

Galatians

Book Outline

Galatians Chapter One

Summary: Paul opens his letter to the Galatian church with an affirmation of his identity as an apostle of Christ. He expresses grief that the Galatians have turned from the gospel, and he talks briefly about his own conversion experience.

I. Paul's Greetings (1:2-5)

- **To the saints in Galatia** (1:2): Paul sends greetings from himself and the Christians he is with.
- **From the Savior in glory** (1:3-5)
 - Who died to save us (1:3-4a)
 - Who lives to sanctify us (1:4b-5)

II. Paul's Grief (1:6-10)

- **The apostle's concern** (1:6-7): He grieves that the Galatians have turned from the gospel of grace to the bondage of the law.
- **The apostle's curse** (1:8-10): He pronounces God's severe judgment on those who dare pervert the gospel message.

III. Paul's Gospel Call (1:1, 11-24)

- **The revelation** (1:11-12)
 - It is not of man (1:1, 11): The gospel was not compiled by any human authority, reasoning, or logic.
 - It is not from man (1:12): The gospel was communicated to Paul by none other than Jesus Christ.
- **The review** (1:13-24)
 - Paul speaks of his *pre-conversion* activities (1:13-14)
 - His cruelty toward Christianity (1:13): He persecuted Christians.
 - His commitment to Judaism (1:14): As a very religious Jew he followed all the laws and customs.
 - Paul speaks of his *post-conversion* activities (1:15-24).
 - His choosing by God (1:15-16): He was chosen before he was born, and the Son was revealed to him.
 - His travels from Arabia to Damascus (1:17)
 - His travels from Damascus to Jerusalem (1:18-20): Three years after his conversion, he went to Jerusalem and met with Peter and James, the Lord's brother, for 15 days.
 - His travels from Jerusalem to Syria and Cilicia (1:21-24).

Galatians Chapter Two

Summary: Paul writes about his second trip to Jerusalem and about his rebuke of Peter.

I. The Reception of Paul in Jerusalem (2:1-10): Paul, accompanied by Barnabas and Titus, visited Jerusalem for a second time 14 years after his first visit.

- **The reason for the visit (2:1-2):** It was to confer with the Christian leaders there concerning Paul's ministry to the Gentiles.
- **The results of their visit (2:3-10)**
 - Paul and the leaders (2:3, 6-10)
 - The leaders agreed with Paul that Titus should not be circumcised (2:3).
 - The leaders accepted Paul as a coworker (2:6-10).
 - Paul and the legalizers (2:4-5): They made an unsuccessful attempt to push their legalism upon him.

II. The Rebuke by Paul in Antioch (2:11-21)

- **The need for Paul's rebuke (2:11-13):** Peter was refusing to fellowship with saved but uncircumcised Gentiles.
- **The nature of Paul's rebuke (2:14-21)**
 - The contents (2:14-18): He reminded Peter that it is faith, not circumcision, that saves both Jews and Gentiles.
 - The conclusion (2:19-21)
 - All believers have been crucified with Christ (2:19-20a).
 - All believers are to live by the faith of the indwelling Christ (2:20b-21).

Galatians Chapter Three

Summary: Paul offers five arguments, all demonstrating the sufficiency of justification by faith alone.

I. The Argument from the Galatians Themselves (3:1-5)

- **They became believers by turning to the gospel (3:1-2).**
- **They are becoming bewitched by turning from the gospel (3:3-5).**

II. The Argument from Abraham (3:6-9, 15-18)

- **How Abraham was saved (3:6-9)**
 - His salvation (3:6): He was justified by faith.
 - Our salvation (3:7-9): Both Jews and Gentiles are justified by faith.
- **Who saved Abraham (3:15-16):** It was Christ, who came from the line of Abraham.
- **When Abraham was saved (3:17-18):** The promise was given to him 430 years before the law was introduced.

III. The Argument from the Law (3:10-12, 19-25)

- **The problem of the law** (3:10-12): Those under the law who do not obey all of it are cursed by the law.
- **The purpose of the law** (3:19-25)
 - It helps to point out our sin (3:19-20).
 - It helps to prepare for our Savior (3:21-25): The law serves as teacher and guide to bring us to Christ.

IV. The Argument from the Work of the Son of God (3:13-14)

- **What He did** (3:13a): He redeemed us from the curse of the law.
- **How He did it** (3:13b): He became a curse for us on the cross.
- **Why He did it** (3:14): He did it to fulfill the promise God gave Abraham.

V. The Argument from the Work of the Spirit of God (3:26-29)

- **What He does** (3:26-27): He baptizes repenting Jews and Gentiles into the Body of Christ.
- **Why He does it** (3:28-29): This assures that all may share in the promise once given to Abraham.

Galatians Chapter Four

Summary: In an attempt to free the Galatians from the terrible yoke of legalism, Paul appeals to their heads and their hearts.

I. Paul's "Head" Words (4:1-7, 21-31): He offers two illustrations.

- **A legal illustration** (4:1-7)
 - The Roman father and his son (4:1-2)
 - The frustration (4:1): Until he comes of age, the son can enjoy very little of his father's estate.
 - The freedom (4:2): Upon coming of age, the son can enjoy all of his father's estate.
 - The redeemer's Father and the Father's children (4:3-7)
 - The frustration (4:3): While under the law, they enjoyed very little of the Father's estate.
 - The freedom (4:4-7): Upon coming of age (effected by Christ's death), they can enjoy all of their Father's estate.
- **An Old Testament illustration** (4:21-31): Paul uses the example of Hagar and Sarah, two Old Testament women, to allegorize the law of Moses and the grace of God.
 - Hagar (an allegory of the law) (4:21-22a, 23a, 24-25, 29a, 30-31a)
 - She was a slave (4:21-22a).
 - Her marriage to Abraham was fleshly directed (4:23a).
 - Her son, Ishmael, was naturally born (4:24).
 - Their son persecuted Abraham's second son, Isaac (4:29a).

- Her child was not considered Abraham's rightful heir (4:30-31a).
- She corresponds to earthly Jerusalem (4:25).
- Sarah (an allegory of grace) (4:22b, 23b, 26-28, 29b, 31b)
 - She was a free woman (4:22b).
 - Her marriage to Abraham was spirit directed (4:23b).
 - Her son Isaac, was supernaturally born (4:27).
 - This son was persecuted by Ishmael (4:29b).
 - Her child was considered Abraham's rightful heir (4:28).
 - Sarah represents the new covenant (4:27).
 - She corresponds to the heavenly Jerusalem (4:26).

II. Paul's "Heart" Words (4:8-20)

- **The rebuke** (4:8-11): Again he faults them for their return to legalism.
- **The review** (4:12-18)
 - Paul reminds them that they once were his friends (4:12-15).
 - Paul wants to know if they are now his foes (4:16-18).
- **The rebirth** (4:19-20): Paul will again suffer the pains of child-birth until Christ is full developed in them.

Galatians Chapter Five

Summary: Paul shows how the miracle of justification by faith brings about both freedom and fruit.

The Freedom in the Son (5:1-15)

- **Protection from the legalism of the legalizers** (5:1-12)
 - The work of Christ has freed us from the bondage of the law (5:1-4, 6-12).
 - The work of Christ will (someday) free us from the bondage of the body (5:5).
- **Protection from the license of the libertines** (5:13-15): Paul warns against using freedom to indulge in sinful behavior.

The Fruit of the Spirit (5:16-26)

- **The conflict** (5:16-18): Paul describes the fierce struggle within the believer.
 - The contenders (5:17-18)
 - The evil nature (5:17a)
 - The Holy Spirit (5:17b-18)
 - The council (5:16)
 - "Live according to your new life in the Holy Spirit" (5:16a).
 - "Then you won't be doing what your sinful nature craves" (5:16b).
- **The children** (5:19-26)
 - The fruit of the flesh (5:19-21): immorality, idolatry, hatred, discord, selfish ambition, envy, drunkenness, etc.
 - The fruit of the Spirit (5:22-26): Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.

Galatians Chapter Six

Summary: Paul closes his letter with final instructions

I. Paul and the Saints (6:1-10): Paul writes his final instructions to the Galatian believers, reminding them of three laws.

- **The law of sharing and caring (6:1-5)**
 - The name of this law (6:1-2): Paul calls it the law of Christ.
 - The nature of this law (6:3-5): Spiritual believers are to gently restore fallen believers back to fellowship.
- **The law of receiving and giving (6:6):** Those who are taught the Word of God should help their teachers by paying them.
- **The law of sowing and reaping (6:7-10)**
 - Those who sow only sinful desires will reap everlasting death (6:7-8a)
 - Those who sow what is good will reap everlasting life (6: 8b-10)

II. Paul and the Savior (6:11-18)

- **Paul testifies concerning his submission to Christ (6:11-16)**
 - The legalizers boast in the ceremony of circumcision (6:11-13).
 - The apostle boasts in the cross of Christ (6:14-16).
- **Paul testifies concerning his sufferings for Christ (6:17-18):** He bears on his body the marks of his suffering for Jesus.