

Community Groups are used extensively as the primary vehicle for discipleship at The Gathering and run on a quarter system. There is one in the fall, one in the winter and one in the spring. During the summer weeks we don't meet in Community Groups but we still offer the Growth Guides as a tool to help you grow personally. The Growth Guides are designed to help you dig deeper into the weekly sermon on your own or with your family and are available each week along with the note sheets at church as well as online.

Consider...

Use the summary and discussion below to review and apply this week's message:

Message Summary

In the final week of our study in 1 John, Paul examines the reality that if we love like Jesus, we'll love the truth. So many times we say that we value the truth, but that's because we think of truth as a checklist of statements that are either true or false. But truth is Jesus, and so lives that love the truth will look like Jesus and will share Jesus with others who need him. When we love the truth, we will speak the truth, and Paul broke that down in 3 simple steps:

1. **First, we must RECOGNIZE the truth.** Truth isn't a feeling, or an ideal, or even the right answer to a test question. Truth is a person, and his name is Jesus. John wrote in 1 John 4:1-3 that the real test of truth was whether or not people recognize that Jesus was sent from God as the Messiah. It isn't enough to just see Jesus (lots of religious people see him). The key is to recognize him.
2. **Then, we must RECEIVE the truth.** 1 John 4:4 says that greater is he who is IN you than the one in the world. The only way for Jesus to be IN us is for us to RECEIVE him and choose to follow him. It's never good enough to know about Jesus. If we're going to love like Jesus, then we've got to receive the truth in such a way that every decision we make is impacted by his standards.
3. **Finally, we must REPEAT the truth.** What's the sure sign that a person has recognized Jesus and received Jesus? It is that they then begin to share the truth of who Jesus is and what Jesus has done with others. Most of us have lived with our eyes closed far too long, but John 4:35 says to open our eyes and look up and see the harvest. When we do that, we'll find that loving the truth will lead to speaking the truth every single time.

Discuss

Use the following questions to review and apply the points learned in the message.

- What must happen for someone to truly be gullible? What are the dangers of living life in such a state?
- What are some of the blind spots in our culture that make it hard for people to truly recognize Jesus? What are some blind spots that you have seen (or had others to help you see) in your own life?
- Looking back over your notes from the past week, was there anything that confused you or really caught your attention?
- Imagine that you were standing at the edge of a field with your eyes closed and when you opened them, you saw the vast field ready to be harvested and yet only a few people to help. What are your first thoughts and feelings? If everyone lived - and loved - like Jesus, how would that change the overwhelming nature of the task?
- Thinking back over the entire "Love Like Jesus" series, share with the group a one minute takeaway for you personally. How will your life be different on a daily basis because of that one takeaway?