

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. THIS GUIDE HAS BEEN PROVIDED AS A TOOL FOR THAT.

Consider...

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

Message Summary

If there is one word that elicits many different responses from people, it has to be "holiness." Some see a holy man, some see a lonely person, others see a "goody two shoes," and still others see someone exhausted from trying to stop doing bad things and start doing good things. But the key to being able to Stand OUT from culture is understanding that holiness has 2 parts: the identity of holiness and the activity of holiness.

1. **We're called out because of what Jesus did:** *It's so easy in our culture to fall into the performance trap where we work and work and work in order to earn something. Before long, though, our identity gets defined by our activity, and Peter reminded the church in 1 Peter 2:9 that we ARE holy (literally means "called out") because of the work of Jesus on the cross. Holiness, then, is part of our new identity first and foremost. It isn't something we do or acts we perform. Holiness is WHO WE ARE!!*
2. **We stand out because of what we do:** *Remember that story about the 10 Cow woman? The man saw a 10 Cow woman where others only saw a 1 Cow woman, and his actions "called out" the woman that he saw. Over a year, her actions began to match this new identity, and so it is with us. God has given us a new identity, and our pursuit of holiness is simply the process by which our actions begin to rise to the level of who we are in Christ. We don't act holy to become holy; we are holy and so we do holy.*

Discuss

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

- Take the time to read the following passages of scripture and talk about what we can learn about our new identities in Christ from each: John 15:15; Romans 6:6; 2 Corinthians 5:17; Ephesians 4:24; 1 Peter 2:9; Psalm 139:14; Colossians 3:1-3.
- Our family name is Jenkins. That is our identity. How hard do Will, Parker and Sydney have to try to have that name? (Hint: we're not kicking them out of the family ... ever!) How does this relate to the way we so often try really hard to be holy? Look again at 2 Peter 2:9. We ARE a holy nation so that we can "try really hard to be holy!" Is that what it says?
- How does being secure about WHO WE ARE lead to better choices regarding HOW WE ACT?
- Admittedly, there is often a gap between who we are and how we act. In the story of the Prodigal son, the prodigal suddenly "came to his senses" and realized that he was living far below who he really was. Remembering his IDENTITY is what led him back to his father. Reflect on some areas of your life where your standard of living (activity) is lower than the position you've been given (identity). Thank God for the grace that He gives as we continually pursue closing that gap.