

The Gathering Growth Guide

We are Family // Part 4 // Family means we're expected (pt. 2)

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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 with a break from Community Groups during the. The Growth Guides are designed to help you dig deeper into the weekly sermon on your own or with your family as you prepare to attend your Community Group.

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

As we learned last week, being a part of a family means we're EXPECTED, and rather than all of us feeling "angst" – or anxiety and stress – over not really knowing what's expected of us, God laid out 6 very clear expectations of the children in His family. The Big Idea says it like this: **when we stress expectations, we can expect less stress.** Last week we looked at 3 expectations (we're to show encouragingly, grow steadily, and know increasingly), and this week we learned the next 3.

1. **We're expected to row reliably.** If you've ever known someone who worked like a bull in the china shop, then you know that making a lot of movement isn't the same as making progress. A lot of people work frantically or individually, but God expects His family to work together and reliably. You may be the best rower, but if no one else rows with you, you're just going in circles. Ephesians 4:14-16 paints the picture of a team trusting each other to do their part faithfully.
2. **We're expected to sow sacrificially.** As every parent knows, as children grow, they are expected to be less consumers and more contributors. No one expects babies to clean their rooms or mow the grass, but when babies become toddlers who become children and then teens, more is expected. Each family member may not contribute the same amounts or in the same ways, but they're all expected to contribute the same effort. In God's family, we're all called to give sacrificially. It's not because God needs our money as much as He needs our trust and our hearts.
3. **We're expected to go courageously.** Just like parents expect their children to eventually leave the home, God expects His children to go courageously into a world that needs the hope He's given us. The worst thing we can do is become "stay at home children" when He has called us to go, equipped us to go and empowered us to go.

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?
- Of the 6 expectations we've covered – show, grow, know, row, sow and go – the three from this week seem to require the most trust in others and in God. Why is trust so important in these areas?
- Talk about the progression from consumer to contributor in our natural families. Why is it normal to expect more from the more mature members of a family? What insight does Hebrews 5:12 offer?
- So often we hear the word "tithe" and immediately think "10%" and never consider that it is more about honoring God with the FIRST of our resources. Why do you think giving back to God first is so critical in our spiritual maturity?
- Time for some honest evaluation! Think through each of the 6 expectations we've talked about (show, grow, know, row, sow and go). In which of the 6 are you consuming more than contributing? In which would you say you're more of a contributor?
- As we ended this week, Paul mentioned that taking next steps is the way we flow naturally in these areas. What do you think is your next step? Membership? Community Group? Serving on a ministry team? Giving? Reaching out to a neighbor, friend, co-worker? Something else?