

The Gathering Growth Guide

We are Family // Part 3a // Family means we're expected

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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 with a break from Community Groups during the. The Growth Guides are designed to help you dig deeper into the weekly sermon on your own or with your family as you prepare to attend your Community Group.

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

It's great to have a place by being accepted in the family and power by being connected to the family. But what is it about the family that provides purpose to its members? In part 3 of the "We are Family" series, Paul explained that being a part of a family means we're EXPECTED. In fact, any family that's ever done lots of house or yard work only to find one person chilling on the couch understands the reality of expectations and how hard it is when they aren't met. Far from being a bad thing, expectations help us know, well, what's expected. **When we stress expectations, we can expect less stress.** This week, Paul dealt with the first 3 of 6 expectations that apply to all of us who are members of the family of God.

1. **We're expected to show encouragingly.** Not only does family expect each member to show up, but they also want them to WANT to show up! Church isn't that much different, is it, but over time, we can find ourselves going through the motions instead of really being present with the family. The early church in Acts was all in when it came to showing up, but in 40 short years, the church needed to be reminded how important it was to get together in such a way that everyone was encouraged in their walk with Jesus.
2. **We're expected to grow steadily.** If a baby isn't growing and hitting expected growth markers, we take him or her to the doctor to see what's wrong. Simply put, healthy people grow, and spiritual growth is no different. We can see time and again throughout the Bible that spiritual growth is expected (Ephesians 4:15 is one of those places).
3. **We're expected to know increasingly.** As we grow, we're expected to know more, too. We don't celebrate first-grade math ability in high school, because then we should be greater levels of math! Paul said in Philippians 3:10 that he wanted to KNOW Christ. That's a reasonable expectation in the family! In fact, in Hebrews 5:12 we find the writer scolding the readers because they hadn't learned in a way they should have. God takes the mind as seriously as the soul.

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?
- How do you handle unfulfilled expectations from others? What about when you're the one who doesn't meet expectations?
- What were some of the spoken – and unspoken – expectations – in your family growing up? What are some in your family now?
- Why do you think it's so easy for all of us to see the need for expectations in earthly families, but so hard to see the need for it in the spiritual family of God? What insight can we gain from Proverbs 29:1 and James 4:6?
- Look back over your walk with Jesus and talk about ways that you've grown. How are you more mature now as opposed to when you first started following Jesus? How does it feel to see progress?
- What are some areas in which you would like to increase your knowledge spiritually? If Jesus allowed you to ask Him one question, what would it be? How can you find the answer?