

Dear Life Group Leaders,

It's week four of our Galatians series, and I hope you're relishing diving deep in to God's grace week on week.

It is important to take time to explain the narrative of this passage. It provides important context for Paul's teaching about grace and the gospel. But, keep an eye on the clock. Make sure you leave enough time for the application questions at the end of this study.

God bless, take care and stay strong,

Andy

LIFE GROUP GUIDE

Galatians 2:11-21

This Week's BIG IDEA: Paul confronts Peter's hypocrisy, emphasising that we are justified by faith in Jesus.

Please read Galatians 2:11-21.

1. Could someone summarise what's happened in Galatians so far? Where has Paul gotten to in this larger autobiographical section (Gal 1:11-2:21)?
2. v11, where is Paul? Who is he with? What is he doing?
3. Who knows anything about Peter? What are some of the key moments of his life recorded in the Bible?
[Leaders note: Answers don't need to be exhaustive! But perhaps it would be good to establish that Peter was one of Jesus' closest friends and a key leader in the early church.]
4. v12-14, what is Paul's charge against Peter?
5. v14, what are the "Jewish customs" that Paul is referring to?
[Leaders note: We could summarise these as the Jewish Ceremonial Law. They are found in places like Leviticus 11, a chapter detailing clean and unclean foods. They relate to ritual cleanness.]
6. Let's split in to two groups. Could one group read through Mark 7:14-23 and the other Acts 11:1-18? Take a few minutes, then report back on how these passages help us understand our relationship to the Jewish Ceremonial Law as followers of Jesus.
[Leaders note: In Mark 7 Jesus teaches us it is what comes out of our hearts that make us unclean. He also taught that all foods are clean, a point that is reinforced by Peter's vision in Acts 11.]
7. v15-16, can you spot any repeated words or phrases in these two verses? Is there a particular idea Paul is trying to communicate?
[Leaders note: Perhaps, we are justified by faith in Jesus Christ? This is a crucial phrase for Paul. Make sure everyone in your Life Group understands what it means, particularly the technical word, justified.]
8. v17-18, what charge is Paul answering in these verses?
[Leaders note: every commentary I've read on these verses say something like "these verses are hard to understand". They are! I found it helpful to see that that are making the same, or, at least, a very similar, point to Romans 6:1-2.]
9. v19-21, what do these verses tell us about Paul's mindset? How is he seeking to live his life?
[Leaders note: it is all about Jesus!]
10. Let us consider some application questions together:
 - a. Who is your Paul when you're being a Peter? Who has permission to speak honestly in to your life?
 - b. Sometimes we can shame ourselves in to thinking that God can't use us because of wrong things we have done, how does this passage help us correct this false belief?
 - c. How would you explain "justification by faith" to someone who has never about it before?
 - d. How would you explain the difference between being moral and being a Christian to someone who thinks being good makes them acceptable to God?*[Leaders note: You may not have time for all of these questions. So feel free to focus on a specific 1 or 2, particularly if you think they touch on something important for your Life Group at this time.]*