

Questions for Small Groups : Galatians 3.15-25 'Grace Centred'

1. Before we get into Galatians, start by looking at the example of Abraham in **Genesis 15.1-21**. This is the moment where God gives his covenant promise to Abram.

What does Abraham (Abram) believe God will do, despite him being nearly 100 years old (v4-6)?

What does Abraham have to do? (v9-11)

Fire is a sign of God's presence and the passing through animal pieces was an ancient way of sealing a binding agreement – a covenant. Usually both parties would pass between the animal pieces as a way of saying that they would die if the covenant was broken by them.

What passes through the aisle between the animal pieces (v17)? Who doesn't (v12)?

What is God showing about who will keep this covenant?

Why is that good news for imperfect Abraham?

How is all this relevant to Paul's arguments in Galatians?

2. Read Galatians 3.15-25

The argument of the false teachers was that Moses was given the law of God 430 years after God's promises of salvation to Abraham. So isn't the law an improvement on, or replacement for, the promises? If it is, we need to obey the law to be saved.

How does Paul answer this objection? (v15-18)

What doesn't the law achieve? (v21)

What does the law achieve? (v22-23)

So what do you think is the point of the law? (v24-25)

We are no longer under the 'supervision of the law' – does this mean Christians shouldn't be concerned about obeying the law?

3. Going further

Why do people need to know God is a God who has laws before they can understand why Jesus' death is good news?

Do the street preachers have it right then – often at the heart of their message is that we are all sinners fallen short of the law?

To what extent should we focus on concepts like 'grace' and 'love' and how much on 'sin' and 'our need of God' (from your reading of Galatians so far, where does Paul put the emphasis?).

How do you feel about this focus on our sinfulness and inability to save ourselves? Where is it problematic? Where is it helpful?

4. How does this passage motivate you in your faith?