

Life Group Notes
Sunday 07 July 2019

Speaker: Andy Martin

Title: Share Our Father

Passage: Galatians 1: 1-5

Paul, an apostle—not from men nor through man, but through Jesus Christ and God the *Father*, who raised him from the dead— and all the brothers who are with me, To the churches of Galatia: Grace to you and peace from God our *Father* and the Lord Jesus Christ, who gave himself for our sins to deliver us from the present evil age, according to the will of our God and *Father*, to whom be the glory forever and ever. Amen. (Galatians 1:1-5)

Paul is not from Galatia, but he went there in order to *Share the Father*. He was an apostle – a “sent one,” sent by the Father to represent the Father. Then he wrote them this letter. So the context of this letter is mission. Unusually, in the introduction to Galatians he mentions God as Father three times. Firstly, as The Father, and then as Our Father. In this, we see the whole story of the Bible.

God is The Father: Father of creation, maker of all things, powerful. God wanted a family, and through Adam and Eve began the human family that would spread throughout the world.

God is Our Father: After the brokenness of the fall, where Adam and Eve went away from the Father, redemption came through Jesus Christ and we are adopted into the family that God is making. Being brought into the family, we become sons and daughters of God, so now He is not only The Father, but Our Father.

Abraham: At a key moment in this story, God calls Abraham to be the father of many nations. This story is in Genesis 12:1-3, and Paul talks about it to the Galatians in 3:5-9. Through Abraham’s family, all the families of the earth will be blessed. Notice that the blessing is as Abraham leaves his old life behind. You are blessed as you go – the blessing is in the going.

Notice the repeating themes here. Paul was sent by the Father to share his love and bring new people (the Galatians) into his family. Abraham was sent by the Father to build a family through which all the families of the earth would be blessed – brought into the family of Jesus Christ. Ultimately, God the Father sent the Son – Jesus Christ – in order to make the love of the Father known and bring many into his family (John 3:16).

And so the church is a *family of sent ones*. We are blessed as we go. We are to share the love of the Father by inviting people into his family. There is nothing static about the church. We are sent, even as Jesus was sent, to share the Father (John 17:18). We are motivated by love. We are not meant to spend all of our time with easy people who are like us, but to share the love of the Father with those who do not know him yet.

Questions for application

1. Do you know the love of the Father? How is your relationship with Him at the moment?
2. What was it like for Abraham to leave everything and follow God’s call? What do you feel God is asking you to leave behind?
3. What does it mean to be people who “go” even if we stay in Reading?
4. What could you do as part of the “Love Reading” initiative in August? How can you share the love of the Father practically?
5. The church is a family. How can we be family to one another? Are there any needs that you are spotting?
6. Who are you spending time with who does not yet know the Father? Spend some time praying for them.