

The Great Giveaway

A course in promoting the gospel

~ 01 Players in God's Passion ~

Discussion starters

- What are your passions in life (apart from your faith of course!)? How do these affect the various aspects of your life?
- What kinds of things do you think God is passionate about? How do these affect the way he acts?

Introduction

*In the coming weeks we're going to spend a lot of time thinking about **our** involvement in reaching out to the lost. As we do this we mustn't forget that the salvation of others is, first and foremost, God's great passion. It's only as we understand this aspect of God's character that we'll properly grasp why **we also** are to seek the salvation of others.*

God's passion from start to finish

Genesis, chapters 3-6, describe the disastrous results of sin's entrance into the world.

Read Genesis 6:5-8.

- How does God respond to "the wickedness of man"?
- Is God justified in his response?
- How does v. 8, and the story of Noah, provide a glimmer of hope for humanity?

Fortunately the flood was not the end of the story; God had a plan.

Now read Genesis 12:1-3.

- What, in a nutshell, does God promise Abraham?
- When you read these versus against the backdrop of Genesis 3-9, what do they tell us about: i) God's character; ii) God's intentions for the world?
- Why do you think God chose not to abandon us, but rather to stick with us despite our rebellion?

God's promise to Abraham in Genesis 12:1-3 in fact sets the agenda for the rest of the Bible.

Turn to Galatians 3:8.

- How did the apostle Paul (who wrote Galatians) come to understand God's promise to Abraham in Genesis 12:3?

*It's important to notice that while the **result** of the gospel ('blessing') and the **extent** of the gospel ('all nations') was revealed to Abraham, the **content** of the gospel was not.*

- Think back to our sermon series in the book of Romans. What, according to Romans, is the **content** of the gospel? (if you need help see Romans 1:1-4)

*We're now going to shift our focus from **the gospel-promised** (in Genesis) to **the gospel-fulfilled** (in Revelation).*

Read Revelation 7:4-10.

- John's vision here captures beautifully the **result, extent and content** of the gospel first promised to Abraham.
- **What insights does this short study, spanning the period from the beginning of the Bible to its end, give us into God and his mission in the world?**

A snapshot of God's passion

We've seen in our study so far that, from the very beginning of the Bible's story (Genesis) to its end (Revelation), God has been, and continues to be, at work, gathering to himself a people of his own. This is God's mission in the world, and it's a mission he is passionate about.

Read Luke 15:11-24.

- What insight does this story give us into God's passion for the lost?
- How could you use this story to explain to an unbelieving friend God's mission in the world?

Conclusion

- How does an appreciation of God's passionate involvement in his mission help us as we think about our own involvement in mission?