

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 CURRENTLY ON A 3-WEEK BREAK. OUR SPRING QUARTER BEGINS ON APRIL 6.**

## Consider...

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

### Message Summary

In Ephesians 4:25-32, the apostle Paul gets a little preachy. After showing the Ephesians that they are new in Christ and that there is a new way to live that is better than the old way, he takes these verses and starts telling them what to wear! No, not literally, but spiritually. He explains that there are some "fashion choices" that they should no longer make because they won't look right on a follower of Jesus, and, as Christ followers, our fashion should match our passion. There are 5 things we need to take off so that we can start wearing 5 better things:

1. **Take off lies and put on truth:** God is truth as the Father (James 1:17), the Son (John 14:6) and the Holy Spirit (John 16:13). So, it goes without saying that his children will be people of truth, both with each other and with those who aren't yet following Christ.
2. **Take off sinful anger and put on reconciliation:** It's hard to be angry without sinning, and even though Paul writes in verse 26 that it's possible, it isn't very likely, and the one way we all sin when we get angry is by holding onto our anger. So Paul says that the life of a believer should be marked by a willingness to reconcile issues in a timely manner – and for him that was before the sun goes down.
3. **Take off stealing and put on generosity:** Paul knew that some of the Ephesians were thieves before they became Christ followers, and he warns them to stop stealing. After all, they're no longer following the devil, and stealing is his nature (John 10:10), not ours. Now, they would be marked by generosity, because their new Father is a giver.
4. **Take off hurtful words and put on helpful words:** The things we say are important and carry a lot of weight with them. They can either hurt or help (Proverbs 18:21), and Paul tells the believers in Ephesus that Christ followers look better when they wear helpful words.
5. **Take off hostility and put on humility:** Paul wraps up his fashion advice with a list of bad choices, and all of them are hostile. Christ followers never look good with simmering hostility boiling just below the surface. Instead, our new clothes dress us in humility, and remembering that we were forgiven allows us to forgive, too.

### 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?
- Do you have any clothes that you haven't gotten rid of even though you need to? Why or why not?
- Which of the "bad fashion" choices have/are you struggled/struggling with?
- In which of these "take off..put on" scenarios have you seen the greatest changes in your own life? Describe the difference you (and others) have seen.
- Read 1 Peter 3:1. While this verse is speaking specifically to wives of unbelieving husbands, talk about how the change in our lives can be so powerful that it leads to salvation in those around us.