spiritual side because they've got to be continually going to the Lord and saying, "Lord, I want you to fill me today. I want you to fill me this hour. I want you to fill me this minute. I want to do what you want me to do. I want to live for you."

When you're being spiritual, that is, you're allowing the Holy Spirit to run your life, then you start progressing up that ladder of spiritual maturity. That's how they relate together. Let me show you some other verses that talk about this idea of spirituality.

In Galatians 5:16-18 it says, *So I say, walk by the Spirit* (that is, make a choice to live in the spiritual circle), *and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh* (or the carnal circle). *For the flesh desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the flesh.* They are two separate circles. You're either in one or the other right at this moment. It's not like you can have one foot in one and one foot in the other. You are either in one or the other. If you're not in the spiritual circle, you're in the carnal circle. They are contrary to each other. In fact, the verse says, *they are in conflict with each other, so that you are not to do whatever you want. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.*

The idea is right now you, wherever you are in your life, can choose to be led by God's Spirit or not. Very important that we understand this idea.

I want to show you another verse that's going to bring the two concepts together. The idea of spirituality and spiritual maturity; we're going to bring those together now in the passage in 1 Corinthians 3:1-3. It says, *Brothers and sisters, I could not address you as people who live by the Spirit* (characterized by living in the spiritual circle). I couldn't address you that way, he says, *but as people who are still worldly, fleshly, carnal.* Over here you tend to live over on this side. And then he says—*mere infants in Christ.* So on the progressive side you're stuck over here as infants. You might be a Christian for a long time and still be an infant. He's saying you're stuck

down here being an infant because you're not allowing the Holy Spirit to run your life and grow you spiritually. That's what he's talking about here.

Verse 2: *I gave you milk, not solid food, for you were not yet ready for it. Indeed, you are still not ready. You are still worldly. For since there is jealousy and quarreling among you, are you not worldly? We cannot do all that God has for us without ascending the ladder of spiritual maturity, without having God in control of our lives. God has a lot.*

What is God's mission for you? God designed you. He has a plan for you. He's given you a mission. Do you know what that is? You will not be touch with all of what God wants for you unless you are living by the Spirit, unless you are growing in this ladder of spiritual maturity.

That's why what we're talking about here is so important. It implies growth. Growth implies change. And that change is sometimes not pleasant. But we want to make the changes necessary to be tied into what God wants to do so that spiritually we can be growing up.

And that is when we go back to Ephesians 4. That is the purpose of the church. The purpose of the church is not just to get together on Sunday mornings and have a meeting. That's not what we're talking about. We're talking about being connected within this thing he calls the church and this supernatural stuff starts taking place inside of our bodies and we grow spiritually.

John Maxwell tells an interesting story. He says this: "A group of American tourists walked through a quaint English village in wonderment. They were enamored by the town's winding cobblestone streets, the beauty of its courtyards and plazas, and the sense of history emanating from its ancient churches. While strolling through the local park, the tourists struck up conversation with an elderly gentleman and found out that he had lived in the town for his entire life. One of the Americans, eager to hear more about the town's history, asked, 'Sir, have any great men been born in this village?' 'Nope,' said the old man, 'only babies.'"

I think that's true about Christians too. You don't get to be a spiritual giant instantly. It's a matter of growth and something that takes place in our lives over time.

I want to read a quote from A. W. Tozer, a great theologian. He says this about spiritual growth in his book called *Following Hard After God*: "If we would find God amid all the religious externals, we must first determine to find Him and then proceed in the way of simplicity. Now, as always, God reveals Himself to 'babes' and hides Himself in thick darkness from the wise and the prudent. We must simplify our approach to Him. We must strip down to essentials (and they will be found to be blessedly few). We must put away all effort to impress, and come with the guileless candor of childhood. If we do this, without doubt, God will quickly respond. We need not fear that in seeking God only we narrow our lives or restrict the motions of our expanding hearts. The opposite is true. We can well afford to make God our All, to concentrate, to sacrifice the many for the One. The man who has God for his treasure has all things in One."

I think that's a good quote. It describes the importance of seeking God with all of our hearts.

If you're going to imagine spiritual maturity - I once wanted to create a report card, like a spiritual report card that we could measure so that we could all do a self-evaluation and see how we're doing, grading ourselves on our spiritual maturity. I was never successful. It just kept getting bigger and bigger and became unreasonable to use. Maybe you could create something like that. It would be great.

But here are four different kinds of thinking that people engage in that illustrate maybe where they are in the continuum. Four stages of spiritual, mature thinking.

One: "I'm going to do what I want regardless of any thought of God." Now that's where some people are. "I don't care what God thinks; I'm just going to do what I want." That's a very low form of spiritual integration into a person's life.

Secondly, someone might say, "If God gives me what I want then I will give Him what He wants." So there's this exchange. Saying, "God, I'll make a deal with you. I'll give you what you want if you do what I want." There's a sense of exchange that takes place where "God, if you'll do this for me, you give me the job I want, then I'll go forward and I'll serve you." Or "Lord, if you'll get me out of this problem I'm in then I'll serve you." Those kinds of things. "I'll do what you want me to do." That's the second form of spiritual thinking.

A third form of spiritual thinking is this: "I will give God what He wants with faith that He will give me what I want." The idea is I'm going to do this for the Lord and I'm going to trust that He's going to bring me what I want and I'm going to get it.

But the fourth kind of spiritual thinking, which seems to be most mature, is to say, "I will give God what He wants regardless of any thought for myself." The idea is that I'm growing in my thinking. I'm learning, I'm expanding my ability to trust God no matter what happens because I know that He designed me, He created me, and He's moving me forward.

Spiritual growth implies a process. Not just motion. There are some people who are very involved in activity. They're going from here to there. Wherever they're going activity is big, but there's no progress in their lives. There's no purpose. Just because you have activity doesn't mean there's purpose. We're talking about spiritual maturity; we're not just talking about following the crowd because often the crowd doesn't know where it's going. We're talking about following the Lord and doing what God wants.

Let me help you understand a few more things about spiritual growth. I want to talk about what growth is not.

Growth is not automatic, it's a choice. Age does not equate with growth or maturity. It's not automatic, it's a choice.

Secondly, growth is not instant, it's a process. There's no magic pill that will instantly make you spiritually mature. There are no shortcuts. It's a process.



Growth doesn't just happen by attending church. You have to develop a way of living and moving forward. That's why we often talk about take Jesus home. We don't mean just take Him into your family; we mean take Jesus home into your workplace, to your house, to your neighborhood, to your family, wherever you're going to put it into practice because that's where spiritual growth is practiced. It's not just attending church that brings you to a place of spiritual maturity.

Fourthly, growth doesn't just happen by yourself. Other religions sometimes say, "If you want to grow spiritually you need to isolate yourself, get alone, hibernate yourself in order to do that." That's not what the scriptures teach. The scriptures teach, at least in this passage in Ephesians 4, that it's integrated with the way that we're relating together as a church. The church is the place that's stimulating that growth and good things are happening.

The last thing that I want to say that growth is not is it's not measured by beliefs only. Beliefs are important because beliefs change our heart, but it has to do more with the tendencies or the practice that we have. Can we take what we believe and really bring it down into how we live? That is important. If you think that spiritual growth is only about memorizing Bible verses or learning theology in your head or listening to a sermon on the radio or at church, then you're missing the practical part which is to take Jesus home into your everyday life. It is good to listen to sermons. It is good to memorize scripture. But we must go the next step and say, "So what? How does this apply to me? What am I going to do with this particular information?"

If that's what growth is not, let's talk about what spiritual growth is because I think this will be helpful for you as you're trying to understand spiritual growth for your own life.

The first thing I would suggest is that spiritual growth is intentional. It means that you have a plan. If you're going to go on a diet, you need a plan. If you're going to grow spiritually, you need a plan.

A. W. Tozer writes this: "Think about people who find themselves in religious ruts. They discover a number of things about themselves. They will find that they are getting older but not getting any holier. Time is their enemy, not their friend. The time they trusted and looked to is betraying them, for they often said to themselves, 'The passing of time will help me. I know some good old saints, so as I get older I'll get holier and better. Time will help me, purify me and revive me.' They said that the year before last, but they were not helped any last year. Time betrayed them. They were not any better last year than they had been the year before."

The idea here is that spiritual growth is intentional. You want to grow spiritually? You need a plan.

The second thing we want to say about spiritual growth is that it's a process. It takes place over time. When Jesus called His disciples, He said to them, "Leave your nets and follow me." That was just the first step. And they went. Sometimes that's what it means for each of us. Sometimes we have to leave some stuff in order to come and be with Jesus. But then the next step is being with Jesus and getting to know Him. How does He operate? And then Jesus sent them on assignments to do things and they started integrating the teaching that He had in some significant

ways. It is a process for us to grow spiritually. That's what it is and that's what we want to do in our lives.

Another thing we see about spiritual growth is that it's individual. Your spiritual growth plan is going to be different than another person's spiritual growth plan. God designed a Billy plan or a Jimmy plan or a Susie plan uniquely for you. You don't take someone else's spiritual growth plan and say, "I'm going to embrace it." You may take an idea, like read through the Bible in a year kind of an idea, and start working on that. Or you might take some plan from someone else, but you have to realize that God has you on a different plan. You have different needs. You have different challenges that you face every day.

Integrating faith into your life is an individual process. What is God going to do with you uniquely to grow you spiritually?

Another thing is it's very practical. Please don't think that spiritual growth has something to do with just attending a service and learning some more information. That's not what we're talking about. We're talking about integrating that into your life in a way that takes place very practically. What does it mean for you to get up tomorrow morning and deal with the struggles that you face in the morning, to get out the door, or do what you need to do during the day? That's the practical side of spirituality. What does it mean for you to have spiritual maturity in the midst of those particular things?

Another part of spiritual maturity is that it involves people. We grow in community and that's what the passage today is talking about and helping us understand.

Let me just read back. Verse 15 says, *speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ. From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.*

It's those ligaments that we often ignore. You don't talk to your ligaments. You don't say, "Hey ligament, how are you doing?" Those ligaments we take for granted in our lives. And sometimes those ligaments get damaged. They need some help and restoration. They need some work. But what is the purpose of a ligament? The purpose of the ligament is to help things stay connected. Notice what it says there. *The whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament.* You are a ligament, a supporting ligament. You're part of that body.

If you want to grow spiritually it's not about just attending a church, it's about being connected. Being connected in a way that's watching things happen. It's a way that's contributing to what's going on in the life of that entity. Because something supernatural takes place in God's church.

It's a privilege for me to watch that. When I see someone come to church and they say, "Wow, this is great," and they start getting involved and God starts doing a work inside their heart, I'm going, "There it is again. There's that supernatural thing that God does." When growth sometimes takes place over time, we go, "There it is. God's doing that supernatural thing."

I invite you to be part of God's church. If this isn't the church for you, maybe there's another church that you're attending and you're visiting with us today. Great! Be committed to that church because you can be committed to another church that's teaching the Bible and you can grow in that church. We're not saying this is the only church in town. We're saying that the church, the way that God defined it, is the place where this supernatural thing takes place in your life.

Church is not a hobby. Church, the way that it's designed, if it's being done right, is ministering to each one of us on this part of our lives that we need to develop in and we need to grow in. It's the spiritual side of our lives, integrating that into every other area of our lives. It's part of what God designed and I invite you to be a part of that with us.

If you would like more information about how to get involved with spiritual growth in your life, I'd love to share that with you. There are others here who can share that with you as well. We love to pray for people because when we pray for people something supernatural takes place in their hearts. Sometimes God changes the situation. Not always. Sometimes He changes, but He always does a work inside of our hearts when we pray. That's why we're connecting ourselves to God through prayer. We're reading the Bible because when we read the Bible we know that something supernatural takes place. It is not an ordinary book. This is not like reading *The Wizard of Oz* or *Harry Potter*. This is God's word. When we read God's word something supernatural takes place and God speaks to us. It's powerful.

I invite you to be a part of that with us as we continue to grow spiritually. I would benefit from your involvement at Calvary Chapel because you stimulate my spiritual growth. That's who we are. We're supporting ligaments growing together as a body and watching God do this supernatural thing inside us and through us as we reach out to the community. So thank you for being here today. I'm grateful for your part in that body.

Let's sing a couple more worship songs before we're done here. This is an opportunity for you to connect with God during the worship. As we're worshiping and we're singing these songs maybe God will speak to you in a way that you can just talk to Him. Maybe you just need to listen to the song being sung. Maybe you'll sing out the song. I don't know. But maybe God will speak to you in a powerful way and you'll be able to respond to Him during our worship time together. Let's pray.

[PRAYER] Lord, right now we come before you and we're acknowledging our weakness, we're acknowledging our need. We come before you with humility knowing that you're the one who speaks to us and leads us. Each one of us has a responsibility in our own spiritual lives to interact with you. So, Lord, as we worship you and as we sing songs we know that that's an opportunity for us to think about the words or to think about you and what you're doing. We take this time now to worship you, to allow you to speak to us, and allow you to do that deeper work inside of our hearts. So thank you. Thank you for being present in our lives, for speaking to us, and changing us to be the people you want us to be. We worship you now. In Jesus' name, amen.