

Dear Life Group Leaders,

For the next 12 weeks we're going to be basing ourselves in Galatians. It's a letter Paul wrote to a few churches he helped to plant. We'll find that as well as being encouraging and full of warmth towards the Galatians, Paul also has strong words of rebuke. It's a letter fixated on what it means to establish our lives in the grace of God. We're in for some good times together as we deep dive in to this book! // Last week I encouraged you to consider asking three types of questions in your Bible studies – observation, interpretation and application. This week, I'm encouraging to score less goals. Leading a Bible study is more like crossing the ball in the box in a game of football, rather than trying to score a goal yourself. Try to ask questions that point your Life Group to the truth of the Bible. Cross the ball so they are in the best position to score a goal for themselves. I hope you have fun together as you start in Galatians together. God bless, take care and stay strong,
Andy

LIFE GROUP GUIDE

Galatians 1:1-9

This Week's BIG IDEA: Introduction to Paul, Galatians and the major themes of the letter.

Please read Galatians 1:1-9.

1. v1, how does Paul introduce himself? Does everyone know what the word 'apostle' means? Is anyone familiar enough with Paul's story to summarise it for us now?
[Leaders note: apostle = sent one.]
2. Turn quickly to Acts 8-9. Please read Acts 8:1 and Acts 9:1-2, what do we learn about Paul before he encountered Jesus? What do we learn about Paul through what Jesus says to him in Acts 9:4-6 and what Jesus says to Ananias about Paul in Acts 9:15-16?
[Leaders note: Paul is called Saul in passage. He is renamed Paul sometime later, see Acts 13:9.]
3. Acts 9:19-22. How did Paul respond to this encounter with Jesus?
4. Back to the letter of Galatians. Paul went on to went on a number of missionary journeys during his ministry that development after his conversion. The churches Paul is writing to in Galatians 1:2 are most likely some of those he planted during his first missionary journey recorded in Acts 13-14. What does the fact Paul wrote this letter to these churches tell us about him and his relationship with those he has ministered to?
[Leaders note: Point people towards Paul's love and concern, and ongoing relationship, with those churches he planted. Paul invested in others over a long period of time.]
5. v3-5, what do we learn about God's heart towards us in these verses? What do we learn about his will? What does he want to give us? What has he done for us?
6. v6-9, what do we learn about the Galatians here? Future weeks will expand on the reasons behind Paul's rebuke. But, for now, how would you characterise Paul's emotions towards the Galatians and their situation?
[Leaders note: things like passion, dismay, even anger fit well. But also include concern and care.]
7. Let's consider an application together. On a blank piece of paper write down how you would describe the following in your life and take some time to consider how they might shape how you think about yourself and your identity: your parents, upbringing, birthplace, places you've lived, personality, jobs, current title, hobbies, music taste, gifts and skills, family, key life events, hopes and dreams, regrets and setbacks...
[Leaders note: Some people in your group might find this exercise hard and will need someone to verbally process it with. Be alive to this possibility and create the appropriate space if necessary.]
8. Over the coming weeks we'll look deeper in to how God's grace provides a solid foundation for our identity. But for now, pray together for what we'll learn through this series and ask God to help us root our identity in him.