

Small Group Guide: Law, Sin, and Salvation in Christ

Opening Prayer: Begin the session with a prayer, asking for God's guidance and wisdom as you discuss the sermon.

Key Takeaways:

- The Jewish Festival of Weeks (Shavuot) is connected to the Christian celebration of Pentecost.
- The Mosaic Law, while good and holy, ultimately failed to save people from sin.
- Knowledge of the law can actually increase awareness of sin and temptation.
- All people, both Jews and Gentiles, struggle with an inner conflict between knowing what is right and actually doing it.
- Jesus Christ is the ultimate solution to this inner conflict and the only path to true salvation.

Discussion Questions:

- How does understanding the Jewish background of Pentecost enhance your appreciation of this Christian holiday?
- Paul uses the example of coveting to illustrate how the law can make us more aware of sin. Can you think of other examples where knowing a rule might actually increase temptation?
- Reflect on Paul's statement: "I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate." (Romans 7:15) How does this resonate with your own experiences?

- The sermon mentions the "pink elephant" analogy. How does this help explain the relationship between law and sin?
- How does Paul's struggle in this passage make you feel about your own spiritual journey?
- Discuss the difference between following a set of rules and having a relationship with Jesus. How does this impact your approach to faith?
- The sermon warns against man-made rules in churches. Have you experienced or observed any examples of this? How did it affect people's faith?

Practical Applications:

- This week, pay attention to moments when you feel an inner conflict between what you know is right and what you actually do. Reflect on how Christ's grace applies in these situations.
- Choose one area of your life where you tend to rely on rules or self-discipline. Pray about how you can shift your focus to relying on Christ's power instead.
- If you've been judgmental of others based on external behaviors, take time to repent and consider how you can show grace instead.
- Write a short gratitude list, thanking God for freeing you from the "stranglehold of sin" through Jesus Christ.

Closing Prayer: End the session by thanking God for His grace and asking for His help in living out the truths discussed.