

Message Discussion Guide FREE IN CHRIST

The Church at Brook Hills,

Dr. David Platt

December 14, 2008

Galatians 3

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 think about the rules of sporting events. Ask the following questions:

- How do the rules of a sport affect the game?
- If there were no rules, how would a team know if they performed well or poorly?
- Without rules, could a player play the game effectively?

Now ask: Without the Law given to Moses, how would a person know what God expected? Without the Law, how would we know if we are living life effectively in the eyes of God?

Explain that today we'll discuss the law that God gave to Moses and how it points us to faith in Christ.

Option 2

Ask learners to share how they viewed the character of Santa Claus when they were children. Ask the following questions:

- Do we often associate God with a person like Santa Claus—if you are good, you will receive rewards? Or, if you are more good than bad, you'll receive rewards?
- How is our perception of God affected by similar sentiments that we have heard all of our lives?

Explain that today we'll discuss how we can do nothing to deserve God's grace, but that He offers it to us freely through faith in Jesus.

Review the Message . . .

God's Covenant with Abraham...

God's promise shows us the necessity of _____ faith _____.

- By _____ grace _____ alone, God blesses His people.
 - This grace is expressed in radical _____ promises _____.

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- Through _____ faith _____ alone, God's people receive His blessing.
 - This faith is expressed in radical _____ obedience _____.

Discussion Questions

- Enlist a volunteer to read Galatians 3:1-9. Remind learners that Paul was writing this book to Gentile believers who were being influenced by Judaizers who were insisting that following Christ also required them to follow the law of Moses, especially the law of circumcision.
- Considering that Abraham did not have the law of Moses, what did Paul indicate was the way that Abraham was considered righteous?
- Invite two volunteers to read Genesis 12:1-3 and Genesis 15:1-6.
- Explain that Scripture does not indicate that Abraham was in God's favor prior to God's covenant with Him. Who initiated the relationship between Abraham and God?
- What were God's promises to Abraham?
- Were God's promises to Abraham given before or after Abraham believed God?
- What does this indicate about God's role in His covenant with His people?
- How did Abraham express his faith in God and His promises?
- How do we know that Abraham did believe God?

Application . . .

- Read Galatians 3:8 again. How are we justified before God today?
- Is that any different than Abraham?
- Is there anything that we can do to earn God's favor?
- How does that make us feel to know that we cannot earn God's grace? Does it lead us to feel free or helpless?
- Why would we feel anything but freedom? What does our reaction indicate about our trust in God's graceful promises and our reliance upon Him?
- Why is it challenging to place our full faith and trust into the promises of a good God?
- What is the relationship between our faith and our obedience?
- What is the difference between being free from legalism and being constrained to obey Christ's commands?

God's Covenant with Moses...

Key Truth...

God's covenant with Moses does not _____ contradict _____ His covenant with Abraham;
instead, God's covenant with Moses _____ complements _____ His covenant with Abraham.

God's law shows us the futility of the _____ flesh _____.

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- We all disobey the law of God.
 - The law exposes our sin.
 - The law intensifies our sin.
- We all deserve the wrath of God.
 - We stand cursed beneath the law.
 - We stand condemned before God.

Discussion Questions

- Enlist one or two volunteers to read Galatians 3:10-22. Looking at Verse 11 and 17, was the Law given to Moses in contradiction with the faith that Abraham lived?
- Looking at Galatians 3:21-22, what does Paul indicate still gives a man righteousness?
- Who does the Law curse?
- What was the purpose of the law if no one could attain to God's standards of holiness outlined in it?
- Why could the Law then be considered a gift from God?
- How does the Law point us to Christ?

Application . . .

- Why should we be thankful for the Law?
- If we are no longer required to fulfill the Law, what role does the Law play in our lives today?
- What can the Law teach us about God's character? What can the Law teach us about Christ's work on our behalf?
- Why can we not teach grace without also teaching the Law?
- How can we allow the Law to drive us to Christ in our daily lives?

God's Covenant through Christ...

God's Son shows us the price of freedom.

- Jesus fulfills the law of Moses.
 - He obeyed the law of God for us.
 - He endured the wrath of God instead of us.
- Jesus completes the promise to Abraham.
 - By grace alone, He gives salvation to us.
 - Through faith alone, we receive His Spirit in us.

Discussion Questions

- Look at Galatians 3:16, 19, and 22. Explain that the seed was Jesus. Enlist a volunteer to read Romans 10:4. What did Christ do to the Law? What was His relationship to the Law?

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- Galatians 3:10 indicates that anyone who does not obey ALL of the law is cursed, and Galatians 3:13 states that Jesus actually became a curse for us. Could Christ have become a curse in our place if He had not fully obeyed the Law?
- How did Jesus bring a new meaning to the fulfillment of the Law? How was God's promise to bless all nations through Abraham completed in Christ?
- How many times is the word "faith" used in this passage? Why was Paul emphasizing the need to put your faith in Christ alone?
- How does faith in Christ bless the world?

Application . . .

- What does it mean to our lives that Christ became a curse instead of us?
- What kind of things do we do to try and earn salvation? If we are no longer under the law to receive salvation, why do we try so hard?
- How can we make salvation something that is not based on Christ alone?
- How does our faith in Christ affect all nations?
- How does our faith differ from morality?