

GALATIANS

LESSON 1 – INTRODUCTION

- **Written to:** Galatian churches. Not just one. More than likely in the Northern region of Galatia.
- **Purpose:** To address the deceitful work of Judaizers.
- **When:** It is unclear exactly when it was written, aside from the fact that it was most likely written after his second missionary journey. Scholars contend it was sometime between 53 and 57 A.D.

KEY WORDS

- **Faith and Works:** This is a central theme, arguing that salvation comes through faith, not by performing good works or following the Law.
- **Law and Freedom:** The book contrasts the "yoke of slavery" under the Law with the freedom believers have in Christ, which is for living in the Spirit.
- **Spirit and Flesh:** Paul contrasts the "works of the flesh," which lead to corruption, with the "fruit of the Spirit," which leads to eternal life.
- **Christ and the Gospel:** The letter emphasizes that salvation is a gift of grace received through faith in Jesus Christ, and it is the foundation for Christian life.
- **Grace:** This highlights that salvation is a gift of God and the life of a believer is lived through His grace, not by human effort.

OTHER IMPORTANT WORDS

- **Circumcision:** A specific example of the "works of the law" that the false teachers in Galatia insisted were necessary for salvation.
- **Justification:** Being declared righteous by God, which Paul argues is achieved through faith, not by the works of the law.
- **Gentiles:** Refers to non-Jews, highlighting the conflict between Jewish and Gentile believers and the role of faith in salvation for all.
- **Promise:** The promises of God, particularly those made to Abraham, which are fulfilled through faith in Christ.
- **Slave/Slavery:** Contrasts with the freedom believers have in Christ, with the "slavery" of the law being a key point of contrast.

KEY VERSES FROM EACH CHAPTER

- *For I neither received it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came through the revelation of Jesus Christ. (Galatians 1:12 NKJV)*
- *I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me. (Galatians 2:20 NKJV)*
- *O foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you that you should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ was clearly portrayed among you as crucified? (Galatians 3:1 NKJV)*
- *Stand fast therefore in the liberty by which Christ has made us free, and do not be entangled again with a yoke of bondage. (Galatians 5:1 NKJV)*
- *And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart. (Galatians 6:9 NKJV)*

SECTION NOTES

-  **GREETING 1:1-5** – Paul introduces himself as an apostle and extends grace and peace to the churches in Galatia with a brief description of what Christ has done for us.
-  **ONLY ONE GOSPEL 1:6-10** – Paul marvels at the fact that they had turned away from the true gospel. He has strong words for anyone who would preach something other than what he preached.
-  **CALL TO APOSTLESHIP 1:11-17** – Paul emphasizes that what he had preached to them came directly through the revelation of Christ.
-  **CONTACTS AT JERUSALEM 1:18-24** – He lets them know that his encounter with the other apostles was very limited at first.

- ✚ **DEFENDING THE GOSPEL 2:1-10** – Paul talks about further meetings with the apostles who were skeptical about his ministry, but eventually confirm his calling to the Gentiles, with their approval.
- ✚ **NO RETURN TO THE LAW 2:11-21** – He tells about confronting Peter and his hypocrisy and shares the message of grace that he spoke to Peter in front of both the Jews and the Gentiles.
- ✚ **JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH 3:1-9** – He then wants to know why these foolish Galatians are turning away from the purity of grace and polluting it with works of the law, wrongly believing it would somehow make them righteous.
- ✚ **THE LAW BRINGS A CURSE 3:10-14** – Paul lets them know that living by the law would place them under the curse of the law. He emphasizes that justification comes simply by faith in Christ.
- ✚ **THE CHANGELESS PROMISE 3:15-18** – He emphasizes that the promise of Christ was given to Abraham, even before the law which came some 430 years after Abraham.
- ✚ **PURPOSE OF THE LAW 3:19-25** – Paul gives the purpose of the law and how it served to bring us to Christ, but that we are no longer in need of it.
- ✚ **SONS AND HEIRS 3:26-4:7** – All who are of faith are now heirs of the promises of God, whether Jew or Greek. It is faith and not the law that brings about our adoption into the kingdom of God.
- ✚ **FEARS FOR THE CHURCH 4:8-20** – Paul expresses concern that they acted one way when he was present with them, but now are being deceived and are following after those who teach works of the law.
- ✚ **TWO COVENANTS 4:21-31** – The births of Abraham's two sons, Ishmael and Isaac, are used as illustrations of the difference between those who are bound by the law and those of faith who walk in freedom.

✚ **CHRISTIAN LIBERTY 5:1-6** – We are encouraged to stand in the freedom we now have in Christ, and that adherence to the law will profit us nothing.

✚ **LOVE FULFILLS THE LAW 5:7-15** – Paul desires that the deceivers would go away, but that the believers wouldn't dive into works of the flesh as the result of their freedom, but show genuine love for one another.

✚ **WALKING IN THE SPIRIT 5:16-26** – Encouragement is given to walk in the Spirit as they would avoid works of the flesh. Paul gives a contrasting list of the results of walking by the flesh or in the Spirit.

✚ **BEAR AND SHARE BURDENS 6:1-5** – Paul shares the importance of looking out for one another as we in turn examine our own lives.

✚ **BE GENEROUS AND DO GOOD 6:6-10** – The principle of sowing and reaping either to the flesh or to the Spirit is given and how we will reap good things in due time.

✚ **GLORY ONLY IN THE CROSS 6:11-15** – Paul gives a final word about avoiding those who glory in the flesh. He emphasizes that we should glory in the work of the cross and the fact that we are a new creation in Christ.

✚ **BLESSING AND A PLEA 6:16-18** – Paul speaks a final blessing of peace, mercy, and grace upon the churches in Galatia.

CONCLUSION: To sum up this letter in its entirety, it truly is a book about the freedom we have in Christ. It's a freedom book: freedom from the works of the law, freedom from sin, freedom from deceivers. All of it hinges on the work of Christ on the cross and His righteousness imputed to us by grace through faith.