

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 CURRENTLY ON A 3-WEEK BREAK. OUR SPRING QUARTER BEGINS ON APRIL 6.

Consider...

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

Message Summary

As we've learned throughout Ephesians, Paul can often get wordy and so sometimes it's good when he gives us little doses of simplicity in such a way that we can understand what he's saying (see how that long sentence got confusing??). In Ephesians 5:1, Paul tells the Ephesian believers that the Big Idea they needed to remember was that, because they're God's children, they needed to act like their Dad. Or, as we put it during this week's teaching, when you're God's kid, you'll do what God did! The reasons for that truth are pretty simple, even they aren't always simply lived:

1. **Why do we look like God? We have the same DNA.** It's impossible to look like God if we haven't been born again (John 3:3). But once we have been, it's almost impossible to NOT look like God! Just like my kids don't have to try to be like their mother or me, we don't have to try to look like God. In fact, just the opposite is true. If we've been born again, we've got His Spirit in us and that means we'll begin to resemble God.
2. **When do we look like God? When we have the same love.** It's easy to get weighed down trying to figure out how to "act" like a Christian, but the most genuine Christ followers aren't acting out anything. They're simply giving away the same love that they've been given! God's DNA is a DNA of love – real love – and 1 John 4:7 tells us that his children will be loving, too.
3. **How do we look like God? By obeying 3 simple commands.** Paul took 18 verses to tell the Ephesians (and us) 3 important commands that would help them do the same things God would do: stop hinting, turn the light on, and wise up. If we took all three of them and summed them up, it would simply be to come out of the shadows and live honestly and wisely with each other so that we can encourage each other to be more like our Father.

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?
- Which member of your family do you look like the most? Who looks the most like you?
- Have you ever caught yourself doing something that reminded you of one of your parents? What was it? Did you have to "try harder" to look like them?
- Read 1 John 3:2 and Philippians 1:6. Take some time to talk through the PROCESS of becoming more like Jesus. What do these verses teach us? What promises do we find in them? What does Proverbs 3:6 tell us that we can do every day as we go through the PROCESS?
- Read Proverbs 13:20 and then reflect back on Ephesians 4:15-16. Just like my children had my DNA at conception but still had to develop characteristics over the years that resembled me, so will we as we grow in Christ. How does the family of God help us in that growth?