



## MANNA CHURCH HAWAII - SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

May 3, 2026 | Galatians: Religion vs Relationship (pt4) - You're in the Family

**CHOOSE AN ICEBREAKER QUESTION:** Growing up, were you more the “rule follower” the “rule breaker,” or somewhere in between? OR If you could instantly be amazing at something without having to work for it, what would it be and why?

### **MESSAGE SUMMARY & SCRIPTURES:**

In Galatians 4, Paul shifts from theology to something deeply personal, **identity**. He reminds us that following Jesus isn't about upgrading our behavior, it's about receiving a whole new identity. *“So you are no longer a slave, but a son, and if a son, then an heir through God”* (Galatians 4:7). That means we're not working our way toward acceptance, we're starting from it. God didn't just save you from something, He adopted you into something. Through Jesus, we've been brought into the family of God with full access, full love, and a real relationship, not a distant, performance-based connection.

But here's where we tend to drift. Even after receiving grace, many of us slowly slide back into a mindset of “try harder, do better.” We start relating to God like a boss instead of a Father, focused on checking boxes instead of being with Him. Paul calls this out because religion drains life, while relationship brings freedom. *“Because you are sons, God sent the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, ‘Abba, Father!’”* (Galatians 4:6). That word “Abba” is deeply personal, it's the kind of closeness a child has with a loving dad. God isn't asking for perfection; He's inviting us into connection.

Paul then points to Abraham's story to show the difference between striving and trusting. One son (Ishmael) came through human effort, trying to make God's promise happen on their own. The other (Isaac) came through faith in God's timing and power. The result? One led to tension and frustration, the other to promise and blessing. *“We are not children of the slave but of the free woman”* (Galatians 4:31). The same is true for us, what we try to force in our own strength will never produce lasting life, but what we surrender to God will. You weren't created to live pressured, anxious, and trying to prove yourself, you were created to live secure, loved, and free as a son or daughter of God.

### **GOING DEEPER: (break up into groups of no more than 4-6 for discussion)**

1. Share something that stood out to you from the message or the summary?
2. In your life, do you tend to feel like you have to prove yourself to be accepted, or do you feel secure being yourself? What shapes that for you?
3. When you think about God, do you picture Him more like a boss, a judge, or a loving Father? Why do you think that is?
4. What's one area of your life where you find it hard to fully trust God as a good Father (finances, relationships, your future, forgiveness, etc.)? In that area, do you find yourself trying harder instead of choosing to trust in His grace? **ACTION STEP:** This week, choose to fully surrender that area to God. What's one practical step you can take to trust Him with it?

### **PRAYER: (break up into groups of 2-3 for prayer):**

Father, thank You that through Jesus I am no longer a slave but Your child, help me live secure in Your love and not strive for what You've already given me. God, help me see others through the same grace You've given me, and love them with patience, compassion, and truth. Jesus, use my life to reflect Your goodness so that people far from You would experience the freedom and belonging found in Your family



## MANNA CHURCH HAWAII - SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

May 3, 2026 | Galatians: Religion vs Relationship (pt4) - You're in the Family

# MANNA YOUTH DISCUSSION GUIDE

**CHOOSE AN ICEBREAKER QUESTION:** Are you more the rule follower, the rule breaker, or somewhere in between? **OR** If you could instantly be amazing at something without having to work for it, what would it be and why?

### **MESSAGE SUMMARY & SCRIPTURES:**

In Galatians 4, Paul talks about something really personal, your identity. Following Jesus is not just about changing your behavior or trying to be a better person. It is about becoming someone new. The Bible says, "You are no longer a slave, but a son, and if a son, then an heir through God" (Galatians 4:7). That means you are not trying to earn God's love or approval. You already have it. God did not just save you from sin. He brought you into His family. You belong to Him, and you get to have a real relationship with Him, not one based on pressure or performance.

But this is where a lot of us struggle. Even when we know God loves us, we can still feel like we have to prove ourselves. This can show up at school, trying to get perfect grades, in sports, trying to perform, or with friends, trying to fit in. We can start treating God the same way, like He is just waiting for us to mess up or expecting us to do everything right. But Galatians 4:6 reminds us that God is a loving Father. It says we can call Him "Abba," which is like saying "Dad." That is close, personal, and full of love. God is not looking for perfection. He wants connection with you.

Paul also talks about Abraham's story to show the difference between trying to control everything and trusting God. One son came from people trying to make things happen on their own. The other came from trusting God's promise. One led to stress and frustration. The other led to peace and blessing. It is the same for us. When we try to force everything on our own, we feel pressure and anxiety. But when we trust God, we can live free. You were not created to live stressed out and trying to prove yourself. You were created to live as someone who is already loved, already accepted, and already part of God's family.

### **GOING DEEPER: (break up into groups of no more than 4-6 for discussion)**

1. Share something that stood out to you from the message or summary?
2. Do you feel like you have to prove yourself to be accepted at school, on a team, or with friends? What does that feel like?
3. When you think about God, do you see Him more like a boss, a judge, or a loving Father? Why? 4. What is one area of your life where it is hard to trust God? This could be school, family, friendships, your future, or something else. **ACTION STEP:** This week, choose one area where you usually try to control everything. Take time each day to pray and trust God with it. What is one simple step you can take to show that trust? Who can you share this with?

### **PRAYER: (break up into groups of 2-3 for prayer):**

Father, thank You that through Jesus we are Your children and we do not have to earn Your love. Help us live secure in who You say we are and not feel pressure to prove ourselves. Teach us to trust You in our everyday lives, at school, at home, and with our friends. Help us show that same love and grace to others. Use our lives to help people see that they belong in Your family too. Amen.

**Referenced Scripture: Galatians 4, Luke 12:24, 29-31**

Two differences between being a slave and a son:

1. A slave has a \_\_\_\_\_. A son has a \_\_\_\_\_.

2. A slave is an \_\_\_\_\_. A son is an \_\_\_\_\_.

**3 Steps to Living in Relationship With God**

1. See God as a good \_\_\_\_\_.

**Matthew 7:11 (ESV)** - *If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask him!*

2. Approach God through \_\_\_\_\_, not \_\_\_\_\_.

**John 5:39-40 (ESV)** - *You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that bear witness about me, <sup>40</sup> yet you refuse to come to Me that you may have life.*

3. Give God your \_\_\_\_\_ heart.

**Matthew 16:24-26** *Jesus said to his disciples, "If anyone wants to follow after me, let him deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me. <sup>25</sup> For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life because of me will find it.*

**This week's Grace Test**

1. What is holding you back from giving God your whole heart?
2. Where do you find it difficult to trust God?
3. How would your life be different if you were to experience God's grace and blessing in the areas of your life you haven't fully entrusted to Him yet?

Discussion Guide/Going Deeper



Growth Track



Join a Serve Team!

