

CALVARY CHAPEL COSTA MESA

– COMMUNITY GROUP LEADER GUIDE –

Galatians Series: *Free in Christ* “Liberty and Love” - Galatians 5:7-16

FELLOWSHIP

This week I had the opportunity to meet Valerie Bell, the CEO of Awana. One of the leading evangelism and discipleship ministries for children in the world, every week 3.7 million youth take part in Awana around the globe. Valerie shared that she doesn't remember in her lifetime when the culture has been this angry. As a student at Moody Bible Institute during the mid-1960's, she remembers the riots in Chicago that were born out of the civil rights movement, but today there seems to be an anger that has spilled out everywhere. Valerie's message to our group reinforced the main idea of Pastor Brian's message from Galatians 5 this week. What is the solution? Love. The Gospel continues to be the beacon of hope that people need in the midst of the cultural fray. When Jesus was confronted by the religious lawyers on which rules should have the most weight, he simplified the mandate: Love God, and love your neighbor. Paul in his plea of liberty over law, reiterates this calling to the Galatians in verse 13, "For you, brethren, have been called to liberty; only do not use liberty as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another." As you begin your discussion and prayer time this week, share together who you might invite from your neighborhood to your group that needs the kind of genuine love you share in common because of the Lord.

PRAY, READ, DISCUSS

Read **Galatians 5:7-16** out loud together and prayerfully discuss all the personal applications that we can make from this letter to his original hearers. Paul loves sports metaphors. And he often painted the picture of the Christian life as a race. This passage continues his warning regarding the things that might obstruct, cut in front, or sabotage our running route. The path is littered with diversions and alternate roads, but if God is leading you, the sign posts won't be leading you to legalism and ritual, but a spiritual freedom marked by God's best attribute, love. (Sorry, is there a best attribute? Jesus sure seemed to like it!)

- Thinking about the attributes or character of God, what are some of his personal traits that you can think of? Where does Scripture talk about the parts of his nature? How do they encourage you in your ability to trust him? Why should God's character influence our personal prayer time?
- Paul, before he was born-again, was named Saul. As a religious lawyer, he was angry over those who weren't following all the Judaic rules and customs. He was determined to have thrown in jail or execute those from their community who were rebelling. After meeting Jesus personally, he changed and became one of the biggest advocates for love. What kinds of things changed in your personality, or of someone you know, after coming to Christ? How did it affect your relationships?
- A lot of people attest that a gluten free diet has helped with all kinds of health issues. Why would Paul compare the effects of leaven in bread to those things that derail us in our freedom in Christ? What are some of the false teachings that you have come across that put spiritual yeast in your Christian liberty?
- The culture around us has seemed to lose its patience. Discuss this scenario as a group and how you might handle it. *While approaching the window, in line at the drive through at McDonalds with your 15yr old son, a lady in the car behind you decides to start laying down on her horn and yelling. She is obviously bothered. What would you do? Why?*

PRAY



Community Group Leader Guide
Based on Pastor Brian Brodersen's message on March 5, 2017.
Watch: <http://cccm.com/teaching/galatians/video/liberty-and-love/>