

Community Group Guide

@ our core – Spiritual Legacies

The Gathering

Paul Jenkins

March 18, 2012

various

Community Groups are the primary vehicle for discipleship at The Gathering. It is through the interaction that takes place in each of these groups around our area that will enable people to begin to move from being drawn to God to a life that is being deepened by God. Use it as a resource to lead your group in discovering, owning, and applying the truths of God's Word. There may be aspects you do not want to use and there may be instances where you just want to focus on a particular point or truth. Some questions may bring out emotions and cause people to dwell on an aspect of their relationship with God. Your role is to help facilitate this encounter with God in His Word through His Body, not just to complete the guide. Use this as a flexible teaching tool not a rigid group task list.

HEY!

Begin your group time by engaging in relational conversations and prayer that may include the following elements:

Greet each other—a simple, brief time to greet one another (especially new friends), enjoy refreshments, and make announcements.

Week in review—a time to review the truths discussed last week and report on how members have had success or frustrations in applying those truths during the week. The leader will want to provide encouragement and shepherding during this time. Periodically, the leader will also want to review the gospel and allow members to share reports about opportunities they've had to share the gospel. Occasionally, the leader will want to revisit the vision for the group and discuss ways to accomplish that vision better.

Opening prayer—a time of general prayer with the whole group praying for struggles regarding the application of truths, for those with whom the group is sharing the gospel, and for understanding of today's truths.

SAY!

Use the following summary and questions to review this week's message and reflect on its implications in our lives:

Message Summary

Very few values are as important as the sixth one covered in the "@ our core" series: we value **Spiritual Legacies** and expect the next generation to see more success than the current one. Paul taught about 3 critical steps that must happen in order to coach the next generation to success in God's kingdom:

1. **Set the example:** Our faith is a lot like "Follow the Leader" in that we show more than we tell. Jesus said to follow Him (Luke 9:23), Paul said to follow him as he followed Jesus (1 Cor. 11:1), and we are commanded to set an example that can be followed (1 Timothy 4:12).
2. **State the expectation:** Most people live to the expectation, so if it's low, they live at a low level. But if we raise the level of expectation, we'll find that the next generation will respond with a level of greatness that honors God. We see this in the call of Samuel (1 Samuel 3): the expectation was that God rarely spoke (v. 1), but that didn't keep Eli from giving Samuel a new expectation (v. 9). God expects us to move toward more: more strength (Psalm 84:7), more glory (2 Cor. 3:18), and more kingdom success (John 14:12). It's time to train the next generation for their time!
3. **See the end:** The bottom line? As the next generation steps into the spotlight, the previous generation steps out. There is an end, and we must prepare the next wave of believers to be successful without us. Peter understood that and based his ministry practice on the fact that there would be a goodbye at some point (2 Peter 1:12-15, esp. v. 15).

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Discuss

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

- Paul made this statement: “What the leaders do in moderation, the followers do in excess.” What are some examples of this in your own life? How much importance does this put on our example?
- Read 1 Corinthians 11:1 and discuss practical ways that you can make sure you are continuing to follow Christ.
- When you read the beginning verses of 1 Samuel 3, it’s easy to feel the settling that was taking place. God’s word was rare, Eli was old, his eyes were weak, and he was sitting in his usual place. Why do you think it’s so easy to settle for the “way things have always been?”
- Read Matthew 11:12. How can the truth in this verse help us in the fight against settling? Does this verse sound comfortable? Explain your answer.
- One of the most critical steps in leaving spiritual legacies is also the most uncomfortable: teaching and training the people coming behind us. Read 2 Timothy 2:2 and Titus 2:1-8 and answer the following question: “What have I learned about Jesus that I need to entrust to someone else?”
- 2 Peter 1:12-15 gives a great blueprint for preparing others to stand on their own after we are gone. Take some time to talk about the people who did this for you, and then ask the Lord to put people in your life who need you to do this for them.

PRAY!

Encourage your group to break out into smaller, same-gender groups where they will respond to the truths of the message. These groups will share with one another based on the following questions and then close in prayer:

- What are some of the main truths that God wants you to know from the message?
- According to the truths from the message, what does God want you to desire/value?
- How do your desires/values need to change to align with His desires/values?
- What actions does God want you to take according to the truths of this message?
- What is an action that you can start to implement today or tomorrow?

Close this time by praying for each other, specifically for strength in the application of these truths and for the lost people with whom you are seeking to share the gospel.