

# The Gathering Growth Guide

## ONE // Week 10 // Growing up the right way

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Ephesians 4:14-16

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

Each week we see a writer in the apostle Paul who is more and more bold in how he presents the picture of what God is doing in the church in Ephesus (and in The Gathering, too!). This week, Paul begins to explain to his readers not only why God doesn't want any of us to remain infants, but also the benefits that all of us can find when we make the decision to stop living as spiritual babies. In this week's message, Paul shared with our church family the following important truths behind this week's Big Idea: **God's want us to GROW UP before we GROW OUT.**

1. **God wants his children to grow:** There are so many ways that God is a better father than any of us can ever hope to be, but in a lot of ways, he desires for his children the same things we desire for ours. One of those desires is that we would grow up. God never speaks harshly to us for being like infants – at first. But at some point, he wants all of us to grow up and become mature, just like you and I both want our children to grow up.
2. **A better kind of CrossFit:** Just like people all across our country are turning to CrossFit in order to get back to the basics of physical training in order to get in shape, God wants us to get back to the original CrossFit in order to get his church in spiritual shape. The cross was all about mercy, grace and truth. At the cross God spoiled the truth about mankind – that we are sinners doomed to hell. But he spoke that truth with love, because while he was calling us out on our sin, he was giving himself as the payment for it. He paid a high price in order to place us in a body that now must grow up so that we can grow out in love to the hurting around us. And we do that by “doing truth” in a community committed to one another and to calling out the best in each other through love and truth.
3. **Why loving Jesus isn't enough:** Often we don't experience this kind of “doing truth” community. We encounter churches where people simply speak truth without love and it hurts. Shoot, The Gathering isn't immune from that. Give us a couple months and someone is bound to say or do something that will make you want to stay home and “just love Jesus.” But loving Jesus apart from the church he loves is like holding a severed head. Ephesians 4:16 says when we're mature and grown up in Jesus, the whole body will be joined and held together. And that's when we'll be ready for the mission. When we GROW UP, we'll be equipped to GROW OUT.

#### 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?
- Would you rather have someone lie and make you feel good or tell you the truth and make you better? How does Proverbs 27:5-6 speak to that?
- When have you had somebody tell you the truth and it hurt, but you knew they did it because they loved you? Describe some of the feelings and thoughts you experienced.
- Read John 16:13. What is one of the things that the Holy Spirit does for us? What is the end result of truth (see John 8:32 for a hint)?
- What does John 17:17 promise us that the truth can do? What tool does this verse point us to in order to fully immerse ourselves with truth?
- After having a few weeks to think about what part you might play in the local body at The Gathering, what intentional steps are you going to take to live out Ephesians 4:16 – “as each part does its work?”