



Magdalen Road Church

Delighting in God - Displaying his glory

GOD'S BIG SOCIETY

THE COMMUNAL VISION OF THE BIBLE

2. A COVENANT COMMUNITY



Cheap grace is the deadly enemy of our Church. We are fighting today for costly grace. Cheap grace means grace sold on the market like cheapjacks' wares. The sacraments, the forgiveness of sin, and the consolations of religion are thrown away at cut prices. Grace is represented as the Church's inexhaustible treasury, from which she showers blessings with generous hands, without asking questions or fixing limits. Grace without price; grace without cost! The essence of grace, we suppose, is that the account has been paid in advance; and, because it has been paid, everything can be had for nothing....

Cheap grace is the grace we bestow on ourselves. Cheap grace is the preaching of forgiveness without requiring repentance, baptism without church discipline, Communion without confession.... Cheap grace is grace without discipleship, grace without the cross, grace without Jesus Christ, living and incarnate.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *The Cost of Discipleship*

THE STORY SO FAR

GOD IS RESTORING HUMAN BEINGS A RELATIONAL BEINGS

GOD IS RELATIONAL AND WE WERE MADE IN HIS IMAGE

**THE IMAGE HAS BEEN MARRED AND RELATIONSHIPS HAVE BEEN
BROKEN**

THE IMAGE IS RESTORED IN THE CHURCH

GOD IS FULFILLING HIS PROMISES TO ABRAHAM

THE PROMISES

LAND

INNUMERABLE OFFSPRING

ENJOYING GOD'S PRESENCE

FOR ALL NATIONS

ALL MANIFESTED IN CHURCHES

THE MESSAGE OF DEUTERONOMY

OBEDIENCE IS ESSENTIAL

FOR THE FULFILLMENT OF THE PROMISES TO ABRAHAM

Deuteronomy 4:5–8

⁵ See, I have taught you decrees and laws as the Lord my God commanded me, so that you may follow them in the land you are entering to take possession of it. ⁶ Observe them carefully, for this will show your wisdom and understanding to the nations, who will hear about all these decrees and say, “Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people.” ⁷ What other nation is so great as to have their gods near them the way the Lord our God is near us whenever we pray to him? ⁸ And what other nation is so great as to have such righteous decrees and laws as this body of laws I am setting before you today?

SO DISOBEDIENCE IS A DEAL BREAKER

Deuteronomy 13:5, 17:7, 12, 19:13, 19, 21:9, 21, 22:21, 22, 24, 24:7.

Purge the evil from among you

1 Corinthians 5:1–5, 13

¹ It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you, and of a kind that does not occur even among pagans: A man has his father’s wife. ² And you are proud! Shouldn’t you rather have been filled with grief and have put out of your fellowship the man who did this? ³ Even though I am not physically present, I am with you in spirit. And I have already passed judgment on the one who did this, just as if I were present. ⁴ When you are assembled in the name of our Lord Jesus and I am with you in spirit, and the power of our Lord Jesus is present, ⁵ hand this man over to Satan, so that the sinful nature may be destroyed and his spirit saved on the day of the Lord.

¹³ Expel the wicked man from among you.

THE MESSAGE OF DEUTERONOMY (CONT.)

GRACE IS ESSENTIAL

Deuteronomy 27:26

“Cursed is the man who does not uphold the words of this law by carrying them out.”

Then all the people shall say, “Amen!”

Galatians 3:10, 13-14

¹⁰ All who rely on observing the law are under a curse, for it is written: “Cursed is everyone who does not continue to do everything written in the Book of the Law.” ... ¹³ Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us, for it is written: “Cursed is everyone who is hung on a tree.” ¹⁴ He redeemed us in order that the blessing given to Abraham might come to the Gentiles through Christ Jesus, so that by faith we might receive the promise of the Spirit.

QUESTIONS FOR HOMEGROUPS

1. What is your experience of how churches deal with sin? Have you seen good and bad examples?
2. Examine 1 Corinthians 5:1-13. What principles about dealing with sin amongst God’s people can you see? How do these principles fit with the rest of Scripture? How does this affect your view of church membership?
3. How can a church both discipline sin (1 Cor 5) and also be a community that believes in grace - i.e. full forgiveness from Christ (e.g. Gal 3:10-14)? What does this mean about the way that we treat one another?