

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

As we've seen throughout *The Love Buzz* series, once we get filled with the love of Jesus personally, it starts to ooze out more and more onto those around us. Last week we say that the first people it oozes onto are the people closest to us: the family of God. That's the Buzz privately. But when the church starts to love each other, something amazing takes place! The Love Buzz oozes out publicly, and the love of God begins to slowly take over the world. Because of the 4 attributes of love seen below, the end result is this week's Big Idea: the more we love each other, the more there will be others to love. Here are the 4 things that love does:

1. **Love attracts.** No doubt about it. Whether it's the couple kissing in public or the elderly couple holding hands in the park, when we see love displayed, it tends to get our attention, and that's exactly how God planned it! Jesus told His disciples that when they would love each other, the world would sit up and take notice and know that Jesus was the real deal! (see John 13:35)
2. **Love accepts.** Anybody, anytime, anywhere in any condition. Love doesn't accept anything, but it will always accept people. 1 Corinthians 13:4-8 sets a pretty high standard on the acceptance level of love, and it's ok that we tend to struggle with it. It is, after all, a very high standard for mere mortals. Thankfully, when we're filled with God's love, we're not filled with your average love!
3. **Love assures.** Maybe it's your mom or your best friend, but all of us have someone in our lives who just "makes it better" when we're around them. There is an assurance in God's love that we all need, too. He promised that His love would remain even when we might be tempted not to. Now, that can make it seem like we can do anything we want and get away with it, but it's important to remember the last thing that love does...
4. **Love alters.** Whether it was the woman caught in adultery (John 8:11) or you and I killing Jesus (Romans 5:8), the love of God may love us at our worst, but it will never leave us at our worst. His love leads us personally to repent (Romans 2:4) and then it alters the city publicly around us. In fact, it was the love the early church showed their enemies that transformed the culture. The same will be true today.

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?
- What are some examples from your life of when you've been attracted to love? Accepted by love? Assured of love? Altered by love?
- How critical is it that we stay full of the love of God as we love others? Is it okay to get tired of loving others? What should we do when we feel that way? (*repent, refuel, remind ourselves of God's love*)
- Read Galatians 6:9 and discuss the key – if any – verse 8 has for helping us not grow weary. Have you ever tried to love others in your own strength ("the flesh")? What difference does it make when we love others in God's strength ("the Spirit")?
- According to John 3:16, the gospel can be summed up in 5 words: God loved so God gave. Paul asked us all to evaluate HOW we give: are we a USER, and ABUSER or an OOZER? Is it possible to be loved by God in an extraordinary way and then love others in an ordinary way? Why or why not?
- What can you do this week to love one other person the way God loved you?