

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 MEMBERS COME PREPARED. TAKE TIME BEFORE GROUP TO GO OVER THIS GUIDE.

Consider...

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

Message Summary

When we think of the word "pervert" we tend to think of the "worst of the worst" sex offenders, but as we saw this week, perversion is something that we can all be guilty of more than we might be aware.

1. **What is perversion?** Perversion isn't what happens to really bad people; it's what happens to anybody when we deviate from the intended path. Think about a compass: if it's off a degree, you'll be lost by a mile. What about a gun? If the scope is off millimeters, you'll miss the target by feet. In Romans 1, we saw that the perversion at the end of the chapter was the result of a choice to neglect God in the middle of the chapter.
2. **It's all about the little things:** If every big perversion started with a smaller deviation, then Song of Solomon 2:15 really rings true: we'd better get the little foxes under control or else they'll ruin the whole vineyard. Part of God's plan to help us spot and catch those foxes is to examine ourselves (2 Corinthians 13:5) and by following Jesus daily (Luke 9:23).

Discuss

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

- Do you have a takeaway from this week's message that you would like to share?
- For something to be perverted, there has to be a standard from which to deviate. Who makes that call in our culture? In your life?
- In sports, the players don't referee the games because they're too involved to be objective, right? In fact, if a referee or umpire can't be objective, they're removed on suspicions of cheating. How much more important is it to have an "outside" referee who can make the call about what the normal plan is with our souls? According to Isaiah 55:8-9, who would that be? According to Proverbs 14:12 and 16:25, who should it NOT be?
- Most people have a pretty good idea of what the "big" perverts look like: they're the ones we see on the evening news with a rap sheet a mile long. The question that matters most to us as followers of Jesus is how we can measure our steps NOW so that we remove any separation between Christ and us. Read the following passages about discernment and then discuss how it can help us not pervert God's plan. 1 John 4:1; Philippians 1:9-10; 2 Corinthians 2:14; Hebrews 5:14.
- Remember how we can think there's a good way but it can lead to death? Our sin can cause us to have blind spots, and God has given us 2 amazing tools to help with those: the word of God (Hebrews 4:12) and the people of God (Ephesians 4:11-16, esp. v. 15).