

Investigating the Word of God

Galatians



Lystra Looking East Toward Derbe

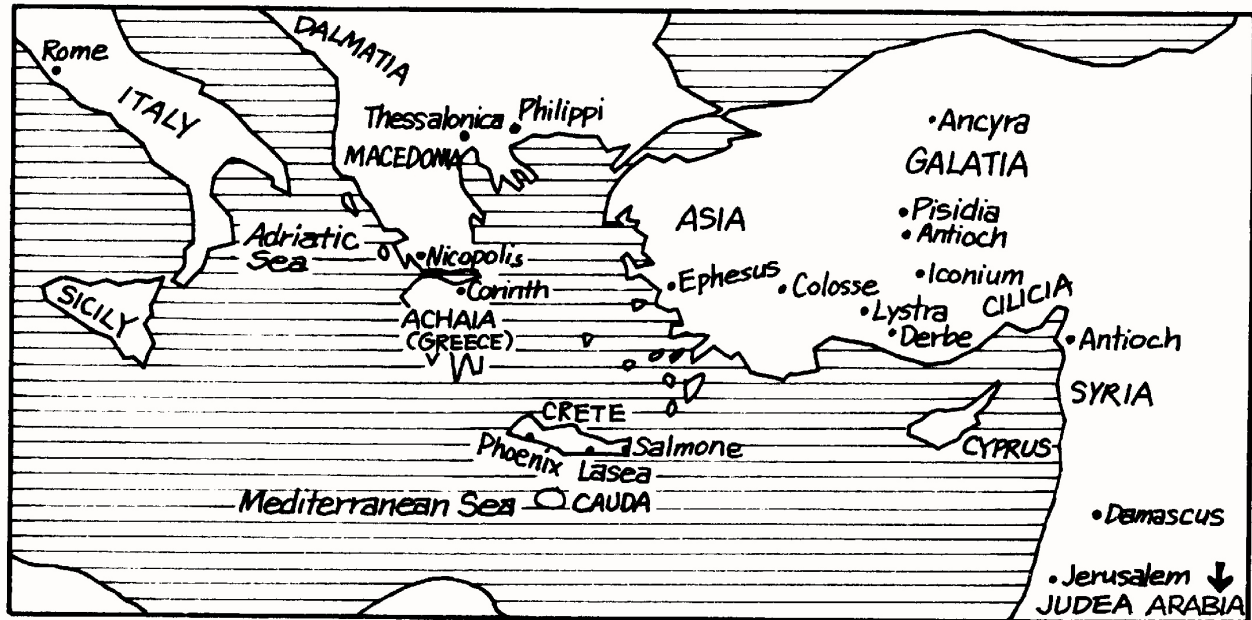
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An Introduction to Galatians

Galatia and the Galatians

The term “Galatians” was used to describe a group of migrating Gauls (A people who lived in Europe) who in the third century B.C. moved across Europe into Asia Minor, modern Turkey. After the death of the last king of the Galatian tribes, King Amyntus, the Romans formed the province of Galatia by adding to the original northern territory of the Galatians the regions of Pisidia, Lycaonia and part of eastern Phrygia.



Most scholars who have studied the book of Galatians believe that the apostle Paul, the author of the book, used the term “Galatia” to refer to the Roman province rather than to the Galatian tribe or race.

During the life of Paul, the province of Galatia would have included the city of Antioch in Pisidia as well as the cities of Iconium, Lystra, and Derbe of Lycaonia.

The Churches of Galatia

The apostle Paul preached the gospel and established churches in Antioch of Pisidia, Iconium, Lystra and Derbe during his first preaching trip (Acts 13-14). Both his second preaching trip and the third began with visits to the churches of this region (Acts 16:1-6; 18:23).

The Date and Place of Writing

We do not know any definite date on which this book was written. We also do not know any place from which it was written. Since the apostle Paul referred in Galatians 4:13 to the “first time” he visited the Galatians, it seems to indicate that he had already visited them at least twice.

If his second visit is the one found in Acts 16:1-6, this book must have been written during or after his second preaching trip.

Because we do not know when or where this book was written, many people have given several different opinions about it. Some place its writing during the latter part of the apostle Paul's second trip from either Macedonia or Corinth. Others place it at Antioch in Syria between his second or third trips. Still others place it on his third trip between the time he wrote the books of Second Corinthians and Romans.

Why This Book Was Written

Though the time and place of the writing of the book of Galatians may be uncertain, the purpose of its writing is clear. This book is a hard-hitting attack against some false teachers who were causing trouble in the Galatian churches. They were trying to get the Christians in those churches to obey the old law, the law of Moses. In trying to bring the Galatian Christians under the old law, these false teachers had evidently attacked both the apostle Paul and the gospel of Jesus Christ.

In this book, the apostle Paul replies to those attacks. He defends his authority as an apostle. He says that salvation is not in keeping the old law but by faith in Jesus.

The theme of this book is clearly stated in Galatians 2:16—"knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law but by faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified."

An Outline of Galatians

Introduction (1:1-5)

I. The Authenticity of the Gospel Preached by the Apostle Paul (1:6 - 2:21)

- A. It was independent of men. (1:6-16)
- B. It was independent of the other apostles. (1:17-19)
- C. It was independent of the church of Judea. (1:20-24)
- D. It was independent of brethren who were trying to bind Judaism and the old law. (2:1-10)
- E. It was independent of any apostolic pressure. (2:11-21)

II. The Superiority of the Gospel and Justification by Faith (3:1 - 4:31)

- A. The Holy Spirit was received by faith. (3:1-5)
- B. Abraham was justified by faith. (3:6-9)
- C. The old law cannot make void the promise of salvation. (3:15-18)
- D. The old law brings a curse. (3:10-14)
- E. The purpose of the old law is stated. (3:15-18)
- F. The condition under faith is superior to that of under the old law. (3:23 - 4:7)
- G. Legalism (overly strict law keeping) is no better than paganism. (4:8-10)
- H. The apostle Paul's original contact with the Galatians described. (4:11-18)
- J. The two covenants—the old law and the new—are contrasted. (4:19-31)

III. The Freedom of the Gospel (5:1 - 6:10)

- A. The call to stand fast in the freedom of Christ. (5:1)
- B. The danger of falling from grace. (5:2-12)
- C. A warning against using the freedom in Christ for an occasion to the flesh. (5:13-15)
- D. The conflict between the Spirit and the flesh. (5:16-26)
- E. Identifying marks of spirituality. (6:1-10)

Conclusion (6:11-18)

Galatians Chapter One

Keys to This Chapter

Key Passage: Verse 8

“But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed.”

Key People

Paul

Peter

James

Key Places

Galatia

Arabia

Damascus

Jerusalem

Syria

Cilicia

Judea

Key Words

Pervert

Gospel

Accursed

Revelation

Judaism

Glorified

Key Lesson

Questions on the Text

1. Who made Paul an apostle?
2. To whom is this letter addressed?
3. Who will was it that Christ should die for man’s sins?
4. What had some of the Christians in the Galatian churches done with the gospel that caused Paul to be amazed?
5. What is the condition of one who preaches a different gospel or changes the gospel of Christ?
6. If one strives to please men, whose servant can he not be?
7. From whom, and how, did Paul receive the gospel he preached?
8. Before his conversion, what were Paul’s attitude and actions toward the church of God?
9. Where did Paul first go after his conversion? Where did he go after three years had passed? Whom did he visit there? How long was his visit?
10. What did the Judean Christians know about Paul?

Matching

- | | |
|--------------------------|--|
| ___ 1. God the Father | A. Accursed if he preaches any other gospel than what has been preached. |
| ___ 2. Jesus Christ | B. The brother of the Lord. |
| ___ 3. Angel from heaven | C. Raised Jesus from the dead. |
| ___ 4. Paul | D. Gave Himself for our sins. |
| ___ 5. James | E. Persecuted the church before he was converted. |

True - False

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| T | F | 1. Paul was made an apostle by men. |
| T | F | 2. Paul received the gospel by revelation from heaven. |
| T | F | 3. Paul’s man concern in life was to please other people. |
| T | F | 4. God, through His grace, called Paul to preach the Christ among the Gentiles. |
| T | F | 5. Immediately following his conversion Paul went to Jerusalem. |

Discussion Question

Joseph Smith, founder of the Mormon Church, claimed an angel appeared to him in 1823 and gave him a new revelation. The Book of Mormon now carries the subtitle “Another Testament of Jesus Christ.” If an angel had really given this message to Smith, what should he have done?

Galatians Chapter Two

Keys to This Chapter

Key Passage: Verse 20

“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.”

Key People

Barnabas

Titus

James

Peter - Cephas

John

Key Places

Jerusalem

Antioch

Key Words

Circumcised

Pillars

Fellowship

Gentiles

Hypocrite

Justified

Grace

Righteousness

Key Lesson

Questions on the Text

1. Where did Paul go fourteen years after his conversion? Whom did he take with him?
2. To whom did Paul tell his gospel privately? Why?
3. What did some people want Titus to do? How did Paul answer this?
4. How did Paul view those who “seemed to be something?” Why?
5. Who was an apostle to the Jews? Who was an apostle to the Gentiles?
6. What did Paul do to him when Peter came to Antioch? Why did he do it?
7. How did the men sent from James affect Peter’s relationship with the Gentiles?
8. By what is one justified? Can works of the law justify?
9. What happens to one who seeks to be justified by Christ but reverts to the old law?
10. If righteousness were through the law, how would that affect:
 - a. The grace of God?
 - b. The death of Christ?

Matching

- | | |
|-----------------|---|
| ___ 1. Titus | A. A pillar. |
| ___ 2. Barnabas | B. Shows personal favoritism to no man. |
| ___ 3. Peter | C. Accompanied Paul to Jerusalem. |
| ___ 4. James | D. A Greek. |
| ___ 5. God | E. Played the hypocrite. |

True - False

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| T | F | 1. Titus was compelled to be circumcised. |
| T | F | 2. James, Cephas and Andrew seemed to be pillars. |
| T | F | 3. Paul and Barnabas received the right hand of fellowship from the Jerusalem church. |
| T | F | 4. One is not justified by works of the law but by faith in Jesus Christ. |
| T | F | 5. Christ lived in Paul because Paul lived by faith in the Son of God. |

Discussion Question

How could Christians today commit the same sin as the apostle Peter committed in this chapter?

Galatians Chapter Three

Keys to This Chapter

Key Passage: Verses 26-27

“For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.”

Key People

Abraham

Key Words

Bewitched

Vain

Curse

Covenant

Seed

Transgressions

Mediator

Tutor

Heirs

Key Lesson

Questions on the Text

1. What had someone done to these Galatians?
2. What great fact had been set forth among the Gentiles?
3. How had the Galatians received the Spirit? After having begun in the Spirit, how were they trying to be made perfect?
4. What did faith in God do for Abraham?
5. Who are the sons of Abraham?
6. By what are Gentiles justified? (v. 8) By what can no person be justified? (v. 11)
7. What did Christ do for those who were under the law?
8. To how many “seeds” was the promise of God given? Who was this seed?
9. Why was the old law given? (v. 19) What was its purpose? (vv. 23-24)
10. How did the Galatians become sons of God? How did they get into Christ?

Matching

- | | |
|--|--|
| ____ 1. Abraham | A. Coming with all His saints. |
| ____ 2. As many as are of the works of the law | B. Receive the blessing of Abraham in Christ Jesus. |
| ____ 3. Gentiles | C. Believed God and it was accounted to him for righteousness. |
| ____ 4. Christ | D. Under the curse. |
| ____ 5. The law | E. A tutor to bring us to Christ. |

True - False

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| T | F | 1. Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree. |
| T | F | 2. No one annuls or adds to a covenant once it is confirmed. |
| T | F | 3. The law was added because of blessings. |
| T | F | 4. Scripture has confined all under sin. |
| T | F | 5. Those who are Christ’s are Abraham’s seed and heirs according to the promise. |

Discussion Question

Describe the duties of a “tutor” (KJV: “schoolmaster”). Is the Mosaic Law a “tutor:” for people today?

Galatians Chapter Four

Keys to This Chapter

Key Passage: Verse 4

“But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law,...”

Key People

Abraham

Hagar

Isaac

Key Places

Mount Sinai in Arabia

Jerusalem

Key Words

Guardians

Stewards

Bondage

Redeem

Adoption

Abba

Bondwoman

Freewoman

Symbolic

Key Lesson

Questions on the Text

1. When did God send His Son?
2. What could God’s Son do for those who were under the law?
3. What were the Galatians doing that caused Paul to think his labor among them might have been useless?
4. What caused Paul to preach to the Galatians in the first place? How did they receive him the first time they heard him?
5. What shows the degree of love they had for Paul?
6. What does Paul tell those who desire to be under the law to do?
7. Who were the two sons mentioned in verse 22? (Gen. 16:16; 21:3)
8. What difference was there in the birth of these two men?
9. Why does Paul use the illustration of Abraham’s family?
10. Of whom is it stated that Christians are the children?

Matching

- | | |
|---------------------------|----------------------|
| ___ 1. Mt. Zion | A. Ten commandments. |
| ___ 2. Mt. Sinai | B. Jerusalem. |
| ___ 3. Gentiles | C. New covenant. |
| ___ 4. Sarah | D. In Arabia. |
| ___ 5. Hagar | E. Son of promise. |
| ___ 6. Ishmael | F. Freewoman. |
| ___ 7. Isaac | G. Son of handmaid. |
| ___ 8. Law from Jerusalem | H. Handmaid. |

True - False

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| T | F | 1. The Galatians had received Paul as if he were an angel or even Christ Jesus. |
| T | F | 2. Paul had become the enemy of the Galatians because he had told them lies. |

Discussion Question

What are the “days and months and seasons and years” mentioned in verse 10? Is there any harm in “observing” days in private? (See Romans 14)

Galatians Chapter Five

Keys to This Chapter

Key Passage: Verses 22-23

“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law.”

Key People

Paul

Key Words

Liberty

Yoke

Leaven

Lust

Flesh

Fruit

Key Lesson

Questions on the Text

1. Who set the Galatians free? Seeing that they were free, what did Paul tell them not to do?
2. If a man is circumcised as a sign of obedience to the law, what is he indebted to do?
3. What happens to those who would be justified by the law?
4. What kind of faith avails in Christ?
5. What had these Galatians been hindered from doing?
6. What does a little leaven do?
7. Unto what had these Galatians been called? How were they to use it?
8. What expression fulfills the whole law?
9. If Christians fight among themselves, of what must they be careful?
10. What were the Galatians to do to keep from fulfilling the lust of the flesh?
11. What is the relationship between flesh and the Spirit?
12. What are the works of the flesh?
13. What is the condition of those who indulge in the works of the flesh?
14. Of what does the fruit of the Spirit consist?
15. What should Christians never become?

True - False

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| T | F | 1. One's liberty in Christ should be used as an opportunity for the flesh. |
| T | F | 2. One who walks in the Spirit will fulfill the lust of the flesh. |
| T | F | 3. If you are led by the Spirit you are not under the law. |
| T | F | 4. Those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desire. |
| T | F | 5. If one lives in the Spirit he does not have to walk in the Spirit. |

Discussion Question

Of the sins listed in verses 19 through 21, which do you believe are often minimized or overlooked?

Galatians Chapter Six

Keys to This Chapter

Key Passage: Verses 7-8

“Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life.”

Key Words

Overtaken

Spiritual

Burdens

Deceived

Mocked

Corruption

Household

Key Lesson

Questions on the Text

1. What is the Christian’s obligation to any brother or sister who has been overtaken by a fault? With what attitude and in what manner should this obligation be discharged?
2. Whose burdens are Christians to bear? Whose law does this burden-bearing fulfill?
3. When does a person deceive himself?
4. What should a person do about his own “load?”
5. What is God’s law of sowing and reaping?
6. Who is to reap corruption? Who is to reap eternal life?
7. Of what should the Christian not become weary? Why?
8. What is a Christian’s obligation to all men? To whom does he have a special obligation?
9. In what alone would Paul glory?
10. If circumcision is not “anything” in Christ, what is?

Matching

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| ___ 1. Those who are spiritual | A. Share in all good things with him who teaches. |
| ___ 2. Fulfill the law | B. Reap everlasting life. |
| ___ 3. One who is taught the word | C. Restore the one overtaken in any trespass. |
| ___ 4. One who sows to the Spirit | D. Do good to all. |
| ___ 5. Those who have opportunity | E. Bear one another’s burdens. |

True - False

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| T | F | 1. One who thinks he is something when he is nothing deceives others. |
| T | F | 2. In due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart. |
| T | F | 3. Someone other than Paul actually wrote this letter. |
| T | F | 4. Both circumcision and uncircumcision avails in Christ. |
| T | F | 5. Paul bore the marks of the Lord Jesus on his body. |

Discussion Question

What is the difference between one’s burden in verse two and his load in verse five?

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