

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

Jesus began wrapping up His Luke 12 teaching by referencing His mission and His frustration with the fact that it wasn't completed yet. In other words, Jesus is alluding to things that can distract us and keep us from doing what we are called by God to do, and then Jesus goes on to talk about 2 very real things that all of us can get distracted with from time to time: drama (and our tendency to participate in it) and deadlines (and our tendency to procrastinate over them). Either of these 2 distractions are enough to keep us from fulfilling our purpose for the Kingdom, and Paul pointed out 2 guardrails that can help us wake up, refocus, and continue on our way:

1. **Guardrail #1: Increasing tension about Jesus (vv. 49-53).** It can seem a little odd to hear Jesus say things like, "I didn't come to bring peace on earth; but division." Jesus sounds like He wants parents to hate kids, and siblings to hate each other, and it can seem very confusing. But the Greek words used here paint a picture that is more about allegiance than animosity. When we go all in as followers of Jesus, we often begin to experience increasing tension in the relationships that mean the most to us, and either we will let that lead to drama that distracts us, or we will allow it to sharpen our focus on Who is truly Lord of our lives.
2. **Guardrail #2: Decreasing time for Jesus (vv. 54-59).** Then Jesus starts talking about weather, judges and prison. What does this have to do with distractions? Well, the distraction is deadlines, and how we handle (or, more honestly, don't handle) them. Instead of procrastinating, Jesus talks about understanding the times and the approaching judgment and doing everything we can to work for the mission WHILE WE STILL HAVE TIME! When we realize that we have decreasing time available to us, we will either procrastinate over the deadline, or push harder toward the goal with renewed focus and intensity.

Discuss

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

- What are some things that distract you? People? Money? Something else?
- Read Luke 10:38-42. What distracted Martha? How does something as good as serving Jesus turn into a distraction? What did it distract Martha from (hint: look what Mary was doing)?
- Have you ever experienced increased tension in your relationships because of your increased passion for Jesus? How did you respond when you "hit" that guardrail?
- Read Joshua 1:1-9. Joshua is getting ready to lead people to a place, and God told him 3 times to be "strong and courageous" and also to not turn "to the right or the left." Why was it so important for Joshua to steer clear of drama? How does that apply to us today?
- Read Ephesians 5:15-20 and Hebrews 10:19-25. What specific instructions do we read about for living in light of the guardrail of decreasing time? Which ones really speak to you in your life right now? What will you do about it?