



Small Group Guide: Jesus Plus Nothing Equals Freedom

Based on Galatians 3 - "The Simple Gospel"

OPENING PRAYER & ICEBREAKER

Prayer: Begin by asking God to open hearts and minds to His truth and to help the group embrace the simplicity of the gospel.

Icebreaker: Share about a time when you overcomplicated something simple (buying a house, getting a cell phone, etc.). How did it feel when something straightforward became unnecessarily complex?

KEY SCRIPTURE PASSAGES

- **Galatians 3:1-5 - Paul's rebuke to the Galatians**
- **Romans 6:1-2 - Grace doesn't mean lawlessness**
- **John 3:36 - Belief and obedience go hand in hand**
- **Galatians 3:13 - Christ redeemed us from the curse**

SERMON SUMMARY

Pastor emphasized that the gospel is beautifully simple: Jesus plus nothing equals freedom. The Galatians had started with faith in Christ but were being influenced by false teachers who added requirements (circumcision, dietary laws) to the gospel. Paul called them "foolish" for complicating what God made simple. When we try to earn salvation through works or add requirements to the gospel, we place ourselves under a curse and miss the freedom Christ died to give us.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Understanding the Message

1. What does it mean that the gospel is "simple enough for a child to understand"? How does this challenge our tendency to overcomplicate faith?
2. Pastor mentioned we need only three things to survive physically: food, water, and shelter. What is the spiritual equivalent? What is the bare essential of the Christian faith?
3. Read Galatians 3:10. What does Paul mean when he says those who rely on works of the law are "under a curse"? How is this different from how we typically think of curses?

Personal Reflection

1. The sermon identified several ways we add to the gospel today:
 - Church attendance requirements
 - Moral behavior checklists
 - Political activism
 - Specific terminology (like insisting on "Yeshua" instead of "Jesus")
2. Which of these have you seen or experienced? Have you ever unintentionally added requirements to the gospel?
3. Pastor described two dangers:
 - Moralism (pride in keeping rules)
 - Lawlessness (abusing grace as an excuse to sin)
4. Which extreme are you more tempted toward? Why?
5. The sermon mentioned "spiritual anxiety and burnout" from trying to perform for God. Have you ever felt like God's love was contingent on your daily performance? What does it feel like to rest in salvation instead?

Going Deeper

1. Read Romans 6:1-2. How do we balance the truth that we're saved by grace alone with the call to obedience? What does it mean that "obedience is a byproduct of salvation, not the cause of it"?
2. The Barabbas story illustrates the gospel perfectly. How does understanding that we are Barabbas (the guilty one set free) change how you view your salvation?
3. Pastor said, "My obedience to Christ as Lord of my life is a byproduct of my salvation." What does genuine, grace-motivated obedience look like compared to law-motivated obedience?

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- ✓ The gospel is simple: Repent, believe, and follow Jesus. Nothing more, nothing less.
- ✓ Adding to the gospel places us under a curse - the burden of trying to keep a law we cannot keep.
- ✓ Jesus fulfilled the law for us because we couldn't fulfill it ourselves.
- ✓ We are saved by faith in Christ alone - not by performance, programs, or perfection.
- ✓ True obedience flows from gratitude for God's grace, not from fear of punishment.
- ✓ Freedom in Christ means we don't perform to earn God's love; we already have it.

PRACTICAL APPLICATION

This Week's Challenge

Choose **ONE** of the following to practice this week:

1. Identify what you've added: Make a list of unspoken "rules" you've placed on yourself or others regarding salvation or Christian living. Confess these to God and ask Him to help you embrace gospel simplicity.
2. Rest in your identity: Each morning this week, before doing anything "spiritual," simply say: "I am God's child. He loves me. Jesus is enough." Let your activities flow from this truth rather than trying to earn it.
3. Share the simple gospel: Find one opportunity this week to share the gospel with someone. Practice keeping it simple: We're all sinners, Jesus died for us, He rose again, and we're saved by believing in Him.
4. Examine your obedience: Look at your spiritual practices (prayer, Bible reading, church attendance). Ask yourself: "Am I doing this out of fear/obligation or out of love and gratitude?" Adjust your heart accordingly.
5. Extend grace to others: When you're tempted to judge someone's salvation or spirituality based on external behaviors, remind yourself: "Jesus plus nothing equals freedom." Pray for them instead.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS FOR THE WEEK

- Where am I trying to earn what Jesus already purchased for me?
- Am I living in the freedom Christ died to give me, or am I in a different form of bondage?
- How can I better communicate the simplicity of the gospel to others?
- What would change in my life if I truly believed Jesus is enough?

CLOSING PRAYER POINTS

- Repent of any self-righteousness or adding to the gospel
- Thank God for the simplicity and sufficiency of Christ
- Ask for freedom from spiritual anxiety and performance-based faith
- Pray for boldness to share the simple gospel with others
- Request wisdom to walk in obedience that flows from gratitude, not fear

PREPARATION FOR NEXT WEEK

Read Galatians Chapter 4 before the next gathering. Look for themes of freedom, sonship, and the Spirit's work in our lives.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Memory Verse for the Week: *"Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us—for it is written, 'Cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree.'" - Galatians 3:13*

Recommended Follow-up:

- Continue reading through Galatians daily
- Journal about areas where you've complicated the gospel
- Pray for those in your life who need to hear the simple message of Jesus

Remember: Jesus is enough. His gospel is simple. His grace is sufficient. Walk in the freedom He purchased for you.