



SET FREE

A STUDY IN GALATIANS

Small Group Study Guide

OVERVIEW

People have a lot of different views on what religion actually is. Pastor Mike defined religion as believing that following rules and rituals makes us good people – better than others – and qualifies us for God’s love.. Skye Jethani says that religion is “efforts at cosmic bribery.” Jesus himself refused to do religion and even drove religious people crazy.

The Galatians had begun to practice a dangerous kind of religion. They listened to false teachers who said “Follow Jesus and be religious. Put your faith in Jesus and keep many of the Old Testament laws and rituals.” The book is Paul’s response to the notion that anything other than Christ’s death on the cross is required for salvation and he’s not happy. He writes it from a place of authority because he is a “big A” Apostle, meaning that he got his message directly from Jesus Christ.

WARM-UP

According to the definition above, do you see our culture as getting more or less religious? Why or why not?

READ

Galatians 1:1-6

DISCUSS

1. Pastor Mike talked a lot about religion and looked at a variety of definitions. How would you define religion?
2. Do you ever feel like you “get credit” with God for spiritual practices (like going to church)? Why or why not?
3. Reflect on the statement: “We can end up viewing God in the same way we view the IRS: What’s the least I can pay and be OK?”
4. In what ways are you religious? Meaning, in what ways do you depend on rules and rituals to qualify you for God’s love?
5. Christianity is based on a radically unreligious premise—the humiliation of God. Has the “humiliation of God” on the cross affected your life? If so, how?
6. How does Paul understand the gospel?
7. Have you ever accepted a different gospel, whether through explicit belief statements or your behavior and view of God? If so, share why and how that affected you.
8. Doing good – being religious, attending Church, serving others, fasting, worshipping, any of the religious rituals and patterns that we do – is good, if we are doing them in response to who God is and what he has done. But if we are doing good thinking we are earning God’s favor, then doing good is bad. How can you remind yourself of this truth this week?

REFLECT

The title of our series is “Set Free.” Is there anything that you hope to be set free from as we go through Galatians?

Small group challenge: read through the entire of book of Galatians (it’s only 5 chapters) at least once, then write down the themes you notice and questions you have.