

Message Discussion Guide FREED THROUGH FAITH

The Church at Brook Hills,

Dr. David Platt

December 7, 2008

Galatians 2

This guide is to help you facilitate discussion with your Small Group. Use it as a resource to lead your group in discovering and owning the truths of God's Word. There may be questions 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 their relationship with God. Your role is to facilitate this experience not to complete the discussion guide. Use this as a flexible teaching tool not a rigid teaching task list.

Connect . . .

Use one or both of the following options to introduce the discussion time to follow.

Option 1

Encourage learners to identify ways that we are judged by our performance every day. (*jobs, home life, education*) Ask the following questions:

- How do you normally introduce yourself or others to someone new? Do you tend to introduce others by what they do?
- Does it seem like we are usually judged based on what we can do instead of who we are in our culture?
- How can we carry this expectation into our relationship with God?

Explain that today we will continue to discuss how God's pleasure in us is not determined by our performances.

Option 2

David asked the question "What if the Christian life isn't about us living for Christ but Christ living in and through us?"

- Invite learners to respond to this quote and then answer the following questions:
- How does this question sound different from what we have heard in our lives?
- Does this question prompt a feeling of freedom or of confusion?
- How could our answer to this question affect how we live?

Explain that today we will discuss Christ's work in our lives.

Review the Message . . .

Freed By Grace . . .

- God's pleasure in you is not based on your _____ performance _____ for Him.

Discussion Questions

- Enlist two volunteers to read 1 Thessalonians 2:4 and 1 Thessalonians 4:1.

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- What do these verses indicate about a believer's desire to please God? Do these verses place more emphasis on people being pleasing to God or righteous actions being pleasing to God?
- Read Galatians 1:6-7. What did Paul outline as the requirements for Christ to call someone to Himself?
- Remind learners that Galatians was partially written to combat the false teachings of the Judaizers that required Gentiles to obey Jewish laws in order to follow Christ. Considering this background, how was the Gospel being distorted beyond the grace of Christ?

Application . . .

- What is the difference between God finding pleasure in a person and God desiring righteousness for His followers?
- Does God consider a person to have a higher intrinsic value based on the things that they do or don't do in order to please Him?
- If salvation comes from by grace through faith, why do we think that we have to "do something" to earn God's salvation and His pleasure?

Three Pictures . . .

- Galatians 2:1-10 - A picture of legalism ...
 - Right behavior with wrong belief.
- Galatians 2:11-14 - A picture of hypocrisy ...
 - Right belief with wrong behavior.
- Galatians 2:15-21 - A picture of faith ...
 - Right belief with right behavior.

Discussion Questions

- Invite a volunteer to read Galatians 2:1-10. Emphasize that Paul is again addressing the false teachings of the Judaizers. Was there anything inherently wrong with the Jewish customs and regulations that God had designed centuries before?
- Considering the message of Gospel, when did these regulations become legalism?
- What is the difference between legalism and obedience?
- Read Galatians 2:11-14. Explain that in Acts 10-11, God revealed to Peter that the Gentiles were supposed to receive the Gospel and were not to be considered as outcasts. How was Peter acting contrary to God's revelation of the value of the Gentiles?
- Focusing on Verse 14, what is the reason that Paul gave for his blatant confrontation of Peter?
- Enlist a volunteer to read Galatians 2:15-21? How many time are the words "faith" and "justified" used?

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- Noting Verse 20, what does Paul indicate is the way that he lives for God?

Application . . .

- What kinds of behavior do we often force on others or ourselves to make them be a “good” Christian?
- How can we become legalistic even in the church today, if we’re not careful?
- What is the danger in associating moral behavior with a changed heart?
- How can we distort the Gospel with our behavior? How do we sometimes act in ways that are contrary to the Gospel and Scripture?
- Why do we often give the excuse “I’m not supposed to judge” when we don’t want to confront a behavior that is unbiblical?
- How should faith affect the way that our lives reflect Christ?

Faith Alone . . .

- Through faith in Christ, we are _____ accepted _____ before God.
 - We are _____ justified _____ by faith.
 - Justification is...
 - ...the _____ gracious _____ act of God...
 - ...by which God _____ declares _____ ...
 - ...a _____ sinner _____ ...
 - ... _____ righteous _____ ...
 - ...solely on the basis of _____ faith _____ in Jesus Christ.
- Through faith in Christ, we are _____ alive _____ to God.
 - We _____ live _____ by faith.
 - Dead and Alive?
 - We die to _____ sin _____.
 - We die to _____ ourselves _____.
 - He _____ covers _____ our sin.
 - He _____ changes _____ our lives.
 - We are not _____ in debt _____ to Christ.

We are _____ indwelt _____ by Christ!

Discussion Questions

- Highlight Galatians 2:16. How is a person justified?
- Explain that the word for “justification” used in the New Testament was a legal term used to describe a judgment of non-conviction at a point in time by a judge.
- Who does Paul indicate is the Judge who determines justification?
- If justification happens at one point in time forever, does a person become unjustified?
- Enlist a volunteer to read 2 Corinthians 5:21. How can a person be considered righteous without actually being righteous?

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- Is there a way to become righteous apart from Christ?
- What are the implications of being declared righteous before God? What are the dangers of not valuing this righteousness?
- Because Christ attributed His righteousness to sinners, are these believers now in debt to Him? Why or why not?
- Looking at Galatians 2:20, consider that the verb phrase for “have been crucified” is in a tense in Greek that indicated an act that happened in the past and continues to have effects into the present. How does Christ’s life in us indicate that He does not consider His sacrifice as one to be repaid but as one that is a life-source?

Application . . .

- Why do we often ignore our justified status before God?
- Do we often take advantage of being justified forever before a holy God?
- How is justification different from forgiveness for a specific sin?
- What emotions do you feel when you realize that you aren’t expected to “live the Christian life” on your own?
- Why does death to ourselves and to our sin give us greater life?
- Why do we feel that we have a debt to repay to Christ? How is it freeing to know that we don’t pay Him back but that He joys in living through us?

Freed Through Faith . . .

- God’s pleasure in you is based on _____ Christ’s _____ performance for you.
 - He is _____ passionate _____ about you.
 - He has _____ paid a price _____ for you.

Discussion Questions

- Note Paul’s personal indication of God’s love and sacrifice for him in Galatians 2:20.
- How does this description of Christ convey Christ’s value of Paul?

Application . . .

- Can we do anything to make Christ love us more?
- Can we do anything to make Christ love us less?
- How does this truth affect the way that we view God? How does it affect the way that we view ourselves?
- Do we truly believe this truth? How would our lives look if we truly believed in this truth?