

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

Big Idea: Reconciliation comes from God, through Christ, for His glory. Have you ever thought about reconciliation? Why would someone want to reconcile with another person? Well let's amp that up infinitely. Why would the only Holy and perfect Being, God, want to reconcile sinful man into a relationship with Him? This is a great mystery, but it is one that is going to be uncovered. Sunday, Adam spoke to us about 3 experiences of reconciliation. These are:

1. **Christ changes our purpose:** When we look at reconciliation, we see that God is restoring us to what He intended for us to be. Through Christ, our purpose is changed because we have experienced reconciliation. Like Saul, when Christ enters our life, we cannot help but be changed by His presence. The same presence that changed Saul's purpose from killing to Christian is the same presence that Jesus has in our life!
2. **Christ changes our power:** When we see that our purpose has been changed, then we have to fuel our new purpose. God does this through Christ, by making us a new creation. Our former power cannot uphold the new purpose. When we are properly empowered by the new creation God has made us to be, we are then able to stand in His might and fulfill our new purpose.
3. **Christ changes our pursuit:** When our purpose has been changed, and we have been given new power, then we see that God changes our pursuit in this life. Before Christ, we were focused on fulfilling the desires of our flesh, but with Christ, we pursue God and His mission, to reach the world with reconciliation. As this happens, we pursue God and what it means to walk in His Spirit, so that we are led into the proper areas to reveal this mystery of reconciliation to the world.

Discuss

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

- When Christ changes our purpose, we see God as Lord over all, including our lives. What did Saul experience in reconciliation that we have through the Holy Spirit? Read Galatians 4:1-7, How does our new purpose, living for Christ, allow us to be in communion with God?
- Reconciliation is a restoration of God's creation to Himself. How has God changed your purpose by calling you to live for Him, instead of yourself? How does this reconciliation to God, challenge you to reconcile other relationships?
- Read 2 Timothy 1:7, God has given us a Spirit of power, love and self-control. How does knowing that our power is from God, because He has made us new, challenge us to reach out to the world when we feel inadequate? How dependent upon our own power is the ministry of reconciliation?
- How do we share with people who say, "Let me get my life right, then I will come to God?" How can we help them understand that it is not by our own power that we stand, but by the power God has given to us?
- 2 Corinthians 5:20 calls us ambassadors for Christ, God making His appeal through us. God did not need us to reconcile the world, by chose to use us. How can we be ambassadors for Christ in our everyday lives?
- When we pursue God's mission, the key is being in step with His Spirit. Read Galatians 5:25, how does our pursuit of God and His mission change when we are not in step with the Spirit?