



Week 2: Karma vs. Grace

Christ is God's great mystery. All the richest treasures of wisdom and knowledge are embedded in that mystery and nowhere else. And we've been shown the mystery! I'm telling you this because I don't want anyone leading you off on some wild-goose chase, after other so-called mysteries, or "the Secret."

~ The Apostle Paul
(Colossians 2, The Message)

INTRODUCTION – The Worst of the West?

- Now over 5 million copies of the book in print (and over 1 million videos).
- Just since last Sunday, another 150,000 people bought a copy of the book.
- Scheduled to be translated into over 30 languages.
- Exporting the worst of Western culture?

REVIEW – Living Like God Exists

Romans 12:15; Hebrews 13:3; 1 John 4:8, 16; Matthew 6; 26:39

James 4:13-17

LIVING IN A UNIVERSE CREATED AND SUSTAINED BY LOVE...

- 1) *We are made to partner with God, to make plans and have dreams.*
- 2) *We should always hold our plans with a gentle grip, humbly affirming that we are God's children and cannot always see what is best.*
- 3) *If we give our best to our plans and they still fail, we can rest assured that God has something better in store for us.*

And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good.
~ Romans 8:28 (ESV)

Good Psychology – Seeing Yourself As God Sees You

Romans 8:14-17; Galatians 4:1-7

Bad Theology – The Cruelty Of Karma

John 9:1-2; Luke 13:1-5

God saved you by his grace when you believed. And you can't take credit for this; it is a gift from God. Salvation is not a reward for the good things we have done, so none of us can boast about it. For we are God's masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago.
~ Ephesians 2:8-10 (NLT)

CONCLUSION – Finding The Right Foundation

Matthew 7:24-27

HOME CHURCH QUESTIONS...

WARMING UP...

1. After briefly reviewing this week's message, share one thing that most challenged, puzzled, or encouraged you.
2. Are there ways that you live like a functional atheist?

LOOK TO THE BOOK...

3. Review **Romans 8:14-17 & Galatians 4:1-11**. Read both passages multiple times in different translations if possible. a) What verse or idea stands out to you the most? Why? b) Brainstorm: What are the benefits or blessings in this life of being God's child? c) "Abba" is Aramaic for "Dad", spoken by first-century Jews. "Father" is the Greek "Pater", spoken by most first-century Gentiles. Really, the phrase is "Daddy, Daddy" with the first "term" being Jewish and the second being Gentile. What do you think is Paul's point in bringing the two languages together like that and attributing it to the Spirit's cry? d) See **Galatians 4:3**. What do you think are the "elementary principles" (ESV) or "rudimentary teachings" (NASB footnote) that held God's children captive so long? What are the implications of the new freedom Jesus brings?

SO WHAT?...

4. In these passages the theme is progressive – moving forward and not going backward. Paul wants to encourage Christ-followers not to return to their former slavery. Remember that many Israelites wanted to return to Egypt after being free for some time – they seemed to find the life of slavery somehow easier than the hardships of freedom. A) What is the slavery Paul most likely has in mind in these passages? b) What most tempts you to return to some form of slavery? c) Pray for each other about this issue.

Bruxy Cavey @ THE MEETING HOUSE – Sunday, June 3 / 10, 2007