

# Family Devotional

From July 17, 2016

**Experiment:** Take a toothpick or small stick and break it in half. Let those in your group that are old enough break one toothpick in half. It is pretty easy to break one, but what happens when you try to break two together? Now try three? Keep going until you can no longer break them. (You could also do this with pieces of paper and ripping it. A phonebook is a great example of strength in number.)

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

**Reflect:** Dr. Miller likes to ask the question, "How many churches are there in Tulsa?" What do you think?

Now this is a trick question, for though we see church buildings and different congregations spread out all over town, there is only one Church. Often when we see the word "church" in the Bible, it is not talking about one building, rather it means God's children all around the world who have said yes to Jesus. Together we make up the body of Christ, the Church. We do not have to all look alike or worship in the same ways because the most important thing is WHO we are worshipping; the one true God. Reread Ephesians 4:3-5

What do you think keeps us from living in love towards other people around us?

What does the passage say about how we should live? (Ephesians 4:2,7)

Why is living with grace so important?

Since we have received grace from Jesus and he has forgiven our sins, we can more freely extend grace to others when they do something we don't like.

How does speaking truthfully to someone else in a loving way help both of you grow stronger?

When we, as children of God, are able to all stand together as one body of Christ, being humble, gentle and honest with one another we are like the toothpick. It's easy to break one, but almost impossible to break a bundle. We are strongest when we let the love of Christ holds us together.

**Remember:** Work together as a family to memorize/meditate on Ephesians 4:2-3 this week.

*Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love.  
Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.*

Ideas: Write this passage down and hang it on the refrigerator. Say it together as a family during meal time each day. Write it on a chalk or white board and erase a couple of words each day until you can say it by memory.

**Respond:** "Dear God, thank you for calling all your children to make up your Church. Help us to be humble, gentle, patient and loving towards one another! ..... Amen!"