**Home Group Questions – October 2020**

**Galatians 1:1-10**

This is a letter written by the Apostle Paul to the churches in Galatia, an area in Southern Turkey. The churches are clearly in trouble. False teachers have come amongst them, questioning the apostolic authority of Paul and adding to the gospel that he originally preached to them when they were founded.

**V1-2:** Paul begins the letter by laying down the credentials of his Apostleship – he was appointed by God, not men!

**V3-5:** Paul now continued by laying down the fundamentals of his message; a gospel which brings grace and peace with God because we have been rescued through the self-sacrifice of Jesus in accordance with His Father’s will, and all to His glory.

**V6-10:** Paul is astonished then, that these churches would depart from God by turning to a different gospel. This “gospel” is not the gospel at all, it is a perversion and those who preach it are damned to hell!

**Big Idea:** *Knowing and standing firm on the authentic Gospel of the grace of God seen in the cross of Christ is critically important.*

**Q Read v8-9** What is Paul so worked up about?

**Q Take a look at 2:11-14, 4:9-11 and 5:2-3.** What can we glean from these verses about the actual issues that had arisen in the churches?

**Q Is it really not possible to save ourselves even if we live really, really good lives and do loads of acts in the service of others?** Why / why not?

**Q Why is it so important that we don’t add anything to the gospel?**

**Q How would you answer someone who claimed that there are many ways that someone can get to heaven, and the route you take depends largely on which culture you were born in.**

---

**Galatians 1:11-24**

In the second half of the first chapter, Paul is continuing his argument about where his gospel came from. A great summary is verses 11-12.

By giving a short testimony, Paul establishes:

**V13-14:** His gospel did not have a human origin – it was completely opposed to the way of salvation that he used to believe

**V15-20:** Neither was it passed onto him by men – Paul didn’t consult anyone about the message that he had received because he had received it from God. It was 3 years before he even met any of the other Apostles.

**V21-24:** And right from the start, all the reports about him that got back to the church in Judaea were that he was preaching the exact same faith that he used to hate!

**Big Idea:** *Paul’s gospel is authentic because it came direct from God. And as such it is the plumb line by which we can assess any other “gospel”.*
Q What’s the connection between v1 and v11-12? Can you spot similarities? What’s the new point that Paul is making in v11-12?

Q What do we know about Paul’s former life (before his conversion)? Why does Paul give his testimony in v13-14? (Think about how it connects with v11)

Q Read v15-20. What did Paul do after his conversion? When did he meet Peter? Why is this an important part of his argument? (Think about how it connects with v12)

Q Read v21-24. Where is Judea? What was the report that got back to the churches there? What was their view of the ministry of Paul?

Q Why is it so important to the Apostle that we allow no contamination into the gospel message? What are some ways that this can happen?

Galatians 2:1-10
In chapter 1, Paul has made the case for the origin of his Gospel. He himself is an Apostle in the truest sense; he met the risen Jesus and was sent directly by Him. But more than that, his gospel itself (the message he preached) was also directly from God; there was nothing in it that came from his own thoughts or that he learned second-hand from others.

Paul starts this second chapter by relating a trip that he made to Jerusalem 14 years later. In Jerusalem he had a private meeting with the leaders of the church, including Peter, James (Jesus’ brother) and John. Paul and Barnabas lay before them the gospel that he has been preaching and they stand their ground against the false brothers who have come to spy on them. The leaders of the Jerusalem church add nothing to the content of Paul’s message. They recognise God’s grace in Paul and they offer him and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship.

In relating this story to his readers in Galatia, Paul establishes that there are indeed false teachers, even in Jerusalem, who preach that things must be added to our faith in Christ… but theirs in not the message of the Apostles in Jerusalem.

Big Idea: There is only one gospel, no matter what context we preach it in, and to add to it is always going to enslave people rather than set them free.

Q Read v1-2. Why does Paul go to Jerusalem after 14 years of ministry in the gentile world? Is he worried that the gospel he’s been preaching might be faulty after all? Why / Why not?

Q Who does Paul take on the trip? What do we know about these men? Why do you think he takes Titus?

Q Read v3-5. Why does Paul say that the false brothers were trying to make people slaves?

Q Read v6-9. What are the outcomes of this meeting? Why was this meeting so crucially important, even to us?

Q How might we fall into the trap of making ours a gospel that enslaves people today?
Galatians 2:11-21

In this passage, Paul relates an occasion when Peter came to Antioch. Initially he embraced all the believers in this wonderful church made up from both Jews and Gentiles. But when another party arrived from Jerusalem he became afraid and drew back from the Gentile believers.

Paul is outraged and he takes the opportunity to publically expose this hypocrisy so that the truth of the Gospel is not denied by the actions of Peter and those who follow his example.

V15-21 contain the deep and essential foundations of the Gospel – Justification by Faith in Christ alone. These are truths we must understand and apply faithfully in every area of our lives.

Big Idea: Our lives need to be lived “in line” with the truth of the gospel. When we fail to do this it is hypocrisy and it denies the gospel that we profess to believe and it can lead others astray.

Q Read v11-12. What did Peter do and why was it so wrong? What did it lead to in v13?

Q Read v14. What does it mean to not act “in line with the truth of the Gospel”? How might we do this today?

Q Read v16. What does Paul mean by “the Law”? What can the law NOT do?

Q What does it mean to be Justified?

Q How does the truth of Justification by Faith in Christ Jesus (and not by works) affect every part of our lives? (e.g. the way we treat others, the way we think about ourselves)