



Pray Together

Use the first few minutes of your time together to lead your group in a focused prayer time.

- **Praise:** Spend time praising God for who He is.
- **Repent:** Take a few moments to silently confess any sin that is lingering in your heart.
- **Ask:** Verbalize your needs and the needs of others to God.
- **Yield:** Surrender your will to God.

Read Together

Paul—persecutor turned preacher—continues his rationale and defense of the true Gospel to believers in Galatia. Using his personal redemption story, his purpose is to convince those who are distorting the Gospel to remember that their beliefs were not founded on lies, perversions of the truth, or false testimonies. Rather, their beliefs were based on an individual and divine encounter with a personal God through the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Paul's plea to the Galatians sought to remind them of the grace God extended to him through faith, and the grace with which God, through His Spirit, drew them to conversion.

As Paul tells his story, they recount the hardships he faced, along with the persecution and daily grind that he withstood. This was again a reminder to them to always cling to truth, dispel perversions of the truth, and fully rely on God's grace to give them the strength to be servants of Christ, not pleasers of man. Paul's life-story, though not easy, portrayed him as being steadfast in his beliefs, as he stood firm and held tightly to the grace Jesus so mercifully lavished on him.

Discuss Together

Use these questions to engage in an informative and impactful discussion.

- Read Galatians 1:10-14. In this passage, Paul continues to point the Galatian believers to truth and dispel the lies of those attempting to add to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. He begins his defense of the Gospel by telling his personal story of redemption, assuring believers that the Gospel he preached was not "man's gospel." At that time, Paul also received a unique mission. (See also Acts 9:15-22). From whom did Paul receive the Gospel and what was his unique mission? How did he fulfill his mission?
- Every believer has a redemption story, a unique revelation of Jesus through the Holy Spirit, and a unique mission. Invite group members to share their redemption story and their unique mission. Encourage them to share how their story validates their authenticity as a believer. How can sharing your redemption story with someone struggling with their faith help when witnessing and encouraging others.
- Galatians 1:10-14 mentions three characterizations of Paul's (Saul's) life:
 - **His conduct before Christ** (Read Acts 7:54-8:2)
What was Paul's identity before his conversion? (See Philippians 3:4-6)
What was your identity before Christ?
 - **His conversion experience** (Read Acts 9:1-12)
How was Paul's conversion a glorious display of God's grace?
What was Paul's new identity? (See Philippians 3:7-11)
In what ways have you seen God's grace change you and help you become more Christ-like?



- **His call to serve.** (Read Acts 9:13-19)
The fruit of true conversion is mission. Did Paul fulfill his God-given mission?
Do you see the fruit of “mission” being lived out in your life?
- According to Galatians 1:15-17 and Acts 9:19-22, rather than going directly to Jerusalem to meet with the disciples, Paul went to Arabia. Consider reasons why Paul waited for a period of time before going to Jerusalem. Can you think of any other men or women called by God in Scripture who were in a period of waiting before moving forward in ministry? What was God’s purpose in their waiting? How have you seen God use a period of waiting in your life to teach, train, or refine you for a specific ministry or mission?
- Read Galatians 1:18-2:2. It wasn’t until three years after his conversion that Paul went to Jerusalem for 15 days. Then Scripture tells us that 14 years later, he finally returned to Jerusalem, along with Barnabas, to meet with the Jerusalem Council. (See Acts 15) Why do you think it would have been difficult for Paul to be accepted by the disciples and the council? Did Paul allow anything (lack of acceptance, persecution, discouragement, etc.) to hinder his unique mission to evangelize to the Gentiles? Explain.
- When a person receives a unique call from God, the most natural thought is that he or she will immediately begin that ministry with little or no difficulties ahead. This is most often not the case. Paul is a prime example of a man on mission who chose to forge ahead, all the while fully depending on the grace of God to help him in times of need. Even though he faced difficulty after difficulty, scripture never indicates that he questioned his calling or doubted God’s revelation to him. Read 2 Corinthians 12:8-10 and 1 Corinthians 15:1-11. What does Paul say about the grace of God in these verses that can help you this week as you move forward in ministry and on mission for God?

How I must obey Christ...

- Examine yourself. As a result of this study, identify a specific area in which you need to obey Christ this week.
- How do you specifically need to obey Christ in this area this week?
- How can Jesus redeem this area? How has He proven that in Scripture?
- Who will keep you accountable to this commitment this week?

Pray Together

Encourage group members to share a burden. Pray 2 Corinthians 12:8-10 over your group.

