

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

Christmas is a time of year when it seems as if everyone is singing, and that means that it's a great opportunity to help people see the truth of the gospel in the songs that we're singing! Over the month of December, we'll focus on one popular Christmas song each week and use it to point each of us to the gospel message that is, literally, right under our noses (because we sing with our mouths – get it??!). This week, we kicked off “The Unexpected Christmas Playlist” with “White Christmas” and talked about how to deal with disappointment (since we rarely ever get a white Christmas!).

1. **What causes disappointment:** Most people would agree that unmet, unspoken, or unrealistic expectations can leave us disappointed, but Paul showed us how those expectations are usually found in 4 areas: God, circumstances, others or ourselves. There is often a gap between what we expect and what we experience, and what we feel in that gap is disappointment.
2. **How to deal with disappointment:** If most of us know where disappointment comes from, few of us know how to deal with it. Paul used the acrostic D.E.A.L. to help us remember what to do when we're faced with disappointments: Do what you know, Encourage your soul, Allow others in, and Look for the purpose. When we do that, we'll find the hope of Jesus filling the gap more than the hurt of disappointment.

Discuss

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

- Paul pointed out that we tend to experience disappointment with God, circumstances, others or ourselves. Which of these do you battle the most?
- We DEAL with disappointment when we Do what we know, Encourage our soul, Allow others in and then Look for the purpose. Which of these comes easiest for you? Which is the most difficult?
- We encourage our souls by remembering what God has done and by worshipping God for who He is. What are some ways that you can incorporate remembering and worshipping into your daily life?
- Read Psalm 16:2, Proverbs 3:5, and Psalm 34:10. What do these verses teach us about trusting God? What promises in these verses can we hold on to in times of disappointment?
- Close the group by reading Psalm 121 and then praying a prayer of thanksgiving for the help and hope that God sent us in His Son.