

Message Discussion Guide

FREE AS SONS

The Church at Brook Hills,

Dr. David Platt

December 21, 2008

Galatians 3:26-4:7

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

Invite any learners who feel comfortable to share a time when their spouse/significant other/Facebook friend pursued them. Ask the following questions:

- How was your view of your pursuer affected by his/her pursuit of you?
- How did this pursuit affect your relationship?
- How did the pursuit make you feel?
- How did the pursuit impact the way that you viewed yourself?

Explain that while in no way is God to be compared to a Facebook friend, He pursues us in an amazing way. Today we will discuss how God has pursued us as His sons.

Option 2

Invite learners to share a time when they received a gift or honor for which they didn't do anything to earn/deserve it. (*For example, receiving an award, getting flowers, or a surprise gift.*) Ask the following questions:

- How did this gift make you feel about the giver?
- How did this gift make you feel about yourself?

Direct learners to compare this situation with how they view salvation from God. Allow for a few minutes of discussion. Explain that today we'll discuss God's grace in pursuing us even though we did nothing to deserve it.

Review the Message . . .

Salvation in Galatians...

- We are saved by _____ grace _____ alone through _____ faith _____ alone in _____ Christ _____ alone.
- The doctrine of justification...
 - We are _____ right _____ before God the _____ Judge _____.

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- The doctrine of adoption...
 - We are _____ loved _____ by God the _____ Father _____.

Discussion Questions

- Enlist a volunteer to read Galatians 3:23-26. How does Paul indicate that justification comes?
- What was the purposes of the Law being “put in charge” or serving as our “guardian”?
- Remind learners that justification is a one-time event in which God declares us right before Him. Justification changes our legal status before God. How does this doctrine demonstrate our freedom in Christ?
- Focusing on Galatians 3:25-26, note that because faith has pointed us to Jesus, the Law no longer enslaves the people of God. How has faith changed the relationship between God and man?

Application . . .

- How do our lives indicate that we believe we can perform well enough to earn justification? How does this false thinking affect the way we view God?
- Why do we often feel that we need to be justified over and over again?
- What is the danger in only seeing God as a Judge? In only seeing Him as a Father?
- How does our view of God affect our relationship with Him?

The Adoptive Father...

- God sent His _____ Son _____ so that we might receive the _____ position _____ of sons.
 - Adoption requires someone who comes at the right _____ time _____.
 - It was the right time _____ theologically _____.
 - It was the right time religiously.
 - It was the right time _____ culturally _____.
 - It was the right time politically.
 - Adoption requires someone who possesses the right _____ qualifications _____.
 - Jesus is fully _____ divine _____.
 - Jesus is fully _____ human _____.
 - Jesus is fully _____ righteous _____.
 - Adoption requires someone who has the right _____ resolve _____.
 - He determined to _____ redeem _____ us.
 - He died to _____ rescue _____ us.

Discussion Questions

- Enlist a volunteer to read Galatians 3:28-4:7.

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- Explain that in the culture of the time of Galatians, a son was the one who had the most rights, including inheritance rights and responsibilities. Considering this information, what is the significance of Paul purposefully using a gender-specific noun (*sons*) to describe a believer's relationship with Christ?
- Invite two volunteers to read Galatians 3:28. Paul indicates that the unity of Christ eliminates racial, social, and gender boundaries. Who is adoption available to?
- Read Galatians 4:4 again. What did it mean that Jesus was sent in the fullness of time?
- Explain that the time surrounding Jesus' birth was during the *Pax Romana*, when there was a general time of peace, a transportation system, and a central language. Considering this time, how was the time ideal for the birth of the Messiah?
- Looking at verses 4 and 5, how was Jesus the only one qualified to make our adoption possible?

Application . . .

- What kind of a picture do you have in your head when you think of God as a Father?
- How can our experiences with our earthly fathers influence our view of God as Father? How can they be positive or negative?
- How is God the ultimate example of a Father?
- How does the realization of our adoption by God impact our relationship with God?
- What does Jesus' redemption and adoption of us indicate about His view of us?
- Does our position as a son affect our responsibilities as a son?

- God sent His _____ Spirit _____ so that we might experience the _____ privileges of sonship.
 - Because we've been adopted, we live with a new _____ identity _____ before God.
 - We are _____ baptized _____ into Christ.
 - We are clothed with Christ.
 - We are united in Christ.
 - We each _____ belong _____ to Christ.
 - Because we've been adopted, we enjoy _____ intimacy _____ with God.
 - We were once held captive by His _____ law _____.
 - Now we're captivated by His _____ love _____.
 - Because we've been adopted, we are guaranteed an _____ inheritance _____ from God.
 - We have an eternal _____ Father _____.
 - We have an eternal _____ family _____.
 - We have an eternal _____ home _____.

Discussion Questions

- Look at Galatians 4:6. What is God's sign of adoption for His sons?

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- What does the Spirit do for the sons?
- Enlist a volunteer to read Galatians 3:26-27. What are the words or phrases used to describe a believer's relationship with Christ in this passage? What are the meanings of these words or phrases?
- What are the privileges of being adopted into God's family?

Application . . .

- How might we interact differently with God as our Father rather than as a task master? What are some differences between the motivations for obedience between a son and a servant?
- When are times that we cry out to God as "Abba Father?" Does it comfort us that we can go to Him in that intimate way?
- How do we cheat others (or ourselves) out of a relationship with God when we simplify salvation and discipleship to just the task of a prayer?
- What privileges do we miss out on when we leave our relationship with God at justification? What aspects of an abundant life are we missing out on?
- How do we neglect the family of God in our attempts to live independently in our Christian journey rather than in community with fellow heirs of God's kingdom?