

Family Fellowship – Week Beginning 7th September.

We have started a new series on Sunday mornings thinking about the 4 'G's of Church;
Gathering, Going, Giving, Gifting.

This week, we are thinking about '*Gathering*' and studying **Hebrews 10:19-25**.

Monday – 7th August

Ask: What do you remember from Robin's sermon/children's talk on Sunday? Was there anything new that you learned? How has it helped you love Jesus more? (Mums and Dads, share your answers to these too!)

Read: **Ephesians 4:11-16** – International Children's Bible opens up this passage well!

Chat:

- What does 'Gathering' actually mean? (*take answers*)

'Gathering' is a bit of a funny word that basically means different people coming together for a single reason or purpose. For example, we can 'gather' with different families at McDonalds for dinner.

What is happening?

Different people from different families are coming together for one reason – to eat!

- Can you think of other places you might 'gather' and why? (*Take answers*).

Church is the same – we gather in our church building. Loads of different people come from loads of different places for one single reason or purpose – to worship God together!

Now, this is something we haven't been able to do now for about 6 months, and it is tough not seeing our friends every Sunday. It is tough not being able to listen to the children's address together. It is tough not being able to go to C.L.I.C.K. but do you know what? It's ok to miss those things – it is good that we miss those things! We were brought in to God's forever family so we could spend time together so it will be strange when we are not able to do that as we would like.

The passage that we read together teaches us that Jesus has given us gifts and people to help us love each other well and love him more. These things have been given to us but we can only enjoy them when we are **gathered** together as the church.

- What do verses 15 and 16 tell us that these gifts help us do, as we 'gather' together in church? (*Take answers*)

They help us become more like Jesus. This is not something that we can do by trying our best because of the sin in our hearts, but something that God helps us do as we come to church to listen to the Bible being taught, to worship Him and to pray together.

Pray:

Thank God that we can gather as His people and that He will change us to look more and more like Jesus in our words, thoughts and actions.

Tuesday – 8th September

Read: Hebrews 10:19.

Chat:

- What did we think about yesterday? (*take answers*)

We thought about what 'gathering' means and why we gather as God's people. And today, we will think about *how* we can gather. What it is that allows us to be part of God's forever family.

- From the super duper short passage that we read, *how* we are able to be part of God's forever family?

By the blood of Jesus!

- Now, this sentence sounds a little strange... what do you think this actually means? (*Take answers*).

Because of our sin, and because of how pure and perfect and holy God is, we cannot be with God. God really hates sin so, so, so much that he *must* punish it. So instead of punishing you and me, God sent Jesus - who never ever sinned, not even once! - so he could say, 'Because I love (*insert child's/children's name(s) here*) so much, I will be punished for their sin, so they can be part of God's forever family.'

- But what happened after Jesus was killed? Did he stay dead?

No! Jesus rose to life and showed that sin is forever the loser and if we trust him to take the punishment for our sin, we are the winners – part of God's forever family and able to **gather** as the church, God's people! This is by nothing that you or I have ever done or ever can do, and so because our sins are only forgiven by grace, we can never be un-forgiven – we will always be part of God's forever family.

Pray:

Thank God that we will always be able to be part of His forever family because of the price Jesus paid in our place, taking the punishment of our sin.

Wednesday – 9th September

Read: Hebrews 10:20-22.

Chat:

- What did we think about yesterday? (*take answers*)

We thought about how, because of Jesus taking the punishment for our sins, we are able to gather as part of God's forever family.

- From the slightly-longer-than-yesterday's passage that we read, what do we think the big idea is from today?

Making things clean!

- Who is the messiest person in your house? (*Take answers*). Who eats chocolate biscuits and finishes with most of the chocolate around their mouth or on their tshirt? Who goes out to the garden and comes in covered in mud or grass or both?!

Because of Jesus, because he takes the punishment for our sins, it means that we can gather with God and His people. But we learn from this part of the Bible that it **does not** mean that God just ignores our sin and lets us still do the things that annoy Him, but instead, he cleans our hearts. He makes them pure and He makes them like His. When God looks at us, he doesn't see the mess of sin (like seeing the chocolate on our face or the mud patches on our knees) because He wipes the stains away and makes us clean, because of Jesus!

- How are our hearts cleaned from sin? Can we do anything to make them *extra* clean? (*Take answers*)

No! It is only God who cleans our hearts. He makes us want different things, enjoy different things – the best things, the things he has made for us to enjoy! We ask God to give us faith to trust in Him and in His plans for our lives as he gathers us with His people, as we come to meet with Him, as Jesus takes the punishment for our sins and as He clean our hearts and makes them pure like His heart.

Pray:

Thank God that He cleans our hearts and makes us pure. Ask that He will help us to have a strong Faith in Him which is strengthened as we gather together to worship Him.

Thursday – 10th September

Read: Hebrews 10:23.

Chat:

- What did we think about yesterday? (*take answers*)

We thought about how God makes our hearts clean and changes them to give us faith in Him and His plans and wants for our lives.

- From today's short-ish passage that we read, what do we think the big idea is from today? Hint: Do you remember what we thought about last week?

Faithfulness!

- Does anybody remember what 'faithfulness' means? (*Take answers*).

God will always be exactly what he promises He will be and nothing will ever change that – isn't this amazing news! God is always faithful to love us, faithful to forgive us, faithful to provide for us and faithful to hold us in His forever family.

- Is God only faithful if we do what he asks us to? (*Take answers*)

Absolutely not! We will always mess up and always get it wrong, but God will not. Because He is **first** faithful to us by being all of the things we thought about in the Fruit of the Spirit (Re-read Galatians 5:22-23) then we, in response, are faithful back to God, trusting in His promises which we know will never be broken.

Pray:

Thank God that He is faithful to make us part of His forever family when we ask, faithful to clean our hearts and helps us to be more faithful followers of Jesus.

Friday – 11th September

Read: Hebrews 10:24-25.

Chat:

- What did we think about yesterday? (*take answers*)

We thought about how God is faithful.

- From the last passage in our study this week, what do we think the big idea is from today?

Encouragement

In this strange time, we could read this part of the Bible and not remember what the last time was like when we all gathered together in church or in C.L.I.C.K because it was so long ago! And because we are not allowed to meet together, how can we do what the Bible is telling us to do?

- Take some time as a family and think of people – they don't have to be from Edenderry – who you could encourage.

What I find really interesting in this passage is Paul doesn't tell us what we should do, he tells us to think about how we can encourage other Christians.

So, ***get creative!***

Think of people who are lonely and will miss gathering with their friends or people who you have not talked to in a while, (Mums and Dads, think of people who you could text or call or drop in to see for a socially-distant cup of tea) and think of how you as a family and individual could help somebody love Jesus more! Pray for them and ask that God will work in them to show His love to others as well.

Weekend

Who have you prayed for today? How can you encourage somebody today?

Before we come to Church on Sunday morning, while we gather round our TV and computer screens, ask God to remind you that while we may be apart in person, His church is still together because of what Jesus has done for us in giving us the Holy Spirit.