

The Gathering Growth Guide

ONE // Week 9 // The gifts that keep on giving

Paul Jenkins

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Ephesians 4:7-13

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.

COMMUNITY GROUPS ARE BETTER WHEN YOU COME TO GROUP HAVING PREPARED WITH THIS GUIDE!!

Consider...

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

Message Summary

In this part of his letter to the Ephesians, the apostle Paul explained to the believers God's plan to build the church. He sent Jesus "down" so that he could raise us "up." Jesus gave himself in service in order to raise us up with him. It's part of the master plan of God to see each one of his children grow up into mature believers. He gives gifts to the body in order to raise the body to greater levels of maturity! The Big Idea says it like this: **the gifting does the lifting**. Here are some key points:

1. **No child left behind:** When it comes to the church, everyone matters, and Paul wrote this clearly with the first 4 words of Ephesians 4:7 – "but to each one." Grace wasn't given to a few, but to all, and each of us came in the same way: grace. All of us have been given that gift by Jesus.
2. **Riding on the crazy elevator:** You can't read verses 8-10 without noticing a lot of movement up and down. It's easy to get a little confused, but the important point for us to remember is that Jesus lowered himself in order to give gifts that would help raise us to new heights spiritually. He stooped down to lift us up. The question is, how will he accomplish that?
3. **You're sitting next to a gift:** Paul wrote in Ephesians 4:8 that Jesus gave gifts to men, and then, in verses 11-13, Paul explains that YOU AND I are the gifts that God designed to lift his church to a place of COMPLETE FULLNESS AND UNITY! We can't be complete with each other's gifts.
4. **Alright means we're ALL right:** How do we know when the church is healthy? When ALL the parts are growing! When only a few parts of a physical body are functioning properly, we don't celebrate it; we investigate it to see why the other parts aren't. The body of Jesus (the church) is no different. The goal is 100% participation so there can be 100% elevation!

Discuss

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

- As you've thought back through this week's message, what one thing – if any – inspired you or maybe even confused you?
- Take some time as a group to read the following: 2 Corinthians 12:9; James 4:6; Hebrews 4:17. What can we learn from these passages about when we need the most grace? How does this apply to developing unity and gifts as a church family?
- Describe some of the bosses and teachers you've had through the years. Which ones were the best at helping you grow and develop? What made them so good?
- In Ephesians 4:12, we read that the responsibility of the ministry leaders is to "prepare" the members of the body for service to one another. The Greek word for "prepare" was a fishing term that described cleaning fishing nets after they were used and putting them in a position to be ready for the next time. How does our church succeed at this? How can we be better?
- As a group, talk through the brochure you received Sunday and share where you think each other have gifts that could complete our church family.
- Read 1 Peter 4:10 and Romans 12:4-6. How does knowing that other members of our church family need your giftedness change how you feel about using your giftedness?