

Grace Bible Church
Adult Elective Fall 2016
Topic: Galatians
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Introduction To Galatians and Galatians Chapter 1

Introduction To Galatians

- **Timeline:**
 - Paul's Conversion – AD 35 (Acts 9:1-19)
 - Paul's time in Arabia (Acts 9:23-25)
 - Paul's time in Tarsus – AD 40 (Acts 9:26-31)
 - Paul's time in Antioch – AD 45 [Home Church!!!] (Acts 11:22-26)
 - Paul's first missionary journey – AD 47
 - Galatians written to the southern churches of Galatia (i.e. regions of Pisidia, Lyconia, and Pamphylia).
 - Paul's second missionary journey – AD 50
 - Paul's third missionary journey – AD 55
 - Paul's arrest in Caesarea – AD 60
 - Paul's first and second arrests in Rome – AD 63 and AD 66
 - Paul's martyrdom – circa AD 66

- **Circumstances of Letter:**
 - The tone and content show us that Paul is frustrated, angry, and disappointed at the new converts in Galatia. They had quickly abandoned the truth of Christ and had replaced it with a works-based salvation and Paul is writing to correct their thinking and to get them back into a right relationship with Christ.
 - **AUTHOR:** The apostle Paul (his first letter)
 - **FROM WHERE:** From Paul and Barnabas' home church in Antioch in Syria (Acts 14)
 - **TO WHOM:** New churches in the southern part of the Roman province of Galatia
 - **WHEN:** Circa AD 47-48 AD after Paul's first missionary journey and before the Jerusalem Council
 - **WHY:** Judaizers were attempting to turn the Galatian converts away from Paul's teaching and toward more traditional Jewish adherence to the Law of Moses (from the true gospel to a false gospel)
 - **THEME:** Christ is the only way to life (both here and eternally)
 - **MEANS:** 1. Paul argues that freedom is based on grace. 2. Paul attacks works-based legalism. 3. Paul encourages those surrounded by legalists.
 - Paul warns against abandoning the truth.

- Paul reiterates the significance of God’s mercy and grace through Christ.
 - Paul teaches the actual, true nature of the Law of Moses.
 - Paul teaches true liberty that is not abused.
- Summary of Letter:
 - “The basic message of Galatians can be summed up in three sentences: Paul had heard that the Galatian Christians were in danger of falling away from the true gospel of grace by turning to a legalistic approach to salvation and the Christian life. His passion for the truth compelled him to call them back to the freedom of salvation by grace alone through faith alone. In doing so, he argued that not only is the sinner saved by grace, but the saved sinner also lives by grace.... Grace is the way to life and the way of life.” – Chuck Swindoll
- Letter Outline
 - The Truth Of The Gospel - Gal. 1:1-2:21
 - The Superiority Of The Gospel - Gal. 3:1-4:31
 - The Freedom Of The Gospel - Gal. 5:1-6:18

Galatians Chapter 1

- 1:1-5
 - Paul’s letter to the Galatians begins with:
 - Sender
 - Recipients
 - Blessing
 - The theme of Galatians is already shown in vv. 1 and 5 (Paul is a true apostle with the simple, sufficient, and true message of Christ)
 - Paul is a true apostle with God-given authority
 - Greek word: *apostolos*
 - The Judaizers who were sowing legalism (trying to turn new converts to the Mosaic Law) started by attempting to discredit Paul (and comparing him to Peter and James).
 - Technically, an apostle was an individual who is God’s representative and has that authority given their direct relationship with Christ (e.g. The Twelve, James, and Paul).
 - Criteria of apostleship
 - Eyewitnesses of Christ (1 Cor. 9:1)
 - Performance of miracles (2 Cor. 12:12)
 - Selected by the risen Christ (Acts 1:21-26)

- Paul was a true apostle as he fulfilled all of the above criteria (Acts 9:3-6, 15, and 14:3).
 - Unlike the Judaizers, only Paul truly had Christ's message (and thus his authority trumped theirs).
 - Paul's message in his greeting focuses on the gospel of Christ
 - "Grace and Peace" translate *charis kai eirene*.
 - This is in contrast to the typical Greek greeting (i.e. in Acts and James *chairein*) which translates into the English "Greeting"
 - Note the play on words here: "Salvation comes purely by grace and results in peace with God" - Chuck Swindoll
 - GOSPEL MESSAGE: Christ rescues us from sin and slavery to sin by His death, burial and resurrection. When we turn from sin (repent) to God (faith) we receive God's mercy (forgiveness from God who has the power of punishment over us) and grace (God's unmerited favor of victory over death and ultimate eternal fellowship with Him). God then declares us justified (God calls us righteous while we are still in a state of sin and makes us children of His).
- 1:6-9
 - Immediately after his short introduction, Paul rips into the Galatians, chastising them for their unbelievable rejection of the truth.
 - v. 6: The term "deserting" implies an abandonment of Christ
 - While dating is imperfect, it is likely that this abandonment occurred very early after Paul had left Galatia (perhaps only mere weeks).
 - The Greek word here is *heteros* which means "of a different kind". So, the Judaizers were pointing the Galatians to a totally different and erroneous gospel.
 - Paul's condemnation was strong: He literally damned them to Hell. But, he also included himself in the camp of damned if he should ever depart from Christ's truth!
 - **Application Point:** A new believer has shallow roots in the faith and may be easily swayed to other false views. This is commonly how cults attract new followers.

- 1:10
 - Paul was not trying to please the Gentiles. Had he been a people-pleaser, he would have remained a Pharisee and continued to teach the Mosaic Law.
 - **Application Point:** What are we willing to "die for"? Paul's message of Christ is simple (the true gospel message is simple) and was something he was willing to die for.
 - How would you describe the gospel message?
 - From Paul:
 - Our Separation from God (Rom. 3:23, 6:23)
 - Power of Christ (Rom. 1:1-4)
 - Work of Christ (Rom. 2:15-16)
 - Our Response to Christ (Rom. 1:16-17, 10:9)
 - GOSPEL MESSAGE: Christ rescues us from sin and slavery to sin by His death, burial and resurrection. When we turn from sin (repent) to God (faith) we receive God's mercy (forgiveness from God who has the power of punishment over us) and grace (God's unmerited favor of victory over death and ultimate eternal fellowship with Him). God then declares us justified (God calls us righteous while we are still in a state of sin and makes us children of His).
- 1:11-12
 - In countering his opponents, Paul writes that his gospel is not from man, nor was it according to men, nor had it been given by men.
 - Paul received the gospel directly from Christ (Acts 9:3-9, 26:18).
- 1:13-14
 - Before his conversion, Paul was a student of the famous Rabbi Gamaliel (Acts 5:34, 22:3). He was zealous for the Jewish faith. Like the other Jews, he likely believed that the Messiah would come from the elite class of Jews.
- 1:15-16
 - Paul then directly and personally encountered the risen Messiah (Christ). Only God could change him, and Paul points this out in these verses: Then God showed up, God set him apart (cf. Jer. 1:5 -> God set Paul apart for service from before he was born), and God called him for a specific ministry to reveal Christ.
 - Paul did not need clarification of the gospel message from human leaders (like Peter or James). He traveled far away (to Arabia) for three years before returning to preach. Paul's message was directly from Christ.
- 1:18-24
 - Finally, Paul writes that he met Peter and James and notes that they all were preaching the same gospel and rejoicing in each other,