

Galatians - Background and Chapter 1

Background

- Galatians is written by Paul. There is no argument about that fact. You can correlate the letter with the accounts of Paul's journeys in Acts.
- The book was probably written around 49 AD. He established the Galatian churches on his first missionary journey in the region (Acts 13:14-14:23.) It is often called the Magna Carta of Christian Liberty
- Interesting point is that Paul comments on his physical appearance and problems with his eyes. In Acts we can find where he was stoned to death before coming to the Galatians so he is suffering badly from having been stoned and left for dead
- So why did Paul write to the Galatians?
 - To counter the false doctrine and gospel of the Judaizers. The Judaizers apparently followed Paul in his missionary work and tried to subvert the true Gospel with their own version of the a gospel.
 - Who are the Judaizers? There have always been those who balk at the idea of God's salvation being offered freely to those who believe. They reason that such a grand gift as forgiveness from such a holy God *must* require some kind of payment from us. We thank God for His grace, but we understand that He expects us to somehow *earn* that grace—in other words, there must be *something* that we can do to pay off the debt we owe to God.
 - Judaizers: In the early church, those who taught a combination of God's grace and human effort were called "Judaizers." The word *Judaizer* comes from a Greek verb meaning "to live according to Jewish customs." The word appears in [Galatians 2:14](#) where Paul describes how he confronted Peter for forcing Gentile Christians to "Judaize."
 - A Judaizer taught that, in order for a Christian to truly be right with God, he must conform to the Mosaic Law. Circumcision, especially, was promoted as necessary for salvation. (Acts 15:1) Gentiles had to become Jewish proselytes *first*, and *then* they could come to Christ. The doctrine of the Judaizers was a mixture of grace (through Christ) and works (through the keeping of the Law). This false doctrine was dealt with in [Acts 15](#) and strongly condemned in the book of Galatians.

- The resurrection of Jesus was a primary point of consideration for all the apostles and for those who lived during the period before and after Jesus' death, burial and resurrection.
- God had resurrected a man, upon whom the sin of the world rested, upon whom death was dwelling, and raised Him unto an immortal life in a human body!! This is the heart of the Gospel. In believing this, we too are given eternal life and will be manifested in a new, immortal flesh and bone body when Christ returns to earth.
- Key verse for the book is Gal 5:1 Stand fast therefore in the liberty by which Christ has made us free, and do not be entangled again with a yoke of bondage."

Outline of the Book of Galatians

- In chapters 1-2, Paul's gives his testimony about how he had received the authentic Gospel message. He warns that if anyone presents another Gospel message other than the one he was preaching, that person is *"As we have said before, so I say again now, if any man is preaching to you a gospel contrary to what you received, he is to be accursed!"* (1:9). Paul was speaking of the one true Gospel that he had received; Please read 1st Corinthians 15:1-4.

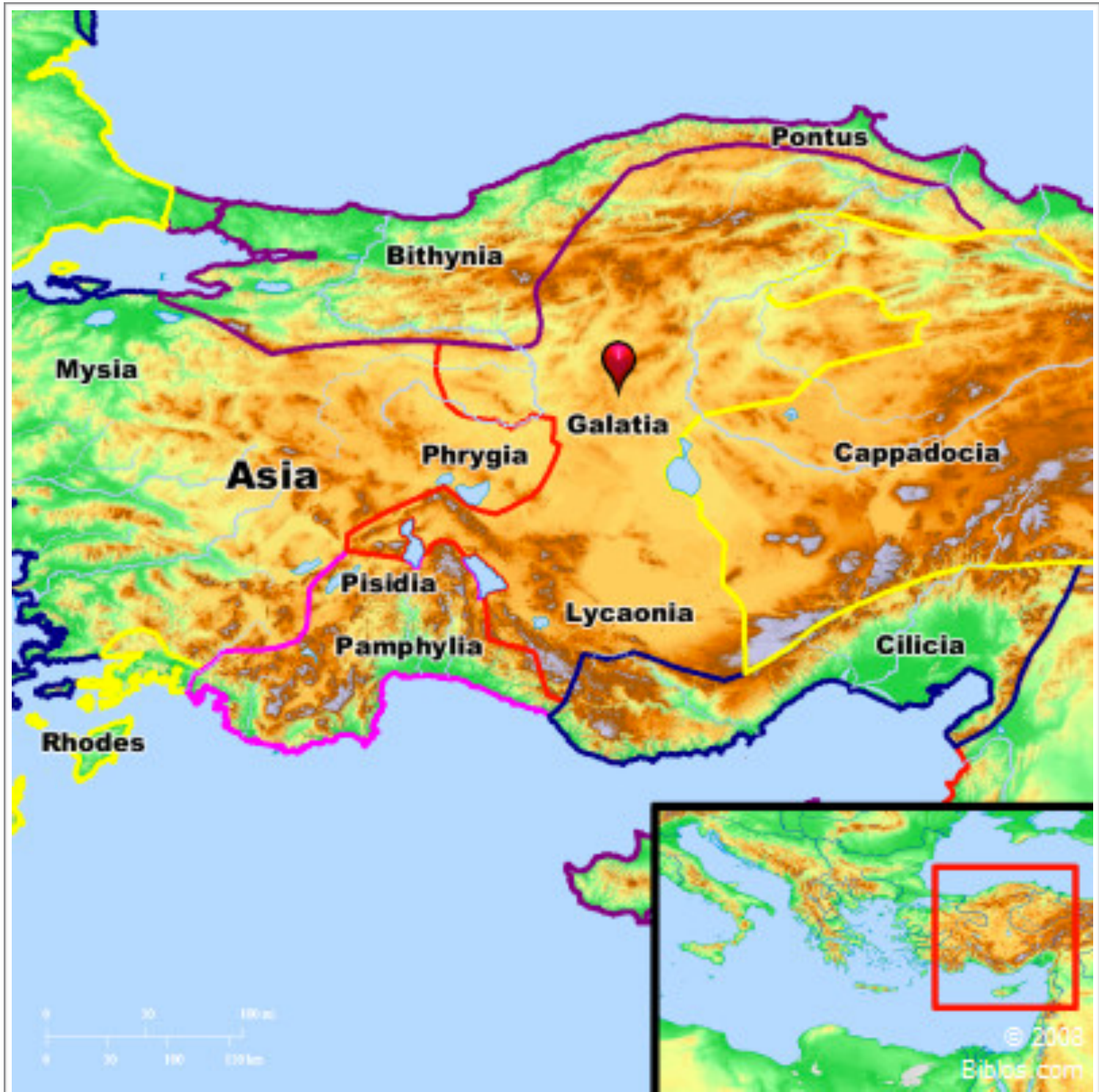
Paul then declares that Christ now lives within him, and directs, and empowers him to live as Christ's ambassador and instrument: "I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me" (2:20).

- Chapters 3-5:12, Paul begins by declaring that salvation is through faith and trust in Jesus Christ "Alone", and cannot be obtained through the keeping of the Law. "You foolish Galatians! Who put you under a spell? Was not Jesus the Messiah clearly portrayed before your very eyes as having been crucified? I want to learn only one thing from you: Did you receive the Spirit by doing the works of the law or by believing what you heard? Are you so foolish? Having started out with the Spirit, are you now ending up with the flesh? (Galatians 3:1-3). The Law (10 Commandments) is our tutor to lead us to salvation in Jesus Christ, "the Law has become our tutor to lead us to Christ, so that we may be justified by faith" (3:24). No one can obey the 10 Commandments. It is impossible. Every person has broken them; therefore, we can only attain salvation through trusting in our Savior Christ Jesus.

- Chapters 5:13-6, He teaches the Fruits of the Spirit and tells us to *"walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh"* (5:16). Good works does not

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save, but a Christian must have the desire to produce good fruit, obey God's Law and live a holy and righteous life in the eyes of God. Christians should live this redeemed life.



Paul's Heart and Intention

- Go back to Genesis 3. To the reason why God had to send Jesus, the spirit of life to rescue man from death. The spirit of life raised Jesus from the dead and seated Him at the Father's right hand as an immortal, flesh and bone human being
- The Spirit of God is called the Spirit of life. The Spirit of life, the spirit of the resurrection, the teaching of God giving life and immortality to man. This is the spirit with which Paul wrote Galatians.
- It is the basic foundation in the heart of Paul from where he defended the true Gospel, from where he explained who he stands for and what he stands for.
- God gives eternal life as a free gift. He gives holiness as a free gift and that we don't live by our works. God is the one who is going to fulfill the promise of eternal life. That is the spirit wherein this letter was written.
- So how would you understand this letter if you were in the churches of Galatia at the time it was written?
 - We worry about our fruit...
 - But our fruit cannot declare us as we are not or as we ought to be
 - • We already are as we ought to be!!!

Gospel Statement:

As a result of sin and death entering into the world through Adam and Eve eating of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, man no longer trusted God to be his source of life. This life, this God-life, is defined as being eternal and full of the manifestation of the fruit of the Spirit.

Adam put mankind under the bondage of death where man would toil and labor for this God-life - but in vain as it could only produce more death.

Because of the intent and desire of God's heart to have man share in the love and life of His life, He determined that Jesus would conquer death for all time through the Cross and the resurrection and would provide mankind a simple pathway to be joined to Him forever.

Though the resurrection and ascension to the right hand of the Father, Jesus has become our living proof that death has indeed been overcome and we, mankind, are now once again free to choose. We are free to choose eternal life or we are free to choose perishing. We can choose between an immortal, eternal life filled with the presence of the Godhead or we can choose to return to the dust of the earth.

The offer of eternal life is free to be taken, and free to be rejected. Choose life!

Act 4:33 And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great **grace** was upon them all.

Rom 1:7 To all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called *to be* saints: **Grace** to you and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.

1Co 1:3 **Grace** *be* unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and *from* the Lord Jesus Christ.

2Co 1:2 **Grace** *be* to you and peace from God our Father, and *from* the Lord Jesus Christ.

Gal 1:3 **Grace** *be* to you and peace from God the Father, and *from* our Lord Jesus Christ,

Eph 1:2 **Grace** *be* to you, and peace, from God our Father, and *from* the Lord Jesus Christ.

Php 1:2 **Grace** *be* unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and *from* the Lord Jesus Christ.

Col 1:2 To the saints and faithful brethren in Christ which are at Colosse: **Grace** *be* unto you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

1Th 1:1 Paul, and Silvanus, and Timotheus, unto the church of the Thessalonians *which is* in God the Father and *in* the Lord Jesus Christ: **Grace** *be* unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.

2Th 1:2 **Grace** unto you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

1Ti 1:2 Unto Timothy, *my* own son in the faith: **Grace**, mercy, *and* peace, from God our Father and Jesus Christ our Lord.

2Ti 1:2 To Timothy, *my* dearly beloved son: **Grace**, mercy, *and* peace, from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.

Tit 1:4 To Titus, *mine* own son after the common faith: **Grace**, mercy, *and* peace, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ our Saviour.

Phm 1:3 **Grace** to you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

1Pe 1:2 Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: **Grace** unto you, and peace, be multiplied.

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2Pe 1:2 Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord,

2Jn 1:3 Grace be with you, mercy, *and* peace, from God the Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father, in truth and love.

Rev 1:4 John to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace *be* unto you, and peace, from him which is, and which was, and which is to come; and from the seven Spirits which are before his throne;

Galatians 1 (Again)

- Verse 1 & 2

- Defends apostleship - was being attacked and questioned by judaizers
- There were more than just Paul involved in the letter. Imagine Paul and a group of other church leaders sitting around while Paul dictates the letter, getting amens and yes and conversation about what he is writing
- Reiterates his apostleship is not from men,
 - But directly from Christ
 - Not of man; msg not from man

- Verse 3

- The greeting - grace and peace unto you.
 - When Paul says, “Grace to you...”, he does so with definite intention and purpose; having an expectation of the influential power of God to bring forth a new life in us, free from keeping laws and carnal commandments; his objective is to have the Galatians understand that we have access to grace by faith;
 - It is not just a friendly greeting, but a powerful statement reflecting the heart of God and the heart of Paul.
 - Peter and John also use similar greeting
- **Grace** = The influential power of God on the heart of people, through the resurrected Jesus, unto a fruitful life; unto our believing we are a new creation
 - Equal in quality to God’s life
 - Effortlessly bearing the fruit of the Spirit (love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, meekness, temperance and faithfulness)
- Col 1:6 (TPT) *This is the wonderful message that* is being spread everywhere, powerfully changing hearts throughout the earth, just like it has changed you! Every believer of this

good news **bears the fruit of eternal life as they experience the reality of God's grace.**

- **Peace** = to be made one with God; to be in harmony with God; to be in harmony with all people
 - No Jew or Gentile if there is peace - harmony
 - As powerful now as it was then - black white; male female, etc.
- The opposite of grace and peace is what? Legalism, works righteousness...
 - **Rom 11:6** And if by grace, then *is it* no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if *it be* of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work.
- The results of grace working in our lives is a brand new life, a life where God's quality life manifests in us effortlessly
- **Verse 4**
 - What is sin? We define sin as missing the mark, not partaking in, not to have a share in
 - Next logical question...what is the mark? what do we not have a share in? what is not being partaken of?
 - Eternal life!!!
 - But also our inability or weakness to live as the true representative of God
 - Romans 5:6 For when we were **yet without strength**, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.
 - Romans 5:8 But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, **while we were yet sinners**, Christ died for us.
 - Jesus gave Himself for the weakness we have in the flesh, in that it cannot produce the immortal, incorruptible life of God in us
 - Present evil world - started with Adam; characterized by man trying to bring forth the Kingdom of God by his own efforts, and to try and have eternal life through our own efforts

- Sin made us part of the present evil world; no sin, not part of it!
- God's will - for us to have an incorruptible, immortal life; to walk with God as His friend forever; to effortlessly manifest the quality of God's life through the Fruit of the Spirit; that the life and light of God might shine through us and impact all around us
- **Verse 5**
 - Glory to God - Amen!
 - Opposite is glory to self/man
 - Confidence in the flesh
 - Seeking to do good and avoid evil
- **Verse 6**
 - This is the foundation for the letter to the Galatians
 - We can see Paul's heart and thoughts here...
 - Paul was so intertwined with Christ and the message of the true Gospel that any rejection or challenge to the Gospel was felt by him and a rejection himself. It was very painful for Paul.
 - Paul compares the two gospels
 - True gospel of grace received by Paul from Christ and passed on to the Galatians in the founding of the church; the good news
- **Verse 7**
 - The other gospel which is not a gospel at all
 - From the judaizers
 - Was a mixture of law and grace - saved by grace, but must be circumcised and follow the law of Moses to have eternal life; profanes Christ by adding to His Gospel
 - Gal 5:4 Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace.
 - To fall from grace is to trust in your self, your own effort for life
 - Judaizers were selective in what laws they wanted performed - this is against biblical doctrine that says the law must be fulfilled in every single detail, every single second!

- Trouble = subvert
 - Acts 15:24 Forasmuch as we have heard, that certain which went out from us have **troubled you with words, subverting your souls**, saying, *Ye must* be circumcised, and keep the law: to whom we gave no *such* commandment:
 - Mixing law and grace destroys (subverts) your soul; it is a perversion of the Gospel of grace!
- **Verse 8 & 9**
 - Again we can see the passion in Paul's heart for the people
 - To accept the message of one that was accursed would result in living a cursed life
 - Repeats the statement twice for emphasis!!
 - **Accursed** = means to be hanged on a tree (Deut 21:23)
 - In jewish culture, if a crime was worthy of death, a person was stoned. If the crime was really horrible, then after being stoned to death, the body was hung on a tree as a statement that the person was worst of all sinners and worthy of a disgraceful death. Being on a tree put a person between heaven and earth - in a sense worthy of neither.
 - Preach another gospel and you are the worst of sinners
- **Verse 10 -**
 - Same as Peter said in Acts 5:29
 - Obey man or God? God of course!
 - Obey = persuade
 - The message Paul brought was not readily accepted by man
 - Man feels that there must always be a doing going on!!!
 - Paul once lived the cursed life and now was living a life of liberty, thus the passion for those to not return to what was cursed
- **Verse 11-**
 - The true gospel is not according to man

- Gospel according to man would say:
 - You must do something to be right with God
 - It frustrates the grace of God
 - You must do something to earn God's favor
 - It is liked by mankind, but against the gospel of grace
 - It perverts the true gospel
- **Certify** = to make known, to reveal, to declare, assurance of fruitfulness
- Gospel Paul received and preached was given to him by direct revelation from Christ, not of man
- **Verse 12** -
 - Compare the two gospels:
 - Man's gospel = trust in your own ability to do the law in order to have life
 - God's Gospel = Trust in God for life, God has conquered the sin and death that bond you in the body of the resurrected Jesus
 - Titus 1:2-3 In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began; But hath in due times manifested his word through preaching, which is committed unto me according to the commandment of God our Saviour;
 - Also 1 John 1:1-4
 - Paul compares the two gospels:
 - Resurrection life - mixture of grace and law
 - Unity as one people - Jew and Gentile
 - Revelation from God - Traditions of man
 - Blessed - accursed
- **Verse 13** -
 - **Conversation** - manner of life, conduct, behavior
 - **Wasted** - to lay waste, destroy, ravage

- Paul speaks of his former life and that beyond measure he persecuted the church of Jesus Christ
- Verse 14 -
 - Profited in man's religion
 - Was exceedingly zealous in man's religion
 - Zealous of the traditions of man, forefathers
 - Paul had a powerful zeal for God but it was perverted by the message of the serpent
- Verse 15 -
 - **Separate** - to appoint; set apart for some purpose
 - Root is to ordain, to appoint, to declare
 - Paul is using a hebrewism that says he was ordained to preach the Gospel before he was born, before he had any type of behavior
 - Key point - we are all separated by God and called by grace to receive the message of the Gospel
 - The serpent tells us differently - lies, kills and destroys
 - **Verse 16** -
 - He came to preach grace to the heathen, to the gentiles
 - In the OT, foreign nations not worshipping the true God, pagans, Gentiles
 - Again, reiterates the source of his message is not man, but Christ
 - **Verse 17** -
 - Judaizers were lying about Paul, his apostleship and the source of his message
 - Countering those lies again
 - Paul knew the traditions of man better than most; but the encounter with Jesus changed his life and his message radically!
- Verses 18 - 24
 - Spent three years in Arabia before returning to Damascus and then Jerusalem
- Conclusion - Glorifying God for the revelation of the true Gospel and Paul's passion to bring it to the Gentiles