

Series: The Gospel-Centered

Title: The Good News that Makes Us Right

Text: Galatians 2:1-3:14

Breaking the Ice:

OPTION # 1 – What do you normally do on Valentine’s Day?

OPTION # 2 – “Best” or “worse” valentine’s movie and why?

Discussion/Study:

1. Read Galatians 3:15-4:7 – Throughout his letter, Paul’s has been continually reiterating that the gospel (good news) is that we are not made right with God on the basis of our performance (i.e., “works of the law”) but “through faith.” Because Paul has spent so much time explaining why God did NOT give the law (that is, as a means of earning God’s favor), Paul then goes on to explain why He DID give the law. In these verses Paul tells us that the law is added to point out our sin (“transgressions”). Why is it important that the law point our sins? How does the law of God given through Moses actually point us to the promise of God given to Abraham (and fulfilled in Christ)?
2. Read Galatians 3:15-4:7 — Paul describes the role of the law before the coming Christ as a “guardian”. Read the description below of a guardian from the late John Stott. In what way was the law a guardian in the life of God’s people? How does faith in Christ change this function of the law in the life of a person?

“The Greek word is *paidagogos* and means literally a ‘tutor, i.e., a guide and guardian of boys’ (Grimm-Thayer). He was usually himself a slave, whose duty it was ‘to conduct the boy or youth to and from school, and to superintend his conduct generally’ (Arndt-Gingrich). The AV translation ‘schoolmaster’ is unfortunate, for the *paidagogos* was not the boy’s teacher so much as his disciplinarian. He was often harsh to the point of cruelty, and is usually depicted in ancient drawings with a rod or cane in his hand...

“Paul uses the word again in 1 Corinthians 4:15, saying ‘You may have teen thousand *tutors* in Christ, but you have only one father’ (NEB). In other words, ‘there are plenty of people to discipline you, but I am the only one to love you.’ Later in the same chapter he asks: “Am I to come to you with a rod in my hand (*i.e.*, like a *paidagogos*), or in love and a gentle spirit (*i.e.*, like a father)?” (1 Cor. 4:21, NEB),” (John Stott, p. 97).

3. Read Galatians 3:15-4:7 — Paul describes the freedom that the gospel gives us by contrasting the life of a first century household slave/employee versus the freedom enjoyed by a son or daughter in the family. Paul tells us that through the gospel God welcomes/adopts us sons/daughters into his family. One of the implications of this is that we can address God like Jesus did, as our “Abba! Father!”. Why is this significant for you personally? What does this teach about how you can relate to God?

4. Read Galatians 3:15-4:7 — As sons and daughters who have been adopted in the family of God, Paul tells us that the Holy Spirit is put into our hearts. This gives us both a new desire to obey God (power/ability) and motive to obey God as we seek to live out the family image, and resemble our Lord, Savior (and elder brother) Jesus. How have you experienced this personally in your own life? In your own words, describe the difference that having the Holy Spirit in your heart makes as you deal with sin, relationships, taking steps of faith/obedience, etc.?

5. Read Galatians 3:15-4:7 — Not only the gospel free us from living out of a performance mentality in our relationship with God, but also with one another. Paul tells us that the gospel unites us people, despite our gender, race, ethnicity, or socio-economic class. This doesn't mean that God does away with our distinction (i.e., we are still men, women, etc.) but it does mean that those things are no longer barriers in the way we relate to and love one another, because the gospel unites us. Think about ways you have seen this truth in practice. Give examples of the ways you have seen the gospel bring people together? What do you think it looks like to practice this truth in the way you relate to others?