

Introduction to Galatians:**The region, the people, the problem, the response, and an outline.****I. The Epistle of Paul to the Galatians**

- A. Written by the apostle **Paul**, but authored by God the Holy Spirit to the churches he had founded in the region.
- B. The time of the writing is believed to be after his first visit to Jerusalem and after his second visit to Galatia and sometime between 57– 60 AD.
- C. It is similar to the book of **Romans** on the subject of **justification** by faith and not the law but Galatians is unique in its address to a specific heresy and group – the Judiazers.
- D. The writing style contains two extremes; **sternness** and **tenderness**. He is sometimes short abrupt almost sarcastic and then warm hearted, caring and loving. We can see how Paul is hurt deeply by the accusations of the Judiazers, the effects of their message, and the change of the people's feelings towards him and his intentions.
- E. The message in this epistle is a rebuke to modern day **Calvinism**.

II. Galatia

- A. The region and people;
 1. Modern day Turkey. Invaded by the Gaul's around 278BC. The language of the Gauls and Celts, are the origins of the English language, Acts 2:5.
 2. Nearby cities include Cappadocia, Cilicia, Phrygia, Bithynia, Pisidia and Pontus.
 - a. See Acts 2:5-9, 1 Pet. 1:1. Peter include the region of Galatia in his epistles
 - b. Paul born in Tarsus a city in Cilicia, Acts 21:39
 - c. Had practiced human sacrifice until it was outlawed by Rome.
 - d. Worshipped mostly female deities and had several mother and son deities. They also worshipped both Greek and Roman gods.
- B. The churches of Galatia;
 - a. **Antioch** Acts 13:14– There are 2 Antiochs; Antioch of **Syria** where they first called themselves Christians, Acts 11:26, and Antioch of **Pisidia** which is in Galatia. As the capital of southern Galatia it was considered to be the administrative and military center for all of Galatia and housed many military colonies. There was a large military road that connected Antioch with Lystra and Iconium. Acts 13:1-52. Paul and Barnabas stay in Antioch for nearly 3 yrs.
 - b. **Iconium** – A large city intersected by several main roads, considered a chief Roman province of Galatia. Acts 14:1-5.
 - c. **Derbe** – It was a city at the eastern part (in Galatia) of the Roman Empire and collected taxes for all incoming traffic. It was distinctively a Roman city but made up of Lacaonians, Romans, Jews and Greeks. Acts 14:20-22.
 - d. **Lystra** – A city made up of Roman aristocracy and soldiers, Greeks, Jews, and Lacaonians. They spoke Greek, understood Latin but also had a local language "speech of Lacaonia" Acts 14:11. Worshipped Zeus and Hermes (Greek gods) Latin names are **Jupiter** and **Mercury** and are father son gods, Acts **14:12**. Certain Jews (Judiazers)

came from Antioch and persuaded the people against Paul and he is stoned, Acts 14:19, see also 2 Cor. 12:1-7. Acts 14:19-15:1, 5; "there came thither certain Jews"

- e. Notable Bible characters and events associated with Galatia; **Timothy** possibly born in Lystra Acts 16:1 & 2 Tim. 3:11, **Gaius** of Derbe Acts 20:4, **Peter** at the church of Antioch Gal 2:11-14, **Barnabas, Silas, Stephen** brought to council by reporting of men from synagogues in Cilicia and Asia region. Most of the persecution of Christians came from the Jews, then later by Rome. John 11:49-50, Acts 19:40.

III. **The 4 problems** – Judiazers were Jews and Jewish proselytes from the Judean Churches, Acts 15:23-27, and 1 John 2:19.

- A. Judaizers perverted Gospel – Gal. 1:7 Grace and works together, circumcision, follow the law.
- B. Judaizers attacked the **apostleship** of Paul – Gal. 1:1, 1:11-12, correcting Peter Gal. 2:9-14
- C. Judaizers turned the people against the **Gospel of grace** and against **Paul** – Gal. 4:16-17.
- D. The 3 errors of the Judaizers
 - a. **Legalism** – salvation through **keeping the laws and religious traditions (works)**.
 - b. **Anti-nomianism** – to be saved by grace though faith and that moral works are of no importance. It gives a **license to sin** (no consequence for sin).
 - c. **Galatianism** – to be saved by faith and **perfected through keeping the law (works)**, Gal. 3:3.

IV. **The response – the reason for the epistle**

- A. To **expose false teachings** – grace verse works.
To **defend** Paul's apostleship – Acts 1:15-26; Three ways to identify an Apostle
 - a. Sent by Christ personally, Acts 1:2
 - b. Eyewitness of the Christ resurrection, Acts 1:21-22
 - c. Did signs and miracles, Acts 2:43
- B. To emphasize **salvation by grace alone**, not a mixture of grace and works.
- C. To teach the purpose for the **law**.
- D. To teach Christians the proper way to **live**.

V. **Basic outline of Galatians**

- A. Three books to be read while studying Galatians are the book of Acts, Romans, and James.
- B. The theme is "the battle cry of the reformation" which means that a man is saved by grace alone through faith without the deeds of the law.
- C. **Chapters 1&2 Personal Address** – where Paul got his Gospel.
 - a. Chapter 1; The truth about the Gospel and where it came from.
 - b. Chapter 2; The truth about justification and the position of the believer.
- D. **Chapters 3&4 Doctrinal Address** – what it is and what it isn't.
 - a. Chapter 3 – The truth about the curse of the law and the blessing of love
 - b. Chapter 4 – The truth about the son, the heir, and the inheritance.
- E. **Chapters 5&6 Practical Address** – put it into practice.
 - a. Chapter 5 – Stand fast in liberty, and the flesh verses the Spirit.
 - b. Chapter 6 – The law of the harvest, sowing and reaping, and the conclusion.

Chapter 1; Paul's apostleship and the source of Paul's Gospel . (Verses 1-9)

- I. Galatians 1:1-5
 - A. **Verse 1;** Paul establishes who it was that made him an apostle.
 1. What is an apostle – **sent one, a delegate or messenger**. Apostle is from the word apostolos. Apo-meaning 'from' and stello-meaning 'to send'.
 - a. Even Jesus is called an apostle, Heb. 3:1.
 - b. Three ways to identify an Apostle
 - i. **Sent** by Christ personally, **Acts 1:2**
 - ii. **Eyewitness** of Christ after his resurrection, **Acts 1:21-22**
 - iii. Did the great **signs and miracles**, **Acts 2:43, Heb. 2:3-4**
 2. Not by men – Acts 1:23-26
 3. But by Jesus Christ – Acts 9:15-16. Suffer for His name? I believe Paul was driven for the Gospel because of 2 things;
 - a. That he literally had Christians killed may have been a constant reminder of the injury caused to Christ, and the importance of getting the Gospel to everyone.
 - b. Because of what he saw, 2 Cor. 12:1-6.
 4. And God the Father –
 - a. Jesus did not speak his own words but His Father's words – John 12:44, 49.
 - b. Who devised or conceived of the plan of salvation? Heb. 12:2
 - c. The author? In the Greek, "*archegos*" means the chief leader or prince, the one who takes the lead. Hence it is God who conceived of the plan of salvation,
 5. With the exception of Philemon, he always addresses his letters by affirming his apostleship by Jesus Christ.
 6. Considered himself to be **least** of all the apostles, 1 Cor. 15:9, but not in his **message!**
 - B. **Verse 2;** Paul mentions **all brethren** that are with him; who by their companionship attest to his calling as an Apostle.
 - C. **Verse 3;** **Grace** is a Greek word of salutation and **peace** (shalom) is the Hebrew word of salutation. Also states "our Lord" meaning he knows that they are brothers in Christ. Even though they were embracing and promoting a false message, they were still saved.
 1. It is by the **faithfulness** of Christ to keep us saved, 2 Tim 2:13,
 2. Even if we forget, 2 Peter 1:5-9.
 3. **Grace** always precedes **peace**.
 - a. Peace with God, Rom. 5:1.
 - b. Blessed are the peacemakers, Matt. 5:9.
 - c. The wrath of God is upon them that do not believe, John 3:36.
 - d. Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord. The flood was the wrath of God and God gave grace to Noah afterward, after the flood, Noah had peace.
 - e. By grace some believers will not face the tribulation wrath and will enter into peace.

- D. **Verse 4**; the 3 tenses of salvation in Christ.
1. "Who gave Himself for our sins..." saved from the **penalty of sin** is death, this is the past, Rom. 6:23.
 2. "Walk in the Spirit and ye will not fulfill the lust ..." Gal. 5:16 - The **power of sin** is the present. Yield yourselves to the Holy Spirit to overcome the desires of the flesh and escape the power of sin in our daily lives, Rom. 6:11-16.
 3. "... that He might deliver us from this present evil world..." removal from the **presence of sin** is the future, 1 John 3:1-3. Either through the rapture or by death, believers will be removed from this present world of sin.
- E. Verse 5; Glory is anything that calls for **praise**
1. It is always about the glory of **God** not men!
 2. Isaiah **48:11** "For mine own sake, *even* for mine own sake, will I do *it*: for how should *my name* be polluted? and I will not give my glory unto another."
 3. Eph. 2:8-9, lest any should boast!
 4. Paul finishes the epistle with 6:14, God forbid that he should glory, (call for praise) except in the cross of Christ.

This marks the end of his salutation. Paul writes wonderful and lengthy salutations in most all of his epistles except here in Galatians. This further emphasizes his urgent desire to get to the matter, and he wastes no time letting them know exactly how he feels about the reports of the effects of Judiazers message upon his churches.

II. Galatians 1:6-9

- A. **Verse 6-7**; Paul marvels (means **amazed** or **astonished**) at how quickly they have moved from the true Gospel to a false one, 2 Cor. 11:3-4.
1. Called you into the grace...
 - a. Matt. 9:13, calls sinners to repentance.
 - b. Matt. 22:14, **many** are called but **few** are chosen.
 2. Removing themselves from the Gospel of grace.
 - a. Can a believer remove himself from grace? We will discuss this in more detail in chapter 5.
 - b. Apostasy – **knowing** the truth but **moving away from it**.
 - c. Heresy – **denying** the truth **altogether**.
 3. The true Gospel is of grace, through faith, and was given to them by Paul.
 4. The false Gospel is of works and is another gospel and was given by the Judiazers.
 - a. Another vs. 6, *heteros* – means another of a **different** kind, **general**.
An example would be another pencil of any kind.
 - b. Another vs. 7, *allos* – means another of **the exact same** kind, **specific**.
An example would be another yellow #2 pencil from Acme pencil company, with a green stripe and red eraser.

Note: *There really is not another Gospel. Gospel means "good news." And a false gospel, one that teaches works of any kind, is bad news. It is bad because it doesn't satisfy the penalty for sin, it places an impossible burden upon those who try to perform it, and deceives or gives a false hope of salvation.*

5. "... some that trouble you..." is referring to the mental anxiety of having to **keep** or maintain **good works** and the lack of assurance it can cause.
6. "... pervert the Gospel of Christ." Pervert literally means to transform into something of an **opposite character**. Adding works to the Gospel changes the **character** of the Gospel, it makes it void, "which is not another..." vs. 7, and Gal. 5:4.
 - a. The Judiazers were not merely disturbing the minds of the converts, they were seeking to remove the **foundation** on which they depended for salvation – grace. They went from having peace and assurance to anxiety and uncertainty.
 - b. A gospel message that is based upon works cannot provide peace and assurance because it begets the question of if the person has done enough.
 - c. It is the message of the Gospel that **persuades** men to salvation not the effectiveness of the man, Rom. 1:16.

B. **Verse 8-9**; Paul includes himself by using the pronoun we – the Apostles.

1. Accursed in the Greek is *anathema* meaning **doomed** to **destruction**.
 - a. Not to be confused with eternal damnation of the lost.
 - b. A believer can be doomed to destruction meaning the **chastening** of God.
 - c. This is the sin unto **death** for the **believer**, Rom. 6:16.
2. It is **polluted** by man when he tries to improve what God has created, Ex. 20:24-25.
 - a. The Gospel message is polluted when men use words God does not use as a way to enhance the message.
3. A man is accursed for not loving God, 1 Cor. 16:22.
4. The Greek word *anathema* is used to describe an offering made from a vow to false gods. It would be hung in a conspicuous place. I believe Paul could be using this as an analogy of the false gospel, a rotting and detestable (now only because of their conversion) sight displayed for all to see the shame of it.
5. The reference to an angel from Heaven is Paul's device of using the most imaginable, improbable source to make his point. He uses the same device for 1 Cor. 13:1.

No Heavenly angel can promote a false gospel.

- a. Mormonism, the church of latter day saints is founded upon the myth that Joseph Smith encountered the angel Moroni who gave him two plates that had the book of Mormon in them.
- b. The book of Mormon is in complete **contradiction** to the Biblical doctrine of **justification** by grace through faith.