

Sermon Questions for Life Groups

Concerned for the Gospel: Galatians 1:1-10

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Sunday, September 17, 2017

*These questions are generated by several authors for Life Group discussions
or family or personal devotions*

1. Step back a bit and visit Acts 8:1- 4 to read the account of the persecution of Christians by Saul. Then read Acts 9:1-30 and his conversion to Paul. Consider the doubt that the apostles first expressed with this event, and the declaration of Paul in Gal 1:1-2.
2. Paul describes himself as an “apostle.” What does this mean? In what way is being an apostle different from being a missionary or pastor, or elder or an ordinary Christian? Why does Paul stress to the Galatians that he is an apostle?
3. Paul summarizes his gospel message in verses 4 and 5. What four things does he tell us about Jesus’ death on the cross? In what ways do you see this Gospel message being perverted today?
4. What is the problem that Paul directs his words to? Who were these troublemakers, what were they doing and why was it so damaging?
5. How does Paul react to what these troublemakers were doing? Why is his response so strong? What can we learn from Paul’s example here?
6. Read 2 Timothy 3:10-17 and discuss the following questions:
 - a) From this passage, it is evident that Paul has struggled with doubters before. What evidence does this passage give for the idea that Paul thinks persecution is to be expected?
 - b) What are the encouraging and discouraging portions of what he says?
 - c) How does this passage speak to what we learned in Galatians 1 this week?
7. We often hear 2 Timothy 3:16-17 quoted on their own, but what comes before and after are packed with significance as well. Read 2 Timothy 4:1-5 and discuss the following:

- a) How does this passage relate to the teaching from Galatians 1?
 - b) How does this passage remind you of our present day?
 - c) Do the similarities discourage you with the knowledge that nothing changes, or encourage you with the knowledge that even with all of the persecution and hard heartedness, God still finds a way to change hearts?
8. What are some ways in which we might desert this gospel of grace (vs. 6)?
9. In reference to Paul's apostleship being discredited, how might we be careful to ensure that our own Christian witness is not discredited or compromised? (I Timothy 4:12, Acts 6:4, I Thessalonians 2:4, II Corinthians 5:20, etc.)
10. What is your defence when others, eg Jehovah's Witnesses, say that you are lacking "more" in your gospel? What biblical support can you cite in defence of your gospel?
11. Discuss this statement from Calvin in light of this passage: "man's nature is a perpetual factory of idols," that the "mind begets an idol, and the hand gives it birth," How might this tendency affect our resolve in sharing the gospel?
12. Why must we continually insist on "Christ alone"?
13. "Loving people means being frank about the truth" and not acquiesce-ing into political correctness. Read II Timothy 4:2 and share any experiences, positive or otherwise, where you had an opportunity to answer truthfully questions about the gospel. What happened and was there any follow up? What would you do if the other party starts to disagree vehemently with you?