

Session 4: Encourage One Another (1 Thessalonians 5:11; 4:13-18; Acts 9:26-28) and Submit to One Another (Ephesians 5:21-6:9; Mark 8:34)

Ice Breaker: A “Big Pretty” is a time when you have felt really affirmed. A “Big Ugly” is a time when you have been hurt, put down, disaffirmed. Take a couple minutes to think about a “Big Pretty” and a “Big Ugly” in your life then take turns sharing with the group.

Review the above scripture passages together.

1. Who has positively influenced you through encouragement in your life?
2. What opportunities do we have to be encouragers?
 - a. In our families
 - b. In our small group
 - c. In our church
 - d. In our community
3. It has been said that the most effective encouragers follow the FAST mode. (Frequent, Accurate, Specific, Timely) How have you seen this in practice?

Remember Pastor Kevin speaking about Balcony (encouragers) and Basement (negatively critical) people. Sometimes we struggle to allow people to be our balcony people.

4. From whom are you most likely to accept constructive criticism? Balcony or basement people?
5. Martin Luther said, “A Christian ... is the most free lord of all and subject to no one; a Christian ... is the most dutiful servant to all and subject to everyone.” What does that mean to you?
6. Pastor Kevin said, “Submission for a greater cause brings joy.” As Christians, what are our greater causes? (See Psalm 133; Ephesians 4:1-3; 1 Corinthians 9:19-23; Luke 19:1-10) Add your own passages and ideas.
7. What does submission look like for you in this small group? At church? In the broader community (at work, school, or with a neighbor)?
8. How does submission relate to accountability?