

The Story of Redemption

Session 1: Shaped (Galatians 1:13-14)

This four-week series is designed to help you get to know each other better by looking at Paul's story of redemption from Galatians 1. In this first session, you'll see that everyone has a life story that has shaped them in a variety of ways.

WELCOME

Take a few moments to share some brief details about yourself.

- Where did you grow up?
- How long have you been at The Hills?
- What brought you here?
- What do you enjoy doing for fun?

INTRODUCTION

- In Galatians chapter 1, Paul the Apostle tells a very abbreviated but powerful story of his own redemption in the context of defending his apostleship. He contends that his message and authority did not come from man, but from Jesus Christ.
- In the midst of this defense, he tells the story of his redemption.
- His story can guide us. It offers us the framework to develop great relationships in community, to grow spiritually, and to get to know each other in the process.

WE ARE ALL SHAPED

- Everyone has a life story that has **shaped** them in a variety of ways.
- No matter where we are on our spiritual journey we've all been shaped by events and people at different points along the way. It may have been a parent, a favorite relative, or an event like the loss of a loved one or even a new family pet.

- It may have been someone outside our family of origin like a childhood friend, a teacher, an older acquaintance of the family, or a coach.
- All the people we have spent time with have played a part in the way we are shaped.
- Our experiences, no doubt, have shaped us in both positive and negative ways. Some have created strengths in us; others have left us with weaknesses. Some have given us great confidence about life. Others have created fears and uncertainties about life. Some we have even tried to hide because we are ashamed.
- We have all been **shaped** in a variety of ways.

FOLLOW UP QUESTIONS

- Who is someone that has shaped you in a positive way? What did that look like for you?
- How have you been impacted in a negative way by someone or something?

There's more on page two. Don't worry about getting to every question but make sure the conversation doesn't get off track.



Read Galatians 1:13-14 and Philippians 3:4-7

- Paul, the Apostle, who formerly was named Saul, was shaped with a deep passion for the things of God. He was very zealous about godly things.
- Paul was very accomplished and confident about his life. He was so accomplished that many of us might feel intimidated with his “big as life” example. But God stopped him on the road to Damascus to let him know he had missed the Messiah. He didn’t know Jesus.
- So, his life passion was misguided. He was very honest and sincere, but badly mistaken. So much so, that he had begun fighting against the very God he claimed to be passionate about!
- Before he met Jesus, Paul’s life was wrapped up in a religion, not a relationship. The result was a fallen way of life. Mainly, it resulted in a spiritual blindness that prevented Paul from seeing the one true God.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What part of Paul’s story, so far, resonates the most with your story? Explain.
- How can a person practice their “religion” today and not really know Jesus?
- How can your spiritual life highlight what God is doing in you, rather than what you are doing for God?
- What accomplishments in today’s world are touted as those that give a person fulfillment and meaning?
- Share some behaviors present in today’s society that might cause a “blind spot” in a person’s view of God.
- What is one next step you can take this week to guard against spiritual blindness?

CONCLUSION

Spend some time in prayer as you wrap up this meeting and confirm details for your next group meeting.

Reminder: Don’t forget to take attendance using the Lead App or directly through The Hills Connect.

