

The Gathering Growth Guide

ONE // Week 6 // Understanding the mystery(us)

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Ephesians 3:1-13

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 YOU COME TO GROUP HAVING PREPARED WITH THIS GUIDE!!

Consider...

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

Message Summary

Everybody loves a good mystery, and in Ephesians 3:1-13, Paul pauses for almost 12 verses and explains that what the mystery is and how the church is the best example of it. In fact, verses 2-13 are one long parenthetical statement, and we use parentheses to explain concepts or give examples of what we're talking about. **WE are in the parentheses because WE are the mystery!**

1. **What the mystery is:** Paul wrote that the mystery was revealed to him. So often we feel like we find God, but he found us! The mystery is revealed to us, and the mystery IS us! Our unity is the real-life example of the mystery of the Gospel. In fact, when the world is looking for what this looks like, Paul is saying here in Ephesians 3 that they should be able to look at the church and say, "So, THAT'S what it means to have hearts knitted together!!"
2. **What the mystery does:** When we've got that down, we find that the mystery - the unity of one body coming from such different parts - sends a message. To the world it says, "You're wanted." To the enemy it says, "You're defeated." To the believer it says, "You're in. You're accepted!"

Discuss

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

- As you've thought back through this week's message, what one thing - if any - inspired you or maybe even confused you?
- Why do you think mysteries fascinate us? What part of a mystery captivates you the most? What part frustrates you the most?
- The apostle Paul wrote that the mystery of God's will was revealed to him. According to Matthew 16:16-17, what does God want to reveal to us? How does the truth of God revealing this (instead of us discovering it) ensure that all the glory in salvation goes to him?
- God wants to put us in the parentheses as an example of his unifying grace. On a scale of 1-10 (1 is low, 10 is high), what grade would you give yourself? Our church? Your Community Group?
- The Gospel is a mystery (I mean, why would a holy God choose people like us!), but it isn't meant to be mysterious. Can you name some examples of people whose unity with you or others really opened your eyes and heart to the truth of Jesus?