

# CITYGROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE



Week 5-(Galatians 1:11-24)  
Week of October 9<sup>th</sup>, 2016



**#CityGroupsTally**

## REMINDERS for leaders:

Here's a few reminders before you get going:

-  **VIDEO:** Each week we will have a video for you to show at your group meeting.
- **Find an Apprentice or Co-Leader.** Be ready to: Replace Yourself & Multiply. My challenge for EVERY group leader is to find someone you can teach about leading a group. Ever since Jesus, the gospel has spread and churches have grown by individuals teaching others what they know. This will also free you up as you hand away responsibility.
- **Testimony this week:** Please be ready to either share your 'testimony' or having someone in your group prepped to share theirs.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS:

1. **Galatians Online Devo's:** Found under the "Grow" tab on our website or [www.citychurchtallahassee.com/galatians](http://www.citychurchtallahassee.com/galatians)
2. **Serve Together "Concessions":** Would your City Group like to serve schools in our city by doing 'concessions' for them? (Dates: Oct 14, 28 & Nov. 4) Contact Travis at [850-296-4803](tel:850-296-4803) or [smith.travis89@gmail.com](mailto:smith.travis89@gmail.com)
3. **Pastor Appreciation Month:** We would like each City Group to write encouraging notes for Pastor Dean and turn them in to the Connect Desk on Sunday mornings. Due 10/23. Thanks!

## BIG IDEA(s):

**Often times, when we try to share the gospel with others in Tallahassee the response back is something like, "well that's just your opinion". Wouldn't you love to hear the apostle Paul respond to that! God has the power to radically change the course of our lives and to change us. Christians not only believe in Jesus, we have a personal relationship with our living Lord and a personal responsibility to introduce others to Him by what we think, say & do. This week we'll look at Paul's conversion and how it relates to our lives today.**

**PRAY:** *Pray for your group's gathering and for the Spirit to equip us to follow Jesus into the world.*

**TESTIMONY:** Have someone in the group prepped to share his or her 'testimony' with the group...and tie it into Paul sharing his conversion story with His readers. with his readers.

**READ: Galatians 1:11-24 // Acts 9:1-9**

## HEAD (20 minutes)



### WATCH THIS WEEK'S VIDEO

**1) Read Acts 9:1-9 & Gal. 1:11-24. What did you notice about Paul's conversion? What about His conversion story could you relate to or not? Why?**

**2) How do you think Paul felt when confronted by the resurrected Jesus? What do you think went through his mind during those 3 days of blindness?**

**3) Why did Jesus choose one of Christianity's worst enemies to be a disciple? Why is this good news for us? What does it tell us about God?**

**4) What can we learn about God and how He saves people according to verses 15-16?** (Paul did nothing to save himself. Jesus chose Paul and called him not only to Himself but also to be an apostle to the gentiles. God 'set apart' Paul before he was born and by His 'grace', effectually 'called' Paul and 'revealed' Jesus to Him in an undeniable way. Although very few people have a Damascus Road experience like Paul, all who God saves are (1) Chosen by God before birth (2) called by God to salvation in Christ (3) sent by God as ambassadors of Christ.

## HEART: (15 minutes)

**1) What in your past makes you feel unworthy of serving God? How does the gospel impact those feelings?** (Paul persecuted Christians, and was doing so much wrong but God used all his sin, failures and past experiences to prep him for his conversion and mission to the gentiles. So it is with each of us.)

**2) How has your past (failures, sins, sufferings, experiences) prepared you to minister to people today? How might your unique story help you connect with lost people this week?**

## HANDS (15 Minutes):

**1) Verse 23 is basically a one-sentence testimony.** *"He who formerly persecuted us now preaches the faith he once tried to destroy".*

- **What would be your one-sentence 'testimony' for your life?**
- **What is your reputation? What visible evidence is there that God is changing your life?**

**2) Have you ever had someone say, "that's just your opinion", when trying to share the gospel with them? How do you respond next? How would Paul have responded?** (The origin of the gospel for Paul was not an opinion, it was a fact, grounded in an encounter with the resurrected Jesus. We, too, have a story to tell of God's grace in saving us and how knowing Jesus is changing our lives.)

**Pray:** *Take a few moments to share prayer requests and pray for one another and your lost friends.*

**Resource:** Below is commentary on the text to help support you as leaders. You can read it in advance for more clarity and can have it with you during group in case some harder questions arise where you might need some back up.

### **Commentary: Galatians 1:11-24**

1:11-12. Paul did not say when his direct revelation from Jesus Christ came, but “reveal His Son in me” in verse 16 may imply that it was related to his conversion on the Damascus road (Acts 9:1-9; 22:6-10; 26:12-18).

1:13-14. Paul communicated three things to his readers: (1) he had advanced much farther in Judaism than those who had distorted the gospel; (2) he was far more zealous for the Jewish traditions than these false teachers; and (3) ironically, Paul’s zeal and advancement in Judaism led him to persecute the church before his conversion.

1:15. The phrase “God, who... set me apart and called me” sounds like Isaiah 49:1, which refers to the messianic Servant, and Jeremiah 1:5, which refers to the prophet Jeremiah. Paul knew that his callings to salvation and apostleship were both undeserved (Rom. 1:5).

1:16-17. On Paul’s calling to preach Christ among the Gentiles, see Acts 9:15; 26:17-18; Rom. 1:5; 16:26. After his conversion (Acts 9:3-9), Paul did not feel any compulsion to travel immediately from Damascus to Jerusalem to consult with the authorities on the gospel. He went to Arabia (see Acts 9:23-25; 2 Cor. 11:32-33), then back to Damascus.

1:18. Because of how time was computed in Paul’s time, it cannot be known whether the three years in this verse speaks of three full calendar years or one full year plus portions of two additional years. It is also not known whether the three years is figured after: (1) Paul’s conversion (vv. 15-16), (2) his departure for Arabia (v. 17), or (3) his return from Arabia to Damascus (v. 17). His trip to Jerusalem was to get to know the apostle Peter (the Greek equivalent of the Aramaic Cephas, meaning “stone”; Matt. 16:18). If there were differences between Paul and Peter over the gospel message, they would have come out during this visit.

1:19. James, the brother of Jesus (Matt. 13:55; James 1:1), is nowhere else listed as one of the 12 apostles (i.e., the 11, without Judas Iscariot, who was replaced by Matthias; Acts 1:23-26). But since he was in the upper room before Pentecost (Acts 1:13-14) and was the senior pastoral figure in the church at Jerusalem (see Acts 15:13; 21:18), James was considered to be virtually an “apostle.”

1:20. If anyone in Galatia doubted that Paul had previously had a harmonious discussion about his gospel message with Peter, and possibly with James, he solemnly affirmed in this verse that it was true.

1:22. That Paul was personally unknown to the Judean churches agrees with the silence about him in Acts from when he went to Tarsus (Acts 9:30) until Barnabas went there to bring him to be involved in the church in Syrian Antioch (Acts 11:25-26).

1:23-24. Since the Judean churches glorified God because Paul was preaching the faith he once tried to destroy, it is clear that they did not disagree with the gospel as he preached it.