

Message Discussion Guide FREE TO BOAST

The Church at Brook Hills,

Dr. David Platt

January 25, 2009

Galatians 6:11-18

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 learners to share their answers to the following questions:

- What is the American Dream?
- Can it really satisfy us? Why or why not?
- Why do we spend so much time pursuing the American Dream for ourselves and wanting it for our children if it really doesn't satisfy us?
- What do our answers to these questions reveal about ourselves?

Explain that today we will take a look at how the cross should be the obsession of our lives.

Option 2

Read the following quote from John Piper that David mentioned in the sermon:
"You don't have to know a lot of things for your life to make a lasting difference in the world. But you do have to know a few great things that matter, and to be willing to live for them and die for them."

Encourage learners to share the "things" that they have been taught through school, the media, and from family that would enable them to affect the world. Then invite them to share if they have discovered which, if any, of these "things" actually matter in terms of eternity.

Explain that today we are going to look at the great treasure that should affect all of our lives.

Review the Message . . .

The Gospel in Galatians...

Justification by grace alone through faith alone
in Christ alone means boasting in the cross alone.

Discussion Questions

- Enlist two volunteers to read Galatians 3:23-27 and Galatians 6:11-18.
- How did God reveal His grace through the Law and then through sending Christ?

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- What role does faith play in salvation? Does it really matter where we put our faith? Does faith count by itself? In Whom is our faith to be placed for our salvation?
- What does Paul indicate is the driving reason behind his boasting in the cross?

Application . . .

- Do we sometimes neglect the grace from God when we think about or talk about salvation? If so, how?
- How do we sometimes present requirements of salvation outside of faith alone?
- Can we belong to Christ without the cross?
- Explain that in the language of the original text, the word for boasting indicates more of a sense of treasuring or obsessing over something.
- How does this definition affect the way that you view the meaning of Galatians 6:14?

Five Reasons Why We Boast In The Cross...

- Because the cross _____ confronts _____ us with the reality of our sin.
 - We are _____ slaves _____ to sin.
 - We are _____ dead _____ in our sin.
 - We are _____ unable _____ to save ourselves.
 - What we don't need..._____ superficial _____ religion.
 - What we do need..._____ supernatural _____ regeneration.

Discussion Questions

- Remind learners that the Judaizers who were teaching false doctrine to the new believers in Galatia were emphasizing a salvation that required human works and action in addition to the cross. How did this false teaching detract from the inability of man to bring salvation? How did this false teaching soften the reality of the depravity of man's sin?
- Read Ephesians 2:1-5. Who made us alive? How did He do this?
- Read Galatians 5:24. What does belonging to Christ drive a believer to do with his or her sinful nature?
- Invite a volunteer to read Galatians 2:20-21. What did Paul mean when he stated that he has been crucified with Christ?
- How did the cross force Paul to examine his sinful nature?

Application . . .

- Why do we often seem resistant to accept the fact that we can do nothing to earn or attain salvation?
- How do our actions and even our words sometimes indicate that we believe that more than the cross is required for our salvation?
- Although we know that the cross is the only way to salvation, why do we easily fall into the temptation of wanting to believe that other ways are possible?

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- Why do we as humankind not want to come face to face with the reality of our sinful natures? What does this indicate about us?
- What does a life that has been crucified with Christ look like on a daily basis?

- Because the cross _____ comforts _____ us with the provision of our Savior.
 - Christianity is not about _____ human _____ achievement.
 - Christianity is all about _____ divine _____ accomplishment.
 - We no longer live for the _____ applause _____ of men.
 - We now live with the _____ pleasure _____ of God.

Discussion Questions

- Emphasize Galatians 6:12-14 again.
- Although the cross was an instrument of humiliation and torture, it also represents the work done by Christ. How does the cross, then, bring comfort?
- As highlighted previously, man cannot obtain salvation with his own works. Therefore, who is at the center of Christianity and salvation? Who then should get the glory for salvation?
- Enlist a learner to read Galatians 6:13. Why did these false teachers want men to obtain salvation through their own means? Whom did these false teachers want to receive glory?
- Who is the only One who deserves glory for the cross?

Application . . .

- How do we give God's glory away when we teach that salvation is obtained through man's efforts?
- How do other world religions affect the way that we view biblical salvation? How do other people, such as celebrities or scholars, attempt to dissuade people from the biblical message of the gospel?
- How do we sometimes change or adjust the gospel in order to make others feel comfortable? How is this behavior deceptive?
- How can our lives illustrate that we think we have to continue to earn salvation?
- How do we feel when we fully accept God's grace in salvation and stop trying to earn it?

- Because the cross reminds us that our _____ safety _____ is not found in this world.
 - We do not _____ fear _____ suffering.
 - We are now _____ free to _____ suffer.

Discussion Questions

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- Emphasizing Galatians 6:12 again, explain that in the Galatians' culture at that time, to accept the cross alone meant to turn one's back on traditional Judaism. This action resulted in social isolation and/or persecution.
- How did these false teachers use a fear of persecution to pervert the Gospel?
- Read Galatians 6:17. What does Paul indicate in this passage and in Verse 12 about persecution?
- How did Christ's suffering as the Son of God show God's love most clearly to the world?

Application . . .

- Why do believers today often tend to believe that being in God's will equals being safe?
 - Why would we believe that we deserved an exemption from suffering--unlike God's own Son?
 - How do we use safety as an excuse to run from God's calling?
 - How can our suffering testify to the sufficiency of God in our lives?
 - Is suffering and persecution worth enduring for the sake of showing other's Christ?
 - Why do we not hear that message hardly from televangelists?
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- Because the cross keeps us from wasting our lives in this world.
 - This world has nothing for us.
 - Christ is everything to us.

Discussion Questions

- In Verse 14, Paul states that the world has been crucified to him. What priority did the world have in Paul's life? What priority did Paul's own desires have in his life?
- In exchanging everything he had in the world for everything in Christ, what message was Paul sending to the Galatians?

Application . . .

- How do or should our lives indicate that the world means nothing to us?
 - What are the things that we spend the most time pursuing? Why do we pursue these things?
 - What do these pursuits indicate about our attachment to the world?
 - What is the guideline that we use to determine success in life? What does that reflect about our values?
 - What is the guideline that we use to determine a wasted life? What does that reflect about our values?
 - How is neglecting a life of pursuing things that don't matter freeing?
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- Because the cross supplies us with every good thing we have.
 - We have been re-created by His Spirit .

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- We are now ruled by His _____ Gospel _____.
- We will always be recipients of His _____ grace _____.

Discussion Questions

- Read Galatians 6:15-18. Paul states that the only thing that matters is a newly created life through Christ.
- How does the Gospel and the Spirit affect the new lives of believers?
- How does God continue to pour out grace on believers' lives?

Application . . .

- Why will the cross lead us to have and experience every good thing?
- Is it wrong to desire good things? What can be the danger in desiring good things?
- How do our attitudes toward God's grace affect the way that we view fleeting things?
- How can our attitudes toward possessions and relationships reveal selfishness?
- Although we don't want to waste our lives with the things of this world, how can we use the good things that we experience to bring glory to God?