

The Gathering Community Group Guide

We are Family // Part 8 // Family follow-up, part 2

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November 23, 2014

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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. 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 WILL BEGIN AGAIN THE WEEK OF SEPTEMBER 15th.
SIGN UPS ARE HAPPENING EACH SUNDAY AT THE CONNECTION DESK.**

Consider...

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

Message Summary

In the final part of our "We are Family" series, Paul explained the importance of where we are planted. In fact, where we put our roots will help determine our fruit. So the soil in which we're planted is possible the most crucial piece of the puzzle, and the overwhelming evidence in the New Testament points to the soil being the local family of God. At The Gathering, our soil is relational and redemptive, and filled with the following 4 qualities:

1. **Necessary:** In today's culture, we make optional the things that God says are necessary. Three things that we feel are absolutely non-negotiable if our church is to be necessary in our city are the Gospel, the Bible, and the power of the Holy Spirit. Teaching these as necessary will allow our church to be necessary to the city around us as well.
2. **Equipping:** If we're going to be sent by God to people far from him, then our church must be one that equips you to actually go and tell others about Jesus and to minister effectively to the hurting. Because the Bible is the primary tool for equipping us, we will be led by elders who are able to teach it in order to equip the members of our church to do the ministry. It also means that each member of the church is stepping into service on a ministry team so we can serve Jesus and the church with excellence.
3. **Authentic:** This happens in community and is why we will always encourage our members to be active in Community Groups. Living life together sharpens us, soothes us and makes us better. Community and service are the 2 catalysts God uses to produce real faith in His church.
4. **Relational:** Can you grow apart from the church? Sure, but not as much as you think you can. Something happens when we really put our roots down in one place and allow the nutrients in that soil to penetrate our lives. In Ephesians 3, Paul told the church (v. 10) that God would do more than they could imagine (v. 21) when they were PLANTED (v. 17).

Discuss

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

- What was one helpful or troubling insight or principle from this week's message, if any?
- What happens in our lives when we make optional what God makes necessary?
- In thinking through the role of elders at The Gathering, consider this statement: "Everyone has a voice, but not everyone has a vote." Why do you think that is so important when it comes to deciding spiritual matters? (you may find 1 Corinthians 2:14 and Matthew 11:15 helpful)
- Paul shared that he is an introvert and that community can be a little overwhelming because of that. How do you respond to the idea of living life together with a smaller group of believers?
- Ultimately, we want you to be planted as a member of The Gathering. As you've read through the Member Covenant you received Sunday, what possibilities come to your mind about how God can accomplish "more than we can ask or imagine" through the church? If you haven't signed your copy yet, what is keeping you from stepping into membership?