

## Galatians Bible Study Notes

### Author

Paul is the author of the Galatian letter. There is both internal and external evidence for holding this view. First, Paul identifies himself as the author at the beginning of the letter (1:1). Second, Galatians is quoted or referenced by several other authors and works. References include 1 Peter, Barnabas, 1 Clement, Polycarp's letter to the Philippians, Justin Martyr, Irenaeus, Clement of Alexandria, and the church father Origen.<sup>1</sup> As such, there are no discrepancies in the book that cast doubt on its authenticity.

### Date and Place of Origination

It is most likely that Paul wrote the Galatian letter from Antioch, in Syria. After Paul's first missionary journey, Paul and Barnabas returned to Antioch to report to the church of their mission. Galatians would have been written before the Jerusalem Council (Acts 15). Therefore, the date of the letter can be placed at approximately A.D. 48. This means that Galatians is the earliest of Paul's New Testament writings, coming right after the epistle of James, which was written in A.D. 45.

### Destination

The letter is written to several churches (1:2), in the region of Galatia. Though debated, most conservative scholars hold the view that these churches were in the southern region of Galatia, which is in modern day Turkey. MacArthur states, "The fact that the book of Acts mentions the four churches established by Paul in south Galatia and mentions none in the rest of the province makes it probable that the epistle was addressed primarily to those southern churches."<sup>2</sup> These churches included the cities of Antioch, Iconium, Lystra, and Derbe. Paul planted these churches on his first missionary journey (Acts 13-14).

### Occasion

Paul wrote the Galatian letter after word came to him that the churches had been infiltrated by Judaizers. These Judaizers were teaching that Gentile Christians needed to be circumcised and keep the Law of Moses (Acts 15:1).<sup>3</sup> This was a huge threat to the Gospel of grace and Paul took immediate action to rectify the problem by writing to the churches. Bush states, "While the letter is profoundly pastoral, Paul isn't trying to be particularly 'pastorally sensitive.' He's confronting something extremely dangerous."<sup>4</sup> Paul's letter is a vindication of his apostleship and the true Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

### Purpose Statement

Paul wrote Galatians for several reasons. He wrote to vindicate his calling as an apostle. He wrote to define and vindicate the Gospel of grace alone through faith alone in Christ. He wrote to instruct the church concerning a Christian's liberties and responsibilities in the dispensation of grace.

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<sup>1</sup> Daniel B. Wallace, Galatians: Introduction, Argument, and Outline. Accessed on June 20, 2018. <https://bible.org/seriespage/9-galatians-introduction-argument-and-outline>.

<sup>2</sup> John F. MacArthur Jr., Galatians, *MacArthur New Testament Commentary* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1983), xi-xii.

<sup>3</sup> Blue Letter Bible, Galatians. Accessed on June 20, 2018. <https://www.blueletterbible.org/study/eo/Gal/Gal000.cfm>.

<sup>4</sup> Daniel Bush and Noel Due, *Live in Liberty: The Spiritual Message of Galatians* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2015), 2.

## Outline

- I. Introduction (1:1–10)
  - A. The salutation (1:1–5)
  - B. The denunciation (1:6–10)
- II. Personal: A Defense of Paul’s Authority (1:11–2:21)
  - A. He was independent of the apostles (1:11–24)
    - 1. Thesis: Paul’s gospel was a revelation (1:11–12)
    - 2. Events before Paul’s conversion (1:13–14)
    - 3. Events at Paul’s conversion (1:15–16a)
    - 4. Events after Paul’s conversion (1:16b–24)
  - B. He was recognized by the apostles (2:1–10)
  - C. He rebuked the reputed chief of the apostles (2:11–21)
- III. Doctrinal: A Defense of Justification by Faith (chaps. 3–4)
  - A. Vindication of the doctrine (chap. 3)
    - 1. By the experience of the Galatians (3:1–5)
    - 2. By the example of Abraham and the Law (3:6–12)
    - 3. By the work of Christ (3:13–14)
    - 4. By the permanence of faith (3:15–18)
    - 5. By the purpose of the Law (3:19–25)
    - 6. By the believer’s present position (3:26–29)
  - B. Illustration of the doctrine (chap. 4)
    - 1. A legal illustration (4:1–7)
    - 2. A personal plea (4:8–20)
      - a. An appeal not to turn to legalism (4:8–11)
      - b. An appeal to remember their relationship (4:12–16)
      - c. An appeal to consider Paul’s attitude toward them (4:17–20)
    - 3. A biblical illustration (4:21–31)
      - a. The historical facts (4:21–23)
      - b. The allegorical interpretation (4:24–27)
      - c. The personal application (4:28–31)
- IV. Practical: A Defense of Christian Liberty (5:1–6:10)
  - A. A life apart from Law (5:1–12)
    - 1. Turning to Law ruins grace (5:1–2)
    - 2. Turning to Law makes man a debtor (5:3)
    - 3. Turning to Law is to fall away from grace (5:4–6)
    - 4. Turning to Law hinders the progress of believers (5:7–10)
    - 5. Turning to Law removes the offense of the Cross (5:11–12)
  - B. A life apart from license (5:13–15)
  - C. A life according to the Spirit (5:16–26)
    - 1. The promise of victory over sin (5:16–18)
    - 2. The peril to victory over sin (5:19–21)
    - 3. The power for victory over sin (5:22–23)
    - 4. The provision for victory over sin (5:24–26)
  - D. A life of service (6:1–10)
    - 1. Toward the Christian who has sinned (6:1)
    - 2. Toward the Christian who is burdened (6:2–5)
    - 3. Toward the pastor-teacher (6:6–9)
    - 4. Toward all men (6:10)
- V. Conclusion (6:11–18)
  - A. Paul’s autograph (6:11)
  - B. Paul’s adversaries (6:12–13)
  - C. Paul’s boast (6:14–16)
  - D. Paul’s benediction (6:17–18)<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Donald K. Campbell, “Galatians,” in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, ed. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, vol. 2 (Wheaton: Victor Books, 1985), 588–89.

Paul's Introduction  
(Gal. 1:1-5)

- I. Paul reviews his authority (v.1)
  - A. Paul had been commissioned to be an Apostle. [Acts 9:15-16] (v.1a)
    - a. Qualifications to be an Apostle:
      - 1. They were selected by Jesus to be His messengers in sharing the Gospel. (Mk. 3:14; Lk. 6:13; Acts 1:2, 24)
      - 2. They were able to perform the signs of an apostle, being authenticated by miraculous signs and wonders. (2 Cor. 12:12; Matt. 10:1-2; Acts 1:5-8; 2:43; 4:33; 5:12; Heb. 2:3-4)
      - 3. They had to have witnessed the resurrected Christ (Acts 1:21-25; 10:39-41; 1 Cor. 9:1; 15:7-8)
        - "Paul saw his apostleship as unique and extraordinary (1 Cor. 15:8-9); it was not a normative pattern for later generations of Christians to emulate. An honest assessment of modern claims to the office demonstrates conclusively that there are no apostles today and have not been in church history since the first century."<sup>6</sup>
  - B. Paul's message did not originate from man but God. (v.1b)
    - "The resurrection signifies that the new age has dawned, in which God will fulfill all his saving promises to Israel and to the entire world... The Galatians were turning the clock back in salvation history by submitting to circumcision and the Mosaic law. Since Jesus has been raised from the dead, believers are no longer under the Mosaic covenant. Once again Paul anticipates one of the central themes of the letter (the fulfillment of God's eschatological promises)."<sup>7</sup>
    - "The attack on Paul's authority, therefore, was an attack on the gospel. In reply, Paul lifts his voice with passion, not simply to defend his apostolic calling but to preach the gospel again to his beloved Galatian converts. Liberation from legalism lies in seeing God's grace not only as completely sufficient for salvation, but also as the wellspring for every facet of life."<sup>8</sup>
- II. Paul recognizes his audience (v.2)
  - A. Paul's audience was not one church but several churches in southern Galatia.
  - B. Paul does not greet these churches in his customary fashion.
    - "The mention of these churches is brief and impersonal, and there is an apparent lack of the amenities usually found in Paul's epistles. His resentment of their defection from the gospel of grace forced him to dispense with any commendation or personal remarks, and he simply gave a gospel greeting before he rebuked them."<sup>9</sup>
- III. Paul reveals his aim (v.3-5)
  - A. Salvation is based upon God's grace not works of the Law. (v.3)
    - a. Grace – *charis*
      - 1. It means unmerited and undeserved favor.
      - 2. We have been saved because of God's favor.
      - 3. Because of grace, believers now have peace with God (judicially and experientially).
    - b. Peace - *eirēnē*
      - 1. To be in a state of harmony and well-being.

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<sup>6</sup> John MacArthur and Richard Mayhue, eds., *Biblical Doctrine: A Systematic Summary of Bible Truth* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2017), 756.

<sup>7</sup> Thomas R. Schreiner, *Galatians, Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2010), 75.

<sup>8</sup> Daniel Bush and Noel Due, *Live in Liberty: The Spiritual Message of Galatians* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2015), 4.

<sup>9</sup> John F. MacArthur, *Galatians, MacArthur New Testament Commentary* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1983), 5.

- “With the offer of salvation, each individual faces life or death. A person may choose to be rightly related to God or to face eternal judgment. Jesus gives opportunity to receive life, forgiveness, peace with God, and the presence of His Spirit. His death and resurrection have shown that He died for others and is ruling at God’s right hand, ready to distribute salvific benefits to those who come to Him.”<sup>10</sup>

2. To be at spiritual peace regardless of one’s circumstances.

- “In the Bible, peace means far more than the absence of conflict or trouble. In fact, peace (*eirēnē/shalom*) is often ours in the midst of conflict and trouble. The peace God gives is independent of outward circumstances.”<sup>11</sup>

B. Salvation results in Christ delivering believers from a world doomed to destruction. (v.4a)

- “Although they are not removed from the earth until they die or are raptured, believers are rescued out of this present evil age the moment they receive Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. They are still in the world, but they are no longer of it (John 17:11, 14–18; Phil. 3:20–21; 1 John 5:5). The faithful Christian life is the heavenly life lived on earth.”<sup>12</sup>

C. Salvation is according to God’s will. (v.4b)



- “God’s [decretive] will is his perfect determination and sovereign ordination of all things, pertaining both to himself (including his decrees and actions) and to his creation (including the events of history and the thoughts and actions of people), all unto the magnification of his utmost glory.”<sup>13</sup>

D. The plan of Salvation brings God glory. (v.5)

- “Paul reminds us in Galatians that God’s saving work brings glory and praise and honor to God. As believers we need to be Christ-centered, God-focused, and Spirit-filled... We were made as human beings to enjoy and find awe in greatness, and nothing fills our hearts more than God himself. He is to be the sun, the moon, and the stars in our lives. May his praise fill our lives and spill over to others.”<sup>14</sup>

Point to Ponder:

No one can be good enough to merit salvation. Faith alone in Christ alone is the only way to have your sins forgiven. This is why Paul preached the exclusive message of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

<sup>10</sup> Roy B. Zuck, *A Biblical Theology of the New Testament*, (Chicago: Moody Press, 1994), 137–38.

<sup>11</sup> Maxie D. Dunnam and Lloyd J. Ogilvie, Galatians / Ephesians / Philippians / Colossians / Philemon, vol. 31, *The Preacher’s Commentary Series* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Inc, 1982), 20.

<sup>12</sup> MacArthur, Galatians, 6.

<sup>13</sup> MacArthur and Mayhue, *Biblical Doctrine*, 185.

<sup>14</sup> Schreiner, Galatians, 81.

Don't Give Up On the Gospel  
Gal. 1:6-10

- I. The problem (v.6)
- A. Paul is shocked that Christians were readily abandoning Christ [2 Pet. 1:12–15].
- “The Galatians had been privileged to be taught by the greatest teacher the church has ever known apart from the Lord Himself; yet they readily rejected the truths of grace they had learned from him. There is still a great and urgent need for preaching and teaching that continually repeats the central truths of the gospel.”<sup>15</sup>
- B. Their act of desertion was willful.
- “The Galatians were a very fickle people. They seem very soon to have left the gospel, to have adulterated it, and to have fallen into Ritualism, into Sacramentarianism, into salvation by works, and all the errors into which people usually fall when they go away from the gospel.”<sup>16</sup>
  - “To desert the Gospel is to desert God Himself, for God is one with the Gospel...If you are to have God, you will only have Him through His saving Gospel.”<sup>17</sup>
  - “The most destructive dangers to the church have never been atheism, pagan religions, or cults that openly deny Scripture, but rather supposedly Christian movements that accept so much biblical truth that their unscriptural doctrines seem relatively insignificant and harmless. But a single drop of poison in a large container can make all the water lethal. And a single false idea that in any way undercuts God’s grace poisons the whole system of belief. Paul would not tolerate a single drop of legalism being intermixed with God’s pure grace.”<sup>18</sup>
- II. The people (v.7-8)
- A. The people were not to consider any other gospel message [John 14:6; 1 John 5:11-12].
- B. Any agent (person or angel) that teaches a false Gospel is to be accursed.
- “[Paul] was reaching for the most fanciful possibilities imaginable to make his point that absolutely no messenger, no matter how seemingly godly and good, should be believed or followed if his teaching does not square with God-revealed apostolic doctrine. The truth outranks anyone’s credentials, and every teacher or preacher must be evaluated on the basis of what he says, not who he is.”<sup>19</sup>
- III. The penalty (v.9)
- A. Those who pervert the Gospel will face judgment.
- “Therefore, anyone who evangelizes in Galatia must proclaim the same gospel taught by Paul. If they teach a gospel contrary to Paul’s, they will face an eschatological curse. By repeating the threat of God’s curse in v. 9, the gravity of the offense of those who proclaim another gospel is underlined.”<sup>20</sup>
- B. Even Christians can be guilty of perverting the Gospel (Teaching or Actions). [Acts 5:1-3; Matt. 16:21-23]
- “The Judaizers who plagued the early church claimed to be Christians, and much of their doctrine was orthodox. They must have recognized Jesus as the promised Messiah and even acknowledged the value of His sacrificial death on the cross—otherwise they would never have gotten a hearing in the church. They claimed to believe all the truths that other Christians believed. They did not purport to overtly deny the gospel but to improve it by adding the requirements, ceremonies, and standards of the Old Covenant to the New. But anything added to grace destroys it just as surely as does anything taken from it.”<sup>21</sup>
  - “Since the second-century...it has been inferred that Paul’s opponents were overzealous Jewish Christians from Jerusalem. They advocated in Galatia the traditional Jewish proselyte model by requiring Gentile Christians to attach themselves to ethnic Israel. This identification was carefully confirmed by John Calvin and more casually assumed by Martin Luther. Since Calvin’s and Luther’s

<sup>15</sup> John F. MacArthur, Galatians, *MacArthur New Testament Commentary* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1983), 13.

<sup>16</sup> Charles Spurgeon, Galatians, ed. Elliot Ritzema, *Spurgeon Commentary Series* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2013), Ga 1:6.

<sup>17</sup> Steve Lawson, “Only One Way” Gal. 1:6-10. <https://www.sermonaudio.com/saplayer/playpopup.asp?SID=10300982301>.

<sup>18</sup> MacArthur, *MNTC*, 14.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, 16.

<sup>20</sup> Thomas R. Schreiner, Galatians, *Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2010), 88.

<sup>21</sup> MacArthur, *MNTC*, 13-14.

day the majority of Protestant scholars have identified Paul's opponents in some way with the Jewish Christians from Jerusalem."<sup>22</sup>

- a. How to confront a Christian holding or teaching false doctrine. [2 Tim. 2:24-28]
  - "The purpose [in confronting believer's caught in Satan's trap] must always be to edify Christ's body... Thus when brethren fall into false teaching they must be treated with gentleness and Christian love in the hope that they will come to their senses and escape from the trap of the devil (cf. Gal. 5:1; 1 Tim. 3:7; 6:9) who has taken them captive to do his will. False teaching and all its negative consequences in the church are always the handiwork of Satan, but God in His grace often salvages the situation through the Christ-like ministry of His servants."<sup>23</sup>
- b. Penalties for the persistent sinning Christian:
  1. Temporal Punishment- God's punishment for the believer is always corrective rather than punitive.
  2. Excommunication- Being band from the fellowship of the local church may become necessary. (1 Cor. 5; Matt. 18:17)
  3. Physical illness or death- in some cases God allows physical infirmities or death to be a form of punishment. (1 Cor. 11:30; 1 John 5:16)
    - "It is clear then that Paul is not calling for the condemnation of his opponents (that is, the Judaizers) because they are opposed to him, but rather because they are enemies of the gospel. That gospel is of divine origin, not of Paul's invention (Gal 1:11-12). Therefore, those who pervert it subvert God's redemptive purpose. On those who thus act and teach, the judgment of God is justly pronounced. Thus there is here no real conflict between Paul's general call for a nonjudgmental spirit and his strong word of judgment here, just as there is no real conflict between Jesus' teaching on love for one's opponents and his words of judgment. In both cases, where the work and truth of God is at stake, those who reject it stand under judgment."<sup>24</sup>
    - "In only two instances does the New Testament pronounce a curse on Christians for failure to do something. One is not loving the Lord (1 Cor. 16:22), and the other is preaching a gospel other than the Gospel of grace of God (Gal. 1:6-9). Not comprehending clearly the doctrine of salvation can lead to proclaiming a false or perverted Gospel, and many statements of the Gospel one hears today may well come under this curse. Yet the grace of God overpowers our unclear presentations, and people are saved in spite of, though not as a result of, an unclear or misstated Gospel."<sup>25</sup>

#### IV. The purpose (v.10)

- A. Paul's mission was to preach truth not please men.
  - "He could have pleased the Jews by preaching law observance, and the pagans by making the death of Christ a mere sacrificial transaction that placed no obligation upon the follower. But from the moment he became a Christian Paul knew nothing else but Jesus crucified. This freed him from the law, but it called him to be crucified with Christ. The only way to prove he was pleasing to God rather than men was to keep the scandal of the Cross at the heart of his preaching and take the consequences of the Cross to the heart of his living."<sup>26</sup>
  - "The Gospel will always be the fork in the road. Will you please God or men. To many men become men pleasers and ear ticklers. But God pleasers are men who teach the truth of God."<sup>27</sup>

#### Point to Ponder:

Each Christian has a choice to make in sharing the Gospel. Be bold in sharing your faith and be accurate in sharing the message of the Gospel.

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<sup>22</sup> Walter B. Russell, "Who Were Paul's Opponents in Galatia?" *BSAC* 147:587 (Jul 1990), 330.

<sup>23</sup> A. Duane Litfin, "2 Timothy," in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, ed. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, vol. 2 (Wheaton: Victor Books, 1985), 755-56.

<sup>24</sup> Walter C. Kaiser Jr. et al., *Hard Sayings of the Bible* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1996), 632.

<sup>25</sup> Charles C. Ryrie, *Basic Theology* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1999), 320.

<sup>26</sup> Maxie D. Dunnam and Lloyd J. Ogilvie, Galatians / Ephesians / Philippians / Colossians / Philemon, vol. 31, *The Preacher's Commentary Series* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Inc, 1982), 22-23.

<sup>27</sup> Lawson, Gal. 1:6-10, <https://www.sermonaudio.com/saplayer/playpopup.asp?SID=10300982301>.

Paul Defends His Ministry  
(Gal. 1:11-24)

- I. Paul's message (v.11-12)
- A. Paul's gospel message did not originate from man (v.11)
- "Had Paul proclaimed a gospel that was according to man, it would have been permeated by works righteousness, as is every humanly devised system of religion. Man's sinful pride is offended by the idea that only God's mercy and grace can save him from sin, and he therefore insists on having a part in his own salvation. The very fact that Paul preached a message of salvation in which works play absolutely no part was itself evidence that his message was from God and not ... man."<sup>28</sup>
- B. Paul's gospel came directly from Jesus Christ (v.12)
- "It may be said that the Lord from heaven communed with him as He on earth in the days of His flesh communed with other apostles. It was at this time that the Son of God was revealed in him, whereas on the road to Damascus the Son of God had been revealed to him."<sup>29</sup>
  - "Paul had been taught directly by Christ, the highest authority. The gospel of grace that Paul preached is true because it came directly from God."<sup>30</sup>
- II. Paul's mission (v.13-17)
- A. Paul defended the gospel based on his own testimony.
- a. Before salvation Paul was a Pharisee and sought to destroy the church [Phil. 3:4-7] (v.13-14)
- "His preconversion knowledge of the gospel, veiled and distorted as it was, made him realize that this radical way of salvation allowed no place for works righteousness and therefore completely undercut legalistic Judaism. Conversely, legalistic Judaism allowed no place for a gospel of grace and therefore sought to destroy those who believed and taught it."<sup>31</sup>
- b. At salvation, Jesus opened Paul's heart to the truth of the Gospel [Acts 9:3-20; 16:13-14]. (v.15-16)
- "Paul did not initiate the choice to be saved, much less the choice to be an apostle. He was "called as an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God" (1 Cor. 1:1). The phrase when He who had set me apart refers to the elective purpose of God before Paul was even able to consider a choice. No person is saved or called to leadership in the church except by such sovereign and predetermined divine will. "He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace, which He freely bestowed on us in the Beloved" (Eph. 1:5-6; cf. v. 9)."<sup>32</sup>
  - 1. How a person is saved:
    - One's understanding (of the gospel) is opened by God through the gospel (Acts 16:14, Rom. 10:17).
    - One believes or trusts in the gospel (Acts 16:15; Acts 13:48; 2 Thes. 2:13-14; John 6:45).
    - It is not with "human faith" that one believes in Christ, but with that faith which comes through regeneration (Eph. 2:8; Phil. 1:29, John 3).
  - "No one, indeed, has any spiritual understanding without God's grace. Apart from grace we repress the truth of God (Rom. 1:18, 21, 23, 25). So, in Scripture when people believe in Christ, they do it because God appointed them to eternal life or because he opens their hearts, as with Lydia in Acts 16:14. We have seen that the gospel is a word of God that has power to save. That power works to make people believe, and it comes from God himself (1 Cor. 2:4-5, 12-16; 1 Thess. 1:5; 2 Thess. 2:14)."<sup>33</sup>
    - Though accomplished at the cross, salvation is subjectively realized in time by those who have been regenerated or born again, through hearing and believing the gospel. [1 Cor. 1:30]

<sup>28</sup> John MacArthur, Galatians, *MacArthur New Testament Commentary* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1983), 23.

<sup>29</sup> Morris V. Klock, "Ten Appearances To Paul," *CENQ* 18:1 (Spring 1975), 26.

<sup>30</sup> Max Anders, Galatians-Colossians, vol. 8, *Holman New Testament Commentary* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1999), 7-8.

<sup>31</sup> MacArthur, *Commentary*, 26.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, 26.

<sup>33</sup> John M. Frame, *Salvation Belongs to the Lord: An Introduction to Systematic Theology* (Phillipsburg: P&R Publishing, 2006), 192.

- c. After his salvation, Paul went to the deserts of Arabia to be personally trained by Christ. (v.17)
  - “In the solitudes of Arabia, Paul studied the Old Testament, communed with God, and obtained insight into the deep things of God; his testimony was therefore fresh from heaven. More of God and less of man is what we all need.”<sup>34</sup>
  - “The revelation that Paul received unfolded many mysteries concerning Christ- His Person, His ministry on earth, His present intercessory ministry in heaven, the mystery of the church as the bride of Christ, His return, His future kingdom, and so forth. Being the thinker that he was, Paul must have learned why salvation was of the Lord, why man could not establish his own righteousness, why all the Jews were lost even though they were the chosen people of God, why Christ is the only way to the Father, and why Christ’s death was necessary for Jew and Gentile alike. While in Arabia his knowledge of Christ was broadened and his desire to return to civilization to preach Christ was heightened.”<sup>35</sup>
  - When this occurred: “The account in Acts [Acts 9] is incomplete, omitting any mention of Paul traveling to Arabia. Galatians fills out the historical record by informing us that Paul, after spending some time in Damascus, traveled to Arabia, and then returned later to Damascus. Acts telescopes the entire period by restricting itself only to what occurred in Damascus (9:19–25).”<sup>36</sup>

### III. Paul’s meetings (v.18-24)

- A. Paul met with Peter and James to develop insight into Jesus’ life and ministry. He did not seek their endorsement or approval (v.18-20)
  - “Paul’s point in this part of the letter was to affirm that he had received his gospel directly from the Lord, not from the other apostles. He only visited two of them for two weeks, and only after three years had elapsed since his conversion. Any accusation that he was a second-hand apostle, receiving his message from the Jerusalem apostles, was false.”<sup>37</sup>
- B. Paul’s works proved his ministry since he did not have any contact with the Judean churches. (v.21-24)
  - a. Paul’s Authority as an Apostle:
    1. The Apostles and churches glorified God because of what happened to Paul.
    2. The Apostles recognized Paul as an equal apostle, not a fraud. (Gal. 2:9)
    3. Peter equated Paul’s letters with Scripture. (2 Pet. 3:15-16)
      - “Paul’s remarkable conversion and independent course made him very decided in his teaching. The more certainly grace works in us, the more attached shall we be to the gospel of grace, and the more opposed shall we be to all those errors which rob God of His glory.”<sup>38</sup>

#### Points to Ponder:

1. Paul’s gospel is Christ’s gospel. This is the anchor by which all other biblical teaching finds its fulfillment.
2. Never change the purity (offensiveness) of the gospel in order to please men. Men do not need to be told about a wonderful plan for their lives, they need salvation from their sins and deliverance from the wrath of God, which is to come [Acts 17:30-31]. “The angles and corners of the gospel are its strength; to pare them off is to deprive it of power. Toning down is not the increase of strength, but the death of it. Learn, then, that if you take Christ out of Christianity, Christianity is dead. If you remove grace out of the gospel, the gospel is gone. If the people do not like the doctrine of grace, give them all the more of it.”<sup>39</sup>

<sup>34</sup> Charles Spurgeon, Galatians, ed. Elliot Ritzema, *Spurgeon Commentary Series* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2013), Ga 1:17.

<sup>35</sup> Robert T. Boyd, *Paul the Apostle* (Iowa Falls: World Bible Publishers, 1995), 71-72.

<sup>36</sup> Thomas R. Schreiner, Galatians, *Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2010), 102.

<sup>37</sup> MacArthur, *Commentary*, 31.

<sup>38</sup> Spurgeon, Galatians, Ga 1:23.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

Paul's Continued Defense  
(Gal. 2:1-10)

- I. Paul did not change his message (v.1-5)
- A. Paul's methods were purposed.
- a. He preached the Gospel.
  - b. Paul met the needs of poor Christians.
    - "Paul went to Jerusalem on his second visit in response to a revelation. That is, he went because God directed him to, not because the Jerusalem leaders had summoned him or called him "on the carpet" for preaching to the Gentiles. The reference may well be to Agabus' prophecy of a famine which prompted Paul and Barnabas to go to Jerusalem on a relief mission (cf. Acts 11:27–30). Paul seized this opportunity to consult with the other apostles privately concerning the message he was preaching to the Gentiles."<sup>40</sup>
- B. Paul's message was purposed.
- a. Paul did not place the Gentiles under the Mosaic Law.
    - "Titus, a true Christian, was living and incontrovertible proof that circumcision and Mosaic regulations are not necessary for salvation. The Jerusalem Council refused to accede to the demands of the Judaizers to have Titus and all other Gentile believers circumcised, determining that they would "not trouble those who are turning to God from among the Gentiles" by compelling them to be circumcised...Henceforth Titus was a living verification that the Judaizers taught a spurious gospel that was rejected by the rest of the church."<sup>41</sup>
- II. Paul did not change his mission (v.6-10)
- A. Paul's mission was to the Gentiles (v.6-8)
- "His [Paul's] point here was that, although those twelve men were personally appointed apostles by Jesus Christ, so was he. He did not need their approval for his own confidence, nor did he need to seek their confirmation to convince himself, and in that regard who or what they were made no difference to him and his ministry. He had no doubts about his calling and revelations."<sup>42</sup>
  - "The leaders of the Jerusalem church...ratified the Pauline gospel. Paul insisted that he did not need their ratification, for his gospel stood apart from the view of the Jerusalem leaders. Nevertheless, when hearing Paul's gospel, they validated it as true."<sup>43</sup>
- a. Paul's apostolic endorsement set the precedent between Law and Grace.
  - b. Purpose of the Law:
    1. The Law is a reflection of God's moral character and it reveals the sinfulness of man.
      - "The law...shows us our defections and stains. It is like the looking-glass which my lady holds up to her face, that she may see if there be any spot on it. But she cannot wash her face with the looking-glass. When the mirror has done its utmost, then there are the same stains. It cannot take away a single spot, it can only show where one is. And the law, though it reveals our sin, our shortcomings, our transgressions, it cannot remove the sin or the transgression. It is weak for that purpose, because it was never intended to accomplish such an end."<sup>44</sup>
    2. The law is useful for restraining man's sin. [1 Peter 2:13-15]

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<sup>40</sup> Donald K. Campbell, "Galatians," in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, ed. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, vol. 2 (Wheaton: Victor Books, 1985), 593.

<sup>41</sup> John MacArthur, Galatians, *MacArthur New Testament Commentary* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1983), 38.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, 40.

<sup>43</sup> Thomas R. Schreiner, Galatians, *Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2010), 114.

<sup>44</sup> Charles Haddon Spurgeon, *Exploring the Mind and Heart of the Prince of Preachers: Five-Thousand Illustrations Selected from the Works of Charles Haddon Spurgeon* (Oswego, IL: Fox River Press, 2005), 274."

- “The law, in and of itself, cannot change human hearts. It can, however, serve to protect the righteous from the unjust...The law allows for a limited measure of justice on this earth, until the last judgment is realized.”<sup>45</sup>
  - “God has placed civil government, even with its failures and even when it gets twisted in place, to restrain evil. It’s not going to be perfect, but we submit. It is God who has designed it. It keeps society safe.”<sup>46</sup>
3. The Law reveals what is pleasing to God. [John 14:21-23]
- B. Paul’s mandate was to continue with his ministry and remember the poor [Acts 11:28-30] .(v. 9-10)

Point to Ponder:

1. The Law was never meant to be a means of making man right before God. It was to demonstrate God’s holiness and to drive man to faith in Jesus Christ.

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<sup>45</sup> R. C. Sproul, *Essential Truths of the Christian Faith* (Wheaton: Tyndale House, 1992), 257.

<sup>46</sup> John MacArthur, How God Restrains Evil in the World, Accessed July 14, 2018. <https://www.gty.org/library/sermons-library/80-419/how-god-restrains-evil-in-the-world>.

Grace Triumphs Over Works  
(Gal. 2:11-21)

- I. Peter's Collapse (v.11-12)
- A. When confronted by the Jerusalem Jews, Peter began to withdraw from the Gentile Christians.
    - "In the Greek text the verbs "began to draw back" and "separate himself" are in the imperfect tense [continual past action], indicating that Peter's action may have happened gradually as, little by little, he reacted to the increasing pressures of the Jerusalem visitors until finally "he drew back and began to hold aloof."<sup>47</sup>
  - B. Peter was afraid of how he was being perceived by the men from Jerusalem.
    - "Peter had been in Antioch for some time prior to the coming of certain men from James, and during that time he used to eat with the Gentiles. The certain men were Judaizers who had come to Antioch claiming to be from James but were not... These men were of the party of the circumcision and not only taught a false gospel but also made false claims of support by the Jerusalem apostles and elders. Like Peter, James at times had difficulty giving up his lifelong adherence to the Mosaic rituals and regulations... But he would hardly have sent a delegation of heretics to Antioch to undermine the true gospel and cause the church there nothing but trouble."<sup>48</sup>
  - C. The Jerusalem church had already decided the Law issue. (Acts 15:6-20)
    - a. Jerusalem Council's Prohibitions:
      1. Abstain from idolatry (meat offered in pagan sacrifices). (Lev. 19)
      2. Abstain from sexual immorality (associated with temple prostitutes and paganism) (Lev. 18)
      3. Abstain from eating what is strangled and from eating blood or kosher laws. (Lev. 17)
    - "James was not in favor of making it difficult for the Gentiles by imposing the requirements of Jewish proselytes on them. But to help gentile converts not put a stumbling block in the path of Jews, he recommended that Christian teachers encourage their disciples to be careful to avoid things associated with idolatry and all kinds of sexual aberrations. If gentile Christians disregarded the convictions of Jews, they would only alienate those they hoped to bring to faith in Jesus Christ or to growth in Christ."<sup>49</sup>
- II. Peter's Corruption (v.13)
- A. Peter and the other Jewish Christians separated from the Gentiles.
    - "All of them—Peter, the other Jewish Christians, and Barnabas—were guilty of hypocrisy because while confessing and teaching that they were one in Christ with Gentiles, they were denying this truth by their conduct."<sup>50</sup>
      - a. Fear prompted Jewish Christian response. [Prov. 29:25; Deut. 1:17]
    - "Humans are the only beings on planet Earth that have a built-in longing for approval... The Bible has a name for this need for approval: the fear of man. In the Bible, the word fear means more than fright; it's any kind of awe and reverence that causes us to subject ourselves to something or someone else."<sup>51</sup>
- III. Paul's Charge (v.14)
- A. Paul immediately and publicly addressed Peter's sin.
    - "When Peter sided with the Judaizing party and seemed to favor those who demanded that the Gentiles should be circumcised, our brave apostle withstood him to his face. He fought always for salvation by

<sup>47</sup> Timothy George, Galatians, vol. 30, *The New American Commentary* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1994), 176.

<sup>48</sup> John MacArthur, Galatians, *MacArthur New Testament Commentary* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1983), 49-50.

<sup>49</sup> Mark Bailey et al., *Nelson's New Testament Survey: Discover the Background, Theology and Meaning of Every Book in the New Testament* (Nashville: Word, 1999), 227.

<sup>50</sup> Donald K. Campbell, "Galatians," in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, ed. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, vol. 2 (Wheaton: Victor Books, 1985), 595.

<sup>51</sup> David Jeremiah, Overcome the Fear of Rejection. Accessed on July 21, 2018. <https://www.lifeway.com/en/articles/overcome-the-fear-of-rejection>

grace through faith and contended strenuously against all thought of righteousness by obedience to the precepts of the ceremonial or the moral law. No one could be more explicit than he was upon the doctrine that we are not justified or saved by works in any degree, but solely by the grace of God.”<sup>52</sup>

#### IV. Paul’s Correction (v.15-18)

- A. Paul presented a proof by contradiction argument to Peter and the Jews.
  - “Paul said that to go back on this fundamental commitment would be, in effect, to build back the old structures of repression and slavery, structures that have been once and for all shattered by Christ’s death on the cross and the pouring out of his Spirit upon his people. To yield on this point would be like trying to put the plan of salvation into reverse! The very thought was no less blasphemous than imagining Christ as the agent of sin. May it never be! God forbid!”<sup>53</sup>
  - “If the Judaizers were right, Paul pointed out, Jesus was wrong; if they taught the truth, He had taught falsehood and was thereby a minister of sin! Such an accusation must have shaken Peter to his bones. To be called a hypocrite stung enough, but to be called a sinner was unthinkable, and to be accused of making Jesus a minister of sin was shocking and repulsive. Yet the logic of Paul’s argument was inescapable. By his actions, Peter had in effect condemned Jesus Christ. He therefore had to forsake his Judaistic sympathies or continue to make His Lord a liar.”<sup>54</sup>

#### V. Paul’s Confession (v.19-21)

- A. Paul declares that spiritually and positionally, the Law no longer has any legal claim over him.
  - “Paul is referring to the fact that when a person exercises faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, he is placed in transcendent spiritual union with Christ in the historical event of His death and resurrection, in which the penalty of sin was paid in full.”<sup>55</sup>
- B. When Christ died and was raised, Paul died and was raised. [Rom. 6:3-14; Col. 2:12-13]

#### VI. Lessons we can learn:

- A. Spiritual leaders can fall into sin. Always be on guard.
- B. Having the right doctrine without the right practice produces hypocrisy.
- C. Truth is more important than outward harmony. Unity at the expense of the truth produces weak churches, immature Christians, and an open door for false doctrine.
- D. God’s Word is to be the objective standard for church governance, never the opinions of man.
- E. False doctrines that strike at the heart of the Gospel must immediately be addressed by Church leadership.

#### Point to Ponder:

Like Paul, Christians are under the law of Christ. The basis for our actions is our love of God and our desire to please Him. We demonstrate this love through service and ministry to each other, and evangelism to the world.

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<sup>52</sup> Charles Spurgeon, Galatians, ed. Elliot Ritzema, *Spurgeon Commentary Series* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2013), Ga 2:14.

<sup>53</sup> George, *Galatians*, 197.

<sup>54</sup> MacArthur, *Galatians*, 58.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, 59.

Running the Wrong Way  
(Gal. 3:1-5)

- I. Paul Questions Their Confusion (v.1)
- A. The Galatian Christians had been led astray from the truth of the Gospel.
- “While the Galatians were foolish to have fallen for such teaching, Paul acknowledges that those who taught such heresy were indeed cunning characters. They had, so to speak, cast an evil spell on the Galatians. Their teaching had the effect of mentally disarming the saints so as to convince them of doctrine which should have been seen as false.”<sup>56</sup>
  - “They were willing victims who succumbed to the flesh-pleasing works righteousness of the Judaizers. They had been convinced that faith was not enough, that something was lacking that could be fulfilled by returning to the ceremonies and requirements of the Old Covenant.”<sup>57</sup>
- B. The Galatian Christians had been given the full revelation of Gospel, making them without excuse. (Acts 13:44-49)
- “Paul’s preaching of Jesus Christ and the Galatians’ acceptance of Him by faith was all done publicly. The believers there were witnesses to each other’s salvation by faith in Him alone. But by turning to legalism they were denying the absolute saving power of Christ and the cross by which He had paid the penalty for their sins and bought their salvation.”<sup>58</sup>
- II. Paul Questions Their Conversion (v.2)
- A. Paul inquiries about the origin of their salvation.
- “This rhetorical question pointed to the time of their conversions, when they received the Holy Spirit. Thus Paul did not question their salvation but challenged them to consider whether they were saved and received the Spirit by faith or on the basis of works.”<sup>59</sup>
- a. The Process of Salvation:
1. The Spirit causes one to be born again (John 3)
    - 1) One hears the gospel message. (Rom 10:17; 1 Cor. 15:3-4)
    - 2) The Spirit “quickens” the person. (Ezk. 36:25-27; Acts 13:48)
    - 3) The hearer then exercises faith and believes. (Acts 13:48,16:14; Phil. 1:29)
  2. The Holy Spirit indwells all believers (Rom. 5:5; 1 Cor.2:12 )
  3. The Holy Spirit’s presence is a permanent indwelling (John 14:16; Rom. 8:9)
- “The Spirit cannot leave a believer without throwing that believer back into a lost, unsaved condition. Disindwelling has to mean loss of salvation, and loss of salvation must include disindwelling. The security of the believer and the permanent indwelling of the Spirit are inseparable doctrines.”<sup>60</sup>
- b. Distinctions to note (Filling vs. Indwelling):
1. Unlike the filling of the Holy Spirit (Eph. 5:18), which may come and go in the lives of believers based upon one’s being yielded to the Spirit, the indwelling of the Holy Spirit remains unconditionally permanent.
    - 1) O.T. example: King Saul- His regeneration and subsequent filling are recorded in (1 Samuel 10:1-10). The filling of the Spirit departs in (1 Samuel 16:14) but not the indwelling.

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<sup>56</sup> Robert L. Deffinbaugh, *The Cost of Changing Course* (Galatians 3:1-9), Accessed on August 3, 2018. <https://bible.org/seriespage/6-peter-s-capitulation-and-paul-s-correction-galatians-211-21>

<sup>57</sup> John MacArthur, *Galatians, MacArthur New Testament Commentary* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1983), 64.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, 65.

<sup>59</sup> Donald K. Campbell, “Galatians,” in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, ed. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, vol. 2 (Wheaton: Victor Books, 1985), 597.

<sup>60</sup> Charles Caldwell Ryrie, *Basic Theology: A Popular Systematic Guide to Understanding Biblical Truth* (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1999), 356.

2) N.T. example: The disciples, who were already saved, were filled with the H.S. on the day of Pentecost. (Acts 2:1-4)

2. Filling vs. Indwelling:

<b>What is the difference between the Spirit's indwelling and filling?</b>	
<b><u>Indwelling</u></b>	<b><u>Filling</u></b>
• Occurs only once	• It is a repeated experience
• Results in position	• Results in power
• Cannot be undone	• Can be lost (fleshly living)
• Occurs when we believe in Christ	• Occurs throughout the Christian life
• No prerequisite (except faith in Christ alone)	• Depends upon yieldedness to the Holy Spirit
• God does it alone	• God and the Christian do it

### III. Paul Questions Their Compromise (v.3-4)

A. The flesh cannot complete that which originates from the Holy Spirit. (v.3)

- "The validity of good works in God's sight depends on whose power they are done in and for whose glory. When they are done in the power of His Spirit and for His glory, they are beautiful and acceptable to Him. When they are done in the power of the flesh and for the sake of personal recognition...they are rejected by Him. Legalism is separated from true obedience by attitude. The one is a rotten smell in God's nostrils, whereas the other is a sweet savor."<sup>61</sup>

B. Christians will face persecution but if it is based upon wrong beliefs or actions it brings no enduring benefit. [Gal. 5:2-4] (v.4)

- "You had to struggle and endure much contention within your own spirit to get upon the ground of faith at all. Are you going to throw all that away? Is all the experience of your past life to go for nothing, and are you now going to begin on a lower...platform?"<sup>62</sup>

### IV. Paul Questions Their Conclusions (v.5)

A. God does not honor works of the flesh, He honors one's faith.

- "Paul's argument is itself powerful: If a person has received eternal salvation through trust in the crucified Christ, received the fullness of the Holy Spirit the same moment he believed, and has the Father's Spirit-endowed power working within him, how could he hope to enhance that out of his own insignificant human resources by some meritorious effort?"<sup>63</sup>
- The answers to all of Paul's questions are that works of the Law do not justify one in God's sight. Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of Christ.<sup>64</sup>

#### Points to Ponder:

1. Doctrine is important. However, any theology that advocates works that "you" must do to be right with God is wrong.
2. Faith must be personally appropriated (believed and accepted into practice) in order for one to be declared just by God (John 3:18, 8:24, 6:40).

<sup>61</sup> MacArthur, *Commentary*, 68.

<sup>62</sup> Charles Spurgeon, Galatians, ed. Elliot Ritzema, *Spurgeon Commentary Series* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2013), Ga 3:4.

<sup>63</sup> MacArthur, *Commentary*, 69.

<sup>64</sup> Steve Lawson, *You Foolish Galatians*. Accessed on August 4, 2018.

<https://www.sermonaudio.com/saplayer/playpopup.asp?SID=103009837491>

Proof of Justification by Faith Alone  
(Gal. 3:6-9)

I. The Patriarch (v.6-7)

A. Paul argues for justification by faith alone using Abraham. [Gen. 12:1-3, 15:1-17] (v.6-7)

a. God enters into a covenant with Abraham :

1. Land (Gen.12:1, 13:14-17)
2. Seed or descendants (Gen. 12:2,13:16,17:2-6)
3. Blessing and Redemption (Gen. 12:3,22:18)

b. God ratifies the Abrahamic covenant by blood (Gen. 15:1-18)

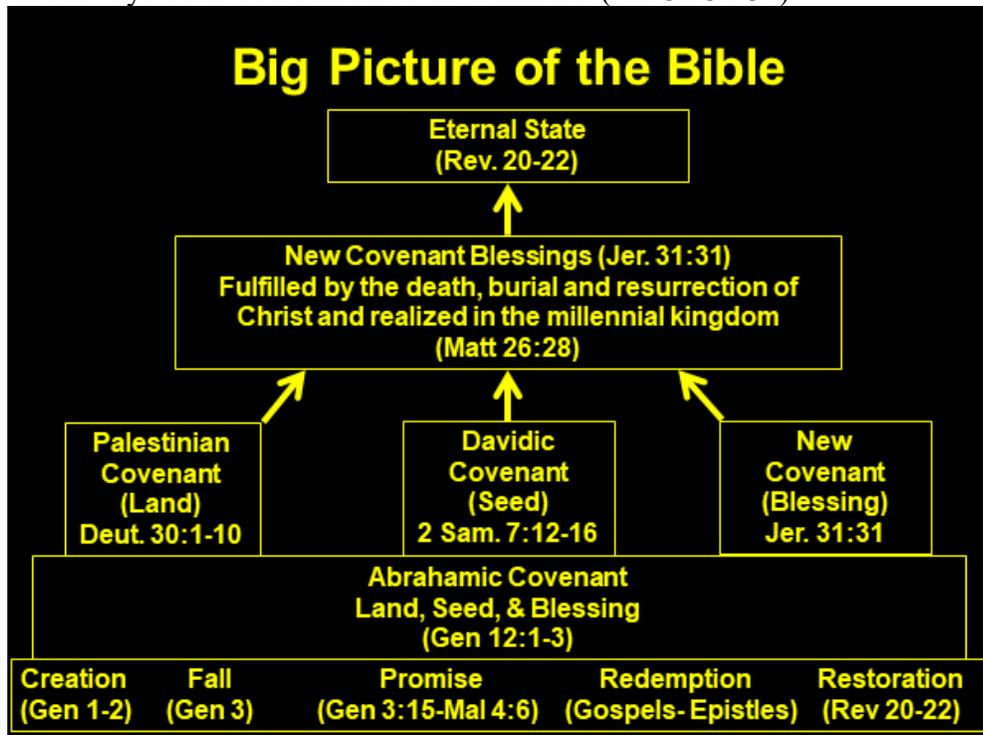
c. God gives a sign of the covenant (Gen. 17:9-12)

1. Circumcision – Sign of Abrahamic Covenant
2. Baptism- Sign of the New Covenant (Col. 2:11-12; Gal. 5:2-6 )

B. Abraham was deemed righteous or in right standing with God just before any works. (Rom. 4:9-11)

II. The Plan (v.8)

A. The Gospel had always been God’s intent to save sinners. (Jer. 31:31-34)



- “Salvation by works would not be good but bad news. All the nations, Jews and Gentiles alike, are justified and blessed for the same reason Abraham was justified and blessed: their faith.”<sup>65</sup>

III. The Point (v.9)

A. Those who believe (trust) in Christ are of Abraham, not those who advocate works. [Rom. 4:1-8]

- “Just as the believing Abraham was accounted righteous, so believing men, who are the spiritual seed of Abraham, are also accounted righteous.”<sup>66</sup>

Points to Ponder:

<sup>65</sup> John MacArthur, Galatians, *MacArthur New Testament Commentary* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1983), 75.

<sup>66</sup> Charles Spurgeon, Galatians, ed. Elliot Ritzema, *Spurgeon Commentary Series* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2013), Ga 3:9.

1. The purity and simplicity of the Gospel needs to be protected and proclaimed. It is the only means of salvation.
2. Man must share in Abraham's faith in order to receive God's righteousness. The object of this faith is the Lord Jesus Christ.

Why the Law Cannot Save  
(Gal. 3:10-14)

- I. It requires perfect obedience (v.10)
- A. Any violation of one Law, makes one guilty of violating the whole Law. [James 2:10-11; Mk. 10:17-23].
- No one can be justified by the Law. “In other words, the fact that those who trust in the works of the Law are obligated to keep all things in the law, without exception, places them inevitably under a curse, because no one had the ability to abide by everything the divine and perfect law of God demands.”<sup>67</sup>
  - “A misguided zeal led some [religious Jews] to trust in external observances alone for salvation. Others [common folks] probably looked to such practices as the means of acquiring merit without a clear understanding of its purpose.”<sup>68</sup>
  - “God’s written law itself marks the danger of trying to live up to its standard, which is perfection. If you are relying on works of the law as your means of salvation, then you have to live by them perfectly.”<sup>69</sup>
- II. It lacks the element of faith (v.11-12)
- A. Justification requires faith not human works or effort. [Phil. 3:4-6]
- “Paul explains further why no one can be righteous by the law. Righteousness is not by the law, for the law requires perfect obedience and human performance. Faith, however, looks to what God has done in Christ for salvation, relying on God’s work rather than one’s own.”<sup>70</sup>
  - “So that the justified man is not justified by the law, but by faith. He stands before God not in what he does, not even in what the Spirit enables him to do. His own prayers and tears and communings with Christ, his own labors, his earnest and indefatigable attempts to extend the kingdom of Christ—all tell for nothing in the matter of his justification. He hangs them all upon the cross of Christ and relies only upon the cross, looking in no manner whatever to anything that comes of himself.”<sup>71</sup>
- III. It omits God’s redemption (v. 13-14)
- A. Those that trust in Law keeping reject God’s redemption in Jesus Christ.
- “Christ justifies those who believe in Him by buying them back from their slavery to sin. The price He paid was the only one high enough to redeem all of mankind, the “precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, the blood of Christ.”<sup>72</sup>
- B. Christ redeems through the atonement on the cross.
- a. Jesus offering Himself. (Mk. 10:45)
- “*Anti* always has the idea of equivalence, exchange, or substitution. It never has the broader idea of ‘for the sake of’ or ‘on behalf of’.”<sup>73</sup>
- b. Jesus purchasing the believer. (1 Cor. 6:20; Rev. 5:9; Gal. 3:13, 4:5; Acts 20:28; 1 Pet. 1:18-19)
- “What does redemption mean? It does not mean redeemability, that we are placed in a redeemable position. It means that Christ purchased and procured redemption.” He makes us His own by the purchase of His own blood.<sup>74</sup>
1. Our Redemption Summarized:
- ~ People are redeemed from something; namely, from the marketplace or slave market of sin.

<sup>67</sup> John MacArthur, Galatians, *MacArthur New Testament Commentary* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1983), 77.

<sup>68</sup> J. Julius Scott Jr., *Jewish Backgrounds of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1995), 277.

<sup>69</sup> MacArthur, *Commentary*, 77.

<sup>70</sup> Thomas R. Schreiner, Galatians, *Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2010), 210.

<sup>71</sup> Charles Spurgeon, Galatians, ed. Elliot Ritzema, *Spurgeon Commentary Series* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2013), Ga 3:12.

<sup>72</sup> MacArthur, *Commentary*, 78.

<sup>73</sup> Charles C. Ryrie, *Basic Theology* (Chicago, Ill.: Moody Press, 1999), 333.

<sup>74</sup> John Murray, *Redemption: Accomplished and Applied* (Grand Rapids: Eedrmans Publishing, 1955), 63.

- ~ People are redeemed by something; namely, by the payment of a price, the blood of Christ shed for us on the cross.
  - ~ People are redeemed to something; namely, to a state of freedom; and then are called to renounce that freedom for slavery to the Lord, who redeemed them.
- c. Jesus turning away God's wrath.
1. Propitiation- Propitiation means the turning away of wrath by an offering. In relation to soteriology (salvation), propitiation means satisfying the wrath of God by the atoning sacrifice of Christ. Christ is the offering by which his blood is the acceptable sacrifice for sin. Thus, God is satisfied by Christ's payment for all of the believer's sins, past, present and future. (1 John 4:10, 1 John 2:2)
    - "The cross had this propitiatory (satisfying) effect because in his suffering Christ assumed our identity, as it were, and endured the retributive judgment due to us ('the curse of the law,' Gal. 3:13) as our substitute, in our place, with the damning record of our transgressions nailed by God to his cross as the tally of crimes for which he was now dying."<sup>75</sup>

Point to Ponder:

- A. Belief or trust in God is the requirement for salvation. Mere assent to the truth claims about God or the gospel will not save anyone.
- a. Faith or believing involves 3 facets:
    1. Content (*notitia*)- knowledge or data concerning the Gospel truth of Christ.
    2. Belief (*assensus*)- A mental assent to the truth claims of the Gospel of Christ.
    3. Trust (*fiducia*)- An exercise of personal trust in the truth claims of the Gospel of Christ, which results in justification and a transformation of one's life.

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<sup>75</sup> J. I. Packer, *Concise Theology: A Guide to Historic Christian Beliefs* (Wheaton: Tyndale House, 1995), 135-36.  
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## Why the Law Cannot Save

### Part II

(Gal. 3:15-22)

#### I. It does not replace the Promise (v.15-18)

##### A. The Mosaic Law does not nullify the previous Abrahamic Covenant.

- “Paul declared that just as a properly executed Roman covenant (or will) cannot arbitrarily be set aside or changed (probably reference to ancient Gr. law), so the promises of God are immutable. Further, the promises...spoken to Abraham and to his seed were not fulfilled before the giving of the Law. Rather, they found fulfillment in Christ and are in effect forever. The blessing of justification by faith is therefore permanent and could not be changed by the Law. The stress on seed, not seeds, was made simply to remind the readers that the faithful in Israel had always recognized that blessing would ultimately come through a single individual, the Messiah, [Jesus Christ].”<sup>76</sup>
- “This covenant was bilateral [Israel and God], conditional, and nullifiable, being contingent on Israel’s obedience to God. Adherence to the Mosaic covenant was the means through which Israel could stay connected to the blessings of the Abrahamic covenant. Keeping the Mosaic covenant out of love to God would lead to spiritual and material prosperity, but disobedience would result in judgment, including removal from the land and dispersion throughout the nations (Deuteronomy 28–29).”<sup>77</sup>

##### B. The fulfillment is in a person not Israel as a people group.

- “Both the Greek term *sperma* (seed) and the corresponding Hebrew term (*zera* ‘) are like the English seed in that they can be either singular or plural. Apart from inspiration by the Holy Spirit, Paul could not have established such a crucial interpretation on the basis of grammar alone. Hebrew grammar, like Greek and English, allows, but does not necessitate, the singular.”<sup>78</sup>
- “The one and only heir of every promise of God is Christ. Every promise given in the covenant with Abraham was fulfilled in Jesus Christ and only Jesus Christ. Therefore the only way a person can participate in the promised blessings to Abraham is to be a fellow heir with Christ through faith in Him. Whether before or after Christ came to earth, salvation has always been provided only through the perfect offering of Christ on the cross.”<sup>79</sup>

##### C. The promise is grace based and not works based. [Gen. 12:1-3]

- “By definition, an inheritance is not earned but simply received, and to work for that which is already guaranteed is foolish and unnecessary. Trying to earn the inheritance God promises through faith in His Son is much worse than foolish. To add works of the law to faith in God’s promise is to “nullify the grace of God” and to cause Christ to have “died needlessly” (2:21).”<sup>80</sup>

#### II. It is an inferior covenant (v.19-20)

##### A. It drives men to despair.[ Rom. 7:7-10] (v.19a)

- “The Law is not the cause of the act of sin; the principle or nature of sin within an individual is. But the Law’s specific commandments stimulate the sin principle into acts that violate the commandments and give those acts the character of transgression . As Paul concluded, Apart

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<sup>76</sup> Donald K. Campbell, “Galatians,” in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, ed. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, vol. 2 (Wheaton: Victor Books, 1985), 598.

<sup>77</sup> John MacArthur and Richard Mayhue, eds., *Biblical Doctrine: A Systematic Summary of Bible Truth* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2017), 874.

<sup>78</sup> John F. MacArthur Jr., Galatians, *MacArthur New Testament Commentary* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1983), 84.

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*, 84.

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.*, 86.

from Law, sin is dead. This does not mean that sin has no existence without the Law, but that without the Law sin is less active, for the Law arouses “sinful passions.”<sup>81</sup>

- “The purpose of the law was to demonstrate to man his total sinfulness, his inability to please God by his own works, and his need for mercy and grace. The Law ... was added to show the depth of man’s transgressions against God. It was given to drive him to desperate guilt and the awareness of his need for the Deliverer.”<sup>82</sup>

B. It was mediated through substitutes. [Acts 7:52-53] (v.19b-20)

- “While God made promises to Abraham directly, the Law was established by a mediator. There were in fact two mediators, the angels representing God, and Moses representing the people....A mediator implies a covenant between two parties both of whom have responsibilities, facts true of the Mosaic Covenant. On the other hand God is One, that is, the “promise” (v. 19) was unilateral and was given to man directly without a mediator, God alone having responsibility for fulfilling it.”<sup>83</sup>
- “God gave the covenant directly to Abraham without a mediator because He was the only one involved in making the covenant. Abraham was a witness to the covenant and was a beneficiary, but he was not a party to it. Abraham had no part in establishing or keeping the covenant. That responsibility was God’s alone.”<sup>84</sup>

III. It is a pointer to something greater (v.21-22)

A. The Law was to point men to Christ.

B. The Scripture confirms man is a sinner by nature and by choice.

- a. Imputed Sin- Federal or Representative View- When Adam sinned; he acted as the representative of the human race. Thus, when he sinned, all sinned in Adam. [Rom. 5:12; Heb. 7:4-10]
  - “The reason is that Adam was acting as the covenantal representative of the human race. Adam was given a position of headship by God, so his sin affected all who would come after him. That’s why Paul said sin passed to every person through Adam...”<sup>85</sup>
- b. Inherited Sin- Inherited sin is the sinful state into which all people are born. We have a constant bent toward sin. It comes to every member of the human race through one’s father (Gen. 5:3).
- c. Personal Sins-
  1. A Personal sin is any thought or attitude, act or failure to act, that violates God’s standard of perfect holiness. (James 3:2; Rom.3:23)
  2. The penalty of the unbeliever’s sins prevents him from having fellowship (a personal relationship) with God. Personal sins are the outward expression of inherited and imputed sin.
  3. The Law was given to show man his utter need for forgiveness and redemption.
    - “The ultimate purpose of [the Law] shutting up men under sin and death was that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe.”<sup>86</sup>

Point to Ponder:

Man must be made aware of his sinfulness and need for salvation against the backdrop of the Law. This was and is the Law’s purpose. The Law drives man to grace and salvation in Jesus Christ.

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<sup>81</sup> John A. Witmer, “Romans,” in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, ed. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, vol. 2 (Wheaton: Victor Books, 1985), 466.

<sup>82</sup> MacArthur, *Commentary*, 86.

<sup>83</sup> Donald K. Campbell, “Galatians,” in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, ed. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, vol. 2 (Wheaton: Victor Books, 1985), 599.

<sup>84</sup> MacArthur, *Commentary*, 88.

<sup>85</sup> Tony Evans, *Theology You Can Count On* (Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2008), 710.

<sup>86</sup> MacArthur, *Commentary*, 89.

## Why the Law Cannot Save: A Tool for Training

### Part III

(Gal. 3:23-29)

- I. It was a revealer (v.23)
- A. The Law was a revealer of sin. [Rom. 1:18-21, 2:14-26] (v.23a)
- B. The Law ruled until the advent of Jesus Christ. [Phil. 3:8-9] (v.23b)
- “The word un[to] is from eis (εις), and is not temporal in its significance...but means here “with a view to.” That is, sinners were kept guarded under the law with a view to their exercising faith in Christ. The law shut them up to one avenue of escape, namely, faith in Christ, for during the 1500 years in which the law was in force, it was the means of convicting sinners of their sins and of causing them to look ahead in faith to the atonement God would someday offer which would pay for their sins.”<sup>87</sup>
- II. It was a tutor (v.24-26)
- A. The Law was a temporary trainer. (v.24)
- “Paul views those living under the Law as children in a state of immaturity, and he views the Law as a pedagogue, a child trainer or overseer whose responsibility it was to supervise every area of the life of the child committed to its care. It is because of this fact of immaturity that Israel needed the Law. Thus the Law was given...to a redeemed people who were in a state of spiritual infancy to meet their needs.”<sup>88</sup>
- a. The Law was a Pedagogue – A Child Trainer
1. A trusted household slave.
  2. Men would train boys, women would train girls.
  3. The trainer would start working with children at seven until they were young adults (14).
  4. The trainer oversaw every aspect of a child’s life.
  5. Trainers used heavy physical punishment to correct the child.
  6. The child was free but controlled by a slave.
  7. The Father would then formally adopt his son. “Adoption (Gk. huiothesia) means “to place as a son” (Eph. 1:5) and emphasizes the Roman ceremony of adoption of one’s own son into the status of adulthood with all its privileges.”<sup>89</sup>
- B. The Law (trainer) ceased upon a son’s maturation and adoption. (v.25-26)
- “At the Roman ceremony boys would take their toys...and offer them in a sacrifice to the gods as a symbol of putting childhood behind them. It was to that custom that Paul alludes in his comment, ‘When I became a man, I did away with childish things’ (1 Cor. 13:11).”<sup>90</sup>
  - “The law was in force for a certain period in salvation history and functioned like a babysitter. Now that the time of babysitting has concluded, believers are sons who have obtained the promise. Believers are not only sons but they “all” belong to the people of God...to include Gentiles who believe.”<sup>91</sup>
- III. It was a guide (v.27-29)
- A. To Jesus and a new life [1 Cor. 12:13] (v.27)

<sup>87</sup> Kenneth S. Wuest, *Wuest’s Word Studies from the Greek New Testament: For the English Reader*, vol. 3 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 109.

<sup>88</sup> J. Dwight Pentecost, *The Purpose of the Law*, *BSAC* 128:511 (Jul 1971), 229.

<sup>89</sup> Paul P. Enns, *The Moody Handbook of Theology* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1989), 106.

<sup>90</sup> John F. MacArthur Jr., *Galatians, MacArthur New Testament Commentary* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1983), 104.

<sup>91</sup> Thomas R. Schreiner, *Galatians, Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2010), 256.

- “[This] is a great mystery that the human mind cannot fathom. But in some spiritually supernatural way that transcends time and space, the person who places his trust in Jesus Christ is crucified, buried, and resurrected with his Savior, baptized into Christ.”<sup>92</sup>
- “The key thought behind...baptism in the New Testament is that of complete identification and unity with Christ.” Water baptism is an outward symbol of this inward reality.<sup>93</sup>

B. To a new position in Christ [Rev. 5:9-10] (v.28)

- “It is not, of course, that among Christians there is no such thing as a Jew, Gentile, slave, free person, man, or woman...Paul was speaking of spiritual differences—differences in standing before the Lord, spiritual value, privilege, and worthiness. Consequently, prejudice based on race, social status, sex, or any other such superficial and temporary differences has no place in the fellowship of Christ’s church. All believers, without exception, are all one in Christ Jesus.”<sup>94</sup>

C. To a better promise in Christ (v.29)

- “Any discussion of the seed of Abraham must first take into account his natural seed, the descendants of Jacob in the 12 tribes. Within this natural seed there is a believing remnant of Jews who will one day inherit the Abrahamic promises directed specifically to them. But there is also the spiritual seed of Abraham who are not Jews. These are the Gentiles who believe and become Abraham’s spiritual seed.”<sup>95</sup>

Points to Ponder:

1. The Gospel is only the “Good News” when it is understood against the backdrop of the Law.
2. The Law brings condemnation and death whereas the Gospel brings forgiveness of sin and life.
3. The Law requires perfect obedience and works. The Gospel requires faith alone in Christ.

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<sup>92</sup> MacArthur, *Commentary*, 98-99.

<sup>93</sup> Tony Evans, *Theology You Can Count On* (Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2008), 858.

<sup>94</sup> MacArthur, *Commentary*, 100.

<sup>95</sup> Donald K. Campbell, “Galatians,” in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, ed. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, vol. 2 (Wheaton: Victor Books, 1985), 600.

Not a Slave But A Son  
(Gal. 4:1-7)

I. What we were in the past (v.1-3)

A. Before adoption, one was no different than a slave. (v.1-2)

- “For all practical purposes, the child did not differ at all from a slave under whom he was being trained. Just as a slave had masters, so he had masters. But at the date set by the father, the child’s status changed radically...He was no longer a child or like a slave, but a responsible adult and citizen.”<sup>96</sup>

B. Before adoption, one was also held in the bondage of spiritual ignorance. (v.3)

- “All legal efforts to achieve salvation by human merit, both by the Mosaic Law or by the Gentile religions, were simply the results of bondage. One might ask how bondage to the Law can be bad, when it was God who gave Israel the Law. Paul is not, of course, implying that the Law was in itself bad. He refers to the way in which Israel took a good thing that had been designed to reveal their sin to them and so twisted its purpose that it became for them an attempted means of salvation. Used in this way, it enslaved them.”<sup>97</sup>
- “Legalism, then, is not a step toward maturity; it is a step back into childhood. The Law was not God’s final revelation; it was but the preparation for that final revelation in Christ. It is important that a person know his ABCs, because they are the foundation for understanding all of the language. But the man who sits in a library and recites the ABCs instead of reading the great literature that is around him, is showing that he is immature and ignorant, not mature and wise. Under the Law, the Jews were children in bondage, not sons enjoying liberty.”<sup>98</sup>

II. What God did (v.4-5)

A. God’s ushered in a plan of redemption in Christ. (v.4-5)

a. How Jesus Came (v.4)

1. According to the right time (v.4a)

- “This “time” was when the Roman civilization had brought peace and a road system which facilitated travel; when the Grecian civilization provided a language...of the empire; when the Jews had proclaimed monotheism and the messianic hope in the synagogues of the Mediterranean world. It was then that God sent His Son, the preexistent One, out of heaven and to earth on a mission.”<sup>99</sup>

2. According to the right means (v.4b)

- “Born of a woman is not intended to be an exclusive statement emphasizing the absence of a man, and thus does not so much refer to Jesus’ virgin birth, important as that great truth is, as to His complete humanity. He was fully man, born of a woman like all other men, yet He was fully God. Otherwise He could not have been Savior of the world. He had to be fully God in order for His sacrifice to have the infinite worth necessary to atone for the sin of mankind. He also had to be fully man in order to represent mankind and take the penalty of sin upon Himself in man’s behalf.”<sup>100</sup>

3. According to the right economy [Rom. 8:3-4] (v.4c)

b. Why Jesus Came (v.5)

1. To redeem those who would trust in Him.

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<sup>96</sup> John F. MacArthur Jr., *Galatians, MacArthur New Testament Commentary* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1983), 105.

<sup>97</sup> S. Lewis Johnson, *The Greatest Commission An Exposition of Galatians 4:1-7, EMJ 14:1* (Summer 2005), 48.

<sup>98</sup> Warren W. Wiersbe, *The Bible Exposition Commentary*, vol. 1 (Wheaton: Victor Books, 1996), 706.

<sup>99</sup> Donald K. Campbell, “Galatians,” in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, ed. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, vol. 2 (Wheaton: Victor Books, 1985), 601.

<sup>100</sup> MacArthur, *Commentary*, 108.

- “This is... [a redemption] from a slavery to the entire Mosaic system. The emphasis is not on the penalty of the Law as in 3:13, but on its bondage. Since Christ redeemed and set free those who were under the Law, why should Gentile converts now wish to be placed under it? Second, Christ’s death secured for believers the full rights of sons. All the enjoyments and privileges of a mature son in a family belong to those who have entered into the benefits of Christ’s redemptive work.”<sup>101</sup>

III. Who We Are in the present (v.6-7)

A. God has bestowed both sonship and privilege to those in Christ.

- “The fundamental proof and evidence that the Galatians are truly God’s adopted sons is that God has given them the Holy Spirit, and their sonship is expressed by their acclamation that God is their Father.”<sup>102</sup>

<b>3 Realities Involved in Salvation</b>		
<p><b>Through evangelism, one hears and believes the Gospel and is transformed from Spiritual Death to Life. This occurs in one’s experience in time.</b> (Acts 16:14-15, 16:30-31)</p>	<p><b>By His death upon the Cross, Jesus purchased (redeemed) out of the slave market of sin, an innumerable number of people in order to make them sons of God.</b> (Gal. 4:5; Rev. 5:9)</p>	<p><b>By His death upon the Cross, God adopts His children, bestowing on them the full rights and privileges of the inheritance of Christ, His Son.</b> (Gal. 4:6-7; Eph. 1:11)</p>

a. Our inheritance in Christ

1. Includes ruling and reigning with Christ in His kingdom. [Lk. 22:29-30; 1 Cor. 6:2-3; Rev. 20:4; Rev. 3:21; Rev. 21:7; Rev. 2:25]
2. Includes crowns and personal accolades.
  - 1 Cor. 9:25 – “crown incorruptible for faithfulness”
  - 1 Thes. 2:19 – “crown of rejoicing for a joyful life”
  - 2 Tim. 4:8 – “crown of righteousness for loving Christ through actions”
  - James 1:12 – “crown of life for personal obedience”
  - 1 Peter 5:4 – “shepherd’s crown for faithful pastoring”
  - Rev. 2:10 – “crown of life for those persecuted”

Points to Ponder:

1. Every believer is made a child of God through faith alone in Christ alone and is promised an inheritance as an heir.
2. Every Christian will have a portion of inheritance but this is determined by how well one lives as an “adult son” in the family.
3. The appeal to every believer is grow up in the faith and take hold of your inheritance in Christ.

<sup>101</sup> Campbell, *BKC*, 601.

<sup>102</sup> Thomas R. Schreiner, *Galatians, Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2010), 271.

Live Grace Not Legalism  
(Gal. 4:8-11)

- I. Their past slavery to superstition (v.8)
- A. Before conversion, everyone is ignorant of God and a slave to religious superstition (idolatry).
- a. Explanation of Idolatry-
1. Man's attempt to ascribe God's attributes to deities created by his own hands. Man believes that these gods can do for him what he desires but that he cannot do for himself. Most of the world's ancient gods revolved around fertility cults because of the ancient agrarian cultures. It was believed that man could manipulate the gods through sacrifice and worship, which in turn, the gods would bestow favor upon man and bless him with what he desired.
- b. Example of Idolatry- Exodus 32:1-28
- c. Expense of Idolatry- Romans 1:21-25
- "The fundamental error of unbelievers is their failure to know and praise and thank God [relationally], and hence they turn instead to self-worship and adulation of the creature rather than the Creator."<sup>103</sup>
- II. Their personal salvation in the Son (v.9a)
- A. Man knows God (salvation) only after God enters into a relationship with them through Jesus Christ.
- "Even though it is true that believers have come to know God, there is a deeper reality that explains why they know God's saving love, namely, God's knowledge of them."<sup>104</sup>
- a. God's Knows His People
1. God's knowing is more than to have a knowledge of something.
  2. God knowing someone deals with having a loving relationship with someone. [John 10:14-15, 17:3; Phil. 3:8; Jer. 9:23-24; Amos 3:2; John 10:27-28; Rom. 8:29-30; 2 Tim. 2:19]
- "The Lord does not know [soteriologically] the entire world. The Lord knows only the few who are on the narrow path, that are headed to life. What a privilege it is to be known by God."<sup>105</sup>
- III. Their present slump in sanctification (v.9b-11)
- A. If saved, one should not engage in legalism to grow in Christ.
- "Under the influence of the Judaizers the Galatians had at least begun to observe the Mosaic calendar. They kept special days (weekly Sabbaths), and months (new moons), and seasons (seasonal festivals such as Passover, Pentecost, and Tabernacles), and years (sabbatical and jubilee years). They observed these special times, thinking that they would thereby gain additional merit before God."<sup>106</sup>
  - "Legalism is trying to please God...by attempting to keep a list of laws and rules...It is identity based on performance rather than relationship."<sup>107</sup>
  - "[Legalism] ...can never cleanse the heart from sin. Neither can it sanctify the life. Legalism erects an artificial façade that religious people hide behind, but it never changes the heart of man."<sup>108</sup>
- B. The Law and Grace do not mix.

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<sup>103</sup> Thomas R. Schreiner, *Galatians, Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2010), 277.

<sup>104</sup> *Ibid.*, 278.

<sup>105</sup> Steve Lawson, *The Danger of Legalism*, Online. Accessed September 29, 2018.

<https://www.sermonaudio.com/saplayer/playpopup.asp?SID=1030091010220>

<sup>106</sup> Donald K. Campbell, "Galatians," in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, ed. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, vol. 2 (Wheaton: Victor Books, 1985), 602.

<sup>107</sup> Tony Evans, *Free at Last: Experiencing Freedom Through Your Identity in Christ* (Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2001), 77.

<sup>108</sup> Steve Lawson, *Law & Liberty: A Biblical Look at Legalism*, Online. Accessed September 29, 2018.

<https://books.google.com/books?id=kv1RBwAAQBAJ&pg=PT18&lpg=PT18&dq#v=onepage&q&f=false>

- “Christ became the end of the Law by virtue of what He did on earth through His sinless life and His sacrifice on the cross. So, the Law no longer has any bearing over us because its demands have been fully met in the Lord Jesus Christ...No longer under the penalty of the Law, we now live under the law of grace in the love of God.”<sup>109</sup>

C. Legalism demonstrates immature faith or no faith at all. [1 John 2:19; Rom 7:2-4]

- “If the Galatians strayed from the gospel of grace, their only hope was an eschatological curse (1:8–9), for those who trust in the law are cut off from Christ (5:2–4)...Hence, Paul contemplates the possibility that his work will be futile if those whom he evangelized do not persevere.”<sup>110</sup>
- “To keep holy days and practice symbolical ceremonies is contrary to the very spirit of Christianity. And those who do so lead us to suspect that they do not know the gospel at all.”<sup>111</sup>

#### Points to Ponder:

1. Live to honor God because of what He has done for us, not because of what we do to gain merit with God.
2. Be careful to guard your liberty so as not to be a stumbling block for others. [Rom. 14:1-9]
3. Use your Christian freedom to treat people from Christ’s point of view and not the subjective, traditional, standards of men.

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<sup>109</sup> Got Questions, What does it mean that Christians are not under the law? Online. Accessed September 29, 2018. <https://www.gotquestions.org/not-under-the-law.html>

<sup>110</sup> Schreiner, *Galatians*, 279.

<sup>111</sup> Charles Spurgeon, *Galatians*, ed. Elliot Ritzema, *Spurgeon Commentary Series* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2013), Ga 4:10-11.

Paul's Personal Appeal  
(Gal. 4:12-20)

- I. Paul reminds them of the past (v.12-14)
- A. Paul wants Christians to live by grace not law (v.12)
- a. Legalism- Man's attempt to obtain right standing before God and men by using religious or man-made rules that give the appearance of holiness but are actually works of the flesh. [Matt. 6:1-2, 5, 16, 23:1-5]
- "Paul's appeal to his brethren in Christ was for them to recognize and live by the spiritual freedom all believers have in God's grace. That is the central truth of the epistle, a truth he had previously preached and taught to the Galatians but one the Judaizers had seduced them into doubting and forsaking."<sup>112</sup>
- B. Paul wants them to return to how they once viewed him (v.13-14)
- a. Paul was physically ill but spiritually strong [Malaria or Ophthalmia].
- "There is only one explanation for such a response. Their reception of Paul was not conditioned by his human appeal but was dependent upon the message which he brought, the truth of the gospel by which the Galatians were saved."<sup>113</sup>
- II. Paul reviews their problem (v.15-16)
- A. Because of a lack of discernment, the Galatians now view Paul as an enemy. (v.15-16)
- a. The truth once brought salvation, now it divides.
1. The Galatians lacked spiritual discernment [Heb. 5:12-6:1].
  - "And that is exactly the spiritual state of multitudes in the church today. They are utterly preoccupied with self. They want their own problems solved and their own comfort elevated. Their spiritual development is arrested, and they remain in a perpetual state of selfish helplessness. It is evidence of a tragic abnormality. Arrested infancy means people do not discern. Just as a baby crawls along the floor, putting anything it finds in its mouth, spiritual babies don't know what is good for them and what isn't. Immaturity and lack of discernment go together; they are virtually the same thing."<sup>114</sup>
- III. Paul reveals his position (v.17-20)
- A. He cautions the Galatians about the Judaizers (v.17)
- a. Judaizer's Goals [e.g., Matt. 23:15]:
1. To zealously seek after the Christians.
  2. To separate the Galatians from the truth of the Gospel, a by faith alone salvation.
  3. To make the Christians submit to the Judaizer's teachings.
  - "Three times in this letter Paul refers to the desires of the false teachers. They longed to make a good showing in the flesh (6:12) and to have the Galatians circumcised so they could boast in them (6:13). Here they desire to turn the Galatians away from Paul so that the Galatians will show zeal for them as teachers. The Judaizers, in contrast to Paul, had an ardent desire to be praised and honored."<sup>115</sup>
- B. He has concern for the Galatians (v.18)

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<sup>112</sup> John F. MacArthur, Galatians, *MacArthur New Testament Commentary* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1983), 114.

<sup>113</sup> Bob Deffinbaugh, Paul Gets Personal (Galatians 4:12-20). Online. Accessed on October 13, 2018. <https://bible.org/seriespage/11-paul-gets-personal-galatians-412-20>

<sup>114</sup> John F. MacArthur Jr., *The Truth War: Fighting for Certainty in an Age of Deception* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 2007), 212.

<sup>115</sup> Thomas R. Schreiner, Galatians, *Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2010), 288.

- “He [Paul] himself had eagerly sought them when he first preached the gospel in Galatia. But it was in a commendable manner, out of love for Christ and a deep desire for their salvation....Paul warned against the Judaizers not because they opposed him and personally wounded him, but because they opposed the glorious, saving gospel of Jesus Christ.”<sup>116</sup> [Rom. 10:1-3]

C. He has compassion for the Galatians (v.19-20)

a. Paul wants the Galatians to be like Christ.

- “All his anxiety arose from their falling into ritualism and legalism. He wanted to see them living by faith upon Jesus and worshiping God with free spiritual worship. The fashionable religion of the present day is overlaid with pompous forms, and the plain gospel of salvation by faith in Jesus is despised. Nevertheless, to the doctrine of grace let us steadfastly cleave, for it alone is truth, and in it alone is salvation.”<sup>117</sup>

Points to Ponder:

1. Be gentle and gracious when confronting a wayward Christian trapped in false doctrine. [2 Tim. 2:24-26]
2. Christians should be discerning when confronting claims contrary to biblical truth. [Col. 2:8; Ps.119:66; Prov. 2:2-5, 10:13, 16:21 ]
  - “We cannot gain discernment overnight or through a mystical experience. Discernment will come only as we train our minds to be understanding in the truth of God’s Word and learn to apply that truth skillfully to our lives.”<sup>118</sup>
3. The power to change a person’s life is in the gospel and not in the persuasiveness of, man or his methodology.
  - “Men are not saved by a messenger, nor the persuasiveness of his methods but by the truth, the message...Too much attention is given to the messenger and too little to the message.”<sup>119</sup>

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<sup>116</sup> MacArthur, *Commentary*, 119.

<sup>117</sup> Charles Spurgeon, Galatians, ed. Elliot Ritzema, *Spurgeon Commentary Series* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2013), Ga 4:20.

<sup>118</sup> MacArthur, *The Truth War*, 215.

<sup>119</sup> Bob Deffinbaugh, Paul Gets Personal (Galatians 4:12-20). Online. Accessed on October 13, 2018. <https://bible.org/seriespage/11-paul-gets-personal-galatians-412-20>

The Contrast of Two Destinies  
(Gal. 4:21-5:1)

Paul's argument in this passage is formed by the use of an analogy. Paul uses contrasts between children of the slave woman (Hagar- faith plus law keeping) with the children of the free woman (Sarah- faith alone in Christ). He argues that since believers are now free in Christ, they are not to return to living in slavery under the Law.

I. A contrast of two sons (v. 21-23)

A. Paul reminds them of Abraham's history (v.21-22)

- "Paul's first historical reminder about Abraham was that he had two sons...The first son was Ishmael, whose mother was Hagar, an Egyptian slave of Sarah, Abraham's wife. The second son was Isaac, whose mother was Sarah."<sup>120</sup>

B. Paul reveals the significance of the sons (v.23)

- "The conception of Ishmael represents man's way, the way of the flesh, whereas that of Isaac represents God's way, the way of promise, The first is analogous to the way of religious self-effort and works righteousness; the second is analogous to the way of faith and God's imputed righteousness. The one is the way of legalism, the other the way of grace."<sup>121</sup>

II. A contrast of two wives (v. 24-27)

A. Paul compares Hagar and Sarah to two Covenants. (v.24a)

a. Hagar is of the Covenant of Works (v.24b-25)

1. Old Covenant- a faith plus works theology equals slavery.
2. Mt. Sinai and Jerusalem are identified with Judaism, where the Jews who rejected Jesus lived in spiritual slavery. These are Hagar's spiritual descendants.

B. Sarah is of the New Covenant (v.26-27)

- The spiritual descendants of Sarah through Isaac...live in the Jerusalem above and are free, because she is our mother, if we are among those who live by faith in God's gracious promise, given to Abraham and fulfilled in Jesus Christ."<sup>122</sup>
- "This [verse] prophesied the changing fortunes of Israel, which Paul applied to Sarah's history. Israel before her Babylonian Captivity was likened to a woman with a husband. The barren woman was Israel in Captivity. The woman bearing more ... children may have pictured Israel restored to the land after the Exile, but more particularly it portrays her millennial blessings. Paul applied this passage (he did not claim it was fulfilled) in this context to Sarah, who though previously barren, was later blessed with a child, and who would ultimately enjoy a greater progeny than Hagar."<sup>123</sup>

III. A contrast of two identities (v. 28-5:1)

A. Paul compares Isaac to believers positionally and practically (v.28-30)

- "Whether within Judaism or Christianity, legalists have always been persecutors. Those who trust in God have always been persecuted by those who trust in themselves. True believers

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<sup>120</sup> John F. MacArthur Jr., Galatians, MacArthur New Testament Commentary (Chicago: Moody Press, 1983), 124.

<sup>121</sup> Ibid.

<sup>122</sup> Ibid., 126.

<sup>123</sup> Donald K. Campbell, "Galatians," in The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures, ed. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, vol. 2 (Wheaton: Victor Books, 1985), 604.

- have always been more mistreated and oppressed by religionists than by atheists. It is the false religious system of Revelation 17:6 that is “drunk with the blood of the saints.”<sup>124</sup>
- “The persecutors are going to be thrown out, and the persecuted will receive their promised and rightful inheritance. As Sarah had Hagar and Ishmael cast out of Abraham’s household, so will their unbelieving descendants, those who live by works of the flesh, be cast out of God’s household.”<sup>125</sup>

B. Paul commands believers to stand firm in their faith (v. 31-5:1)

- “Throughout this letter, and indeed throughout all of Scripture, such contrasts reflect and demonstrate the contrast of the ages: the way of Satan and the way of God. But in God’s ultimate and unchangeable plan, Satan and his way will be destroyed, and only the way of God will remain, forever and ever. Vacillating between the two is unacceptable.”<sup>126</sup>

Points to Ponder:

1. Legalism has no place in the church because it emphasizes trust in one’s own works rather than God and His grace.
2. Paul’s analogy presented two mothers and sons. Hagar is after the flesh and Sarah is after the Spirit. Do you know who your Mother is?
3. Salvation is by faith alone but never by a faith that is alone. Justification will produce some level of works borne out of a love for God.

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<sup>124</sup> MacArthur, Commentary, 128.

<sup>125</sup> Ibid.

<sup>126</sup> Ibid., 129.

The Futility of Trusting in Works  
(Gal. 5:2-6)

- I. You are separated from the truth (v.2)
- A. There is no spiritual benefit in circumcision (works).
- “Circumcision and everything like it belong to the rule of the *paidagogos*, not to the dominion of sonship; to return to them is to deny what has been done at the cross.”<sup>127</sup>
- B. One cannot trust in Christ and his own efforts (works of the Law or tradition). [Rom. 9:30-32]
- “The Bible goes to great lengths to combat legalism and establish us in grace. If you are a legalist, you will never enjoy grace or know real spiritual freedom...the Christian life will be a burden to you, not a joy.”<sup>128</sup>
- II. You are snared by the law (v.3)
- A. Keeping any part of the Law implies that one must keep all of the Law. [Gal. 3:11-12; Js. 2:10-11; Rom. 9:30-32]
- “Circumcision was prescribed under the Abrahamic Covenant, but it was also prescribed under the Mosaic Covenant (Lev. 12:3), though the significance was not the same. Under the Abrahamic Covenant, it was mandatory for Jews only and it was a sign of their Jewishness. Under the Law of Moses, it was mandatory for both Jews and Gentiles and it was a means of submission to the law. It obligated the one circumcised to keep the whole law...”<sup>129</sup>
  - “You cannot take the principle of law [works] and the principle of grace [faith alone] and blend those two together. They are like oil and water—they will never mix. If salvation be of works, it is not of grace; and if it be of grace, it is not of works.”<sup>130</sup>
- III. You are severed from Christ (v.4)
- A. Embracing the Law means letting go of grace and Christ. [Rom. 7:2]
- a. Paul is not speaking of loss of salvation:
- “Paul is not dealing with the security of the believer but with the contrasting ways of grace and law, works and faith, as means of salvation. He is not teaching that a person who has once been justified can lose his righteous standing before God and become lost again by being circumcised or otherwise legalistic. The Bible knows nothing of becoming unjustified...Paul’s primary point in this passage, as throughout the letter, is that law and grace cannot be mixed.”<sup>131</sup>
- b. The believer is eternal secure in salvation [Jn. 6:37-40, 10:27-29; Rom. 8:29-31, 38-39]
- “Paul exulted in the confidence that nothing, including any other created thing (which has to include yourself), can separate us from the love of God which is in Christ (Rom. 8:38–39). And again he declared: “If we are faithless, He remains faithful; for He cannot deny Himself” (2 Tim. 2:13). The consistency of God’s character guarantees a secure salvation.”<sup>132</sup>
- IV. You are shut off from righteousness (v.5-6)
- A. You are experientially excluded from hope and righteousness. (v.5)

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<sup>127</sup> Daniel Bush and Noel Due, *Live in Liberty: The Spiritual Message of Galatians* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2015), 149.

<sup>128</sup> Tony Evans, *Free at Last: Experiencing True Freedom Through Your Identity in Christ* (Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2001), 76.

<sup>129</sup> Arnold G. Fruchtenbaum, *Israelology: The Missing Link in Systematic Theology*, Rev. ed. (Tustin, CA: Ariel Ministries, 1994), 593.

<sup>130</sup> Charles Spurgeon, Galatians, ed. Elliot Ritzema, *Spurgeon Commentary Series* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2013), Ga 5:3.

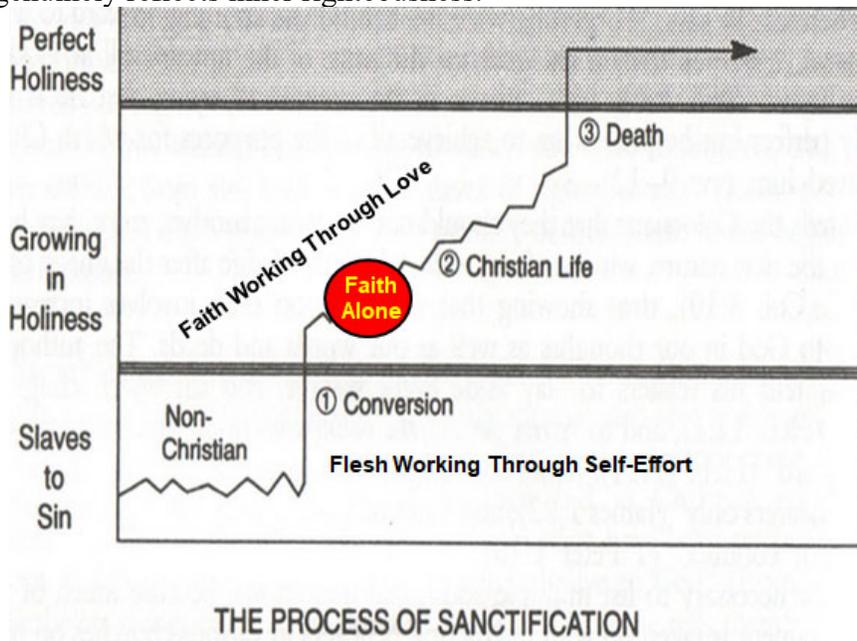
<sup>131</sup> John F. MacArthur Jr., Galatians, *MacArthur New Testament Commentary* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1983), 135.

<sup>132</sup> Charles Caldwell Ryrie, *Basic Theology: A Popular Systematic Guide to Understanding Biblical Truth* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1999), 385–86.

- “The Judaizers promised complete righteousness in ones’ earthly life, beginning with circumcision and achieved with obedience to the Law. Paul spoke of righteousness coming in completeness in the age to come.”<sup>133</sup>
- “At the coming of Christ believers will be completely conformed to all the requirements of God’s will. The inward and forensic righteousness which began at justification will be transformed into an outward righteousness at glorification. God will then publicly acknowledge all believers’ full acceptability with Him.”<sup>134</sup>

B. You are experientially excluded from growth and joy.

- “Nothing that is either done or not done in the flesh, not even religious ceremony, makes any difference in one’s relationship to God. In Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision means anything. The outward is totally unimportant and worthless, except as it genuinely reflects inner righteousness.”<sup>135</sup>



a. The Appeal is to live and grow in holiness. [Phil 2:12-13; Rom. 12:1-2, 6:11-12; Col. 3:5; Gal. 5:13, 2 Tim 2:15]

- “Believers are ‘created in Christ Jesus for good works’...But their working is the product of their faith, not a substitute for it. They do not work for righteousness but out of righteousness...Love needs neither the prescriptions nor the proscriptions of the law, because its very nature is to fulfill the law’s demands.”<sup>136</sup>

Points to Ponder:

1. Man can add nothing to the grace of God for his justification or sanctification. Only life in, by, and through the Holy Spirit can produce the righteous life that God desires.
2. The question is “How are you going to use your freedom in Christ?”

<sup>133</sup> Bob Deffinbaugh, The Goal of the Gospel (Galatians 5:1-12). Online. Accessed on November 10, 2018. <https://bible.org/seriespage/goal-gospel-galatians-51-12>

<sup>134</sup> Donald K. Campbell, “Galatians,” in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, ed. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, vol. 2 (Wheaton: Victor Books, 1985), 605.

<sup>135</sup> MacArthur, *Commentary*, 137.

<sup>136</sup> *Ibid.*, 137.

The Danger of False Teachers  
(Gal. 5:7-12)

I. Distort the Truth (v.7-8)

A. The influence originated with the Judaizers.

- “Three important applications can be garnered from this verse: (1) The Christian life is a marathon, not a hundred-yard dash...(2) Paul did not give up on the Galatians even though many of them had shifted their loyalty from him to the usurpers and, to all outward appearances, appeared to be lost to the cause of God and truth...(3) The “truth of the gospel” is not only something to be believed but also something to be obeyed.”<sup>137</sup> [1 Cor. 9:24; Gal. 2:2]

B. False teachers corrupt sound doctrine.

- “The false teachers who were leading the Galatians astray were far from well-intentioned. Their purpose was to gain a following for themselves and “to make a good showing in the flesh” (6:12). They were forerunners of all the self-promoting false teachers who have plagued the church throughout its history and will continue to do so until the Lord returns.”<sup>138</sup>

a. How to Discern a False Teacher:

1. Deceiving doctrine – False teachers deny unpleasant teachings related to sin and judgment, and offer relief of temporal problems using worldly means.[ Jer. 23:17, 8:11]
2. Deceptive Affirmations- False teachers tell people what they want to hear and avoid the truth. [1 Kings 22:8,13; 2 Tim. 4:3-4]
3. Deny Jesus- They negate Jesus’ person and work, particularly His teachings. [2 Pet. 2:1-3; Titus 1:16]

II. Distress the Tranquility (v.9)

A. False doctrine [leaven] spreads and disrupts the church if unchecked.

a. Leaven

1. A substance, yeast, added to bread to make it ferment and rise.
2. It is often used as an analogy for sin or false doctrine. [Matt. 8:15, 16:6]
  - “The evil introduced by the Judaizers will spread to the whole church if it is uncontained...The Galatians must not succumb to their teaching; otherwise, the deviant theology will spread. Paul does not explicitly call on the Galatians to expel the teachers from the community, but he does exhort them not to submit to their theology.”<sup>139</sup>
  - “One man’s influence may mislead thousands; one piece of false doctrine may taint our whole creed. If you have a wrong ground of confidence, you are wrong altogether.”<sup>140</sup>

III. Destined for Trouble (v.10)

A. True Christians are secure in salvation but these false teachers will be judged. [2 Pet. 2:4-10; Matt. 16:27; Rev. 20:11-15]

IV. Disrupt the Teachers (v.11-12)

A. They persecute true teachers with personal attacks. (v.11)

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<sup>137</sup> Timothy George, Galatians, vol. 30, *The New American Commentary* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1994), 364.

<sup>138</sup> John F. MacArthur Jr., Galatians, *MacArthur New Testament Commentary* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1983), 139.

<sup>139</sup> Thomas R. Schreiner, Galatians, *Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2010), 324-25.

<sup>140</sup> Charles Spurgeon, Galatians, ed. Elliot Ritzema, *Spurgeon Commentary Series* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2013), Ga 5:9.

- “Paul had already explained, he could never advocate circumcision as part of the gospel, because to do so would be to “nullify the grace of God; for if righteousness comes through the Law,” which circumcision represented for the Judaizers, “then Christ died needlessly” (Gal. 2:21). Then the stumbling block of the cross would have been abolished.”<sup>141</sup>
- “Human beings take...[offense] in being told that even their best works are stained with evil, that everything they do is insufficient to be right with God, and that the only basis for right standing with God is the cross of Jesus Christ.”<sup>142</sup>
- “While circumcision had once been the sign of the covenant in Israel, it now had no more religious meaning than any other ritual of cutting and marking practiced by ancient pagans.”<sup>143</sup>

Points to Ponder:

1. A false teacher can be identified by what they teach and believe. Compare their doctrine to Scripture. If it does not match they are to be ignored.
2. Exercise wisdom and discernment when dealing with false doctrine. Jesus and the apostles were not harsh with those who were deceived but with the deceivers.
3. Be sure of your own salvation. What are you trusting in for the forgiveness of sin and eternal life?

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<sup>141</sup> MacArthur, *Commentary*, 141.

<sup>142</sup> Schreiner, *Galatians*, 327.

<sup>143</sup> Donald K. Campbell, “Galatians,” in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, ed. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, vol. 2 (Wheaton: Victor Books, 1985), 606.

Living the Spirit Filled Life  
(Gal. 5:13-25)

- I. It involves charity (v.13-15)
- A. Serve in love not the flesh. (v.13)
- “Christ does not give freedom to believers so they can do what they want but so they can, for the first time, do what God wants, because of love for Him.”<sup>144</sup>
- a. Works of the Flesh are to Be Avoided
1. It cannot please God (Rom 8:8)
  2. In it dwells no good thing (Rom. 7:18)
  3. Do not put confidence in it (Phil. 3:3)
  4. Do not make provision for the flesh by feeding it the things that it enjoys. (Rom 13:14)
    - “Every wrong action, every wrong word, every wrong idea, every wrong reaction, every wrong emotion, every wrong attitude is from the flesh...the reason we have anxiety, the flesh. The reason we have fear, the flesh. The reason we have terrible relationships, the flesh. The reason we have difficulty in marriage, the flesh. The reason we have difficulty in the family, the flesh. The reason we have difficulty cooperating with other people, the flesh. The reason we have pride, the flesh. All sin of every form, all wrong emotions, all wrong attitudes, all wrong actions, all wrong reactions, all wrong thoughts, all wrong words, and all wrong deeds all come out of the flesh.”<sup>145</sup>
- B. The whole of the Law can be summed up by love. (v.14)
- “The text does not suggest that human beings need to learn to love themselves before they can love others. Instead, it assumes that we love ourselves, in that we invariably seek our own interests. Love, then, seeks out the interests of others and pursues their best.”<sup>146</sup>
- C. Loving others does not come naturally [James 4:1-3] (v.15)
- II. It involves choices (v.16-18)
- A. Living by the Spirit is a volitional act. (v.16)
- B. The flesh and spirit are in opposition to each other [Rom 7:18-19, 21-23] (v.17-18)
- a. Victory over the flesh means abstaining from its desires [2 Pet. 1:4-10; 1 Pet. 2:11]
- “Do you want to put to death the lusts in your heart? Then stop [it]. Peter does not prescribe a program of therapy. He does not suggest that such sin be treated as an addiction. He simply says abstain. Quit doing it. You have no business indulging such thoughts. Put them away at once. You yourself must do this; it cannot be done for you.”<sup>147</sup>
  - “I do not know of a single scripture—and I speak advisedly—which tells me to take my sin, the particular thing that gets me down, to God in prayer and ask him to deliver me from it and then trust in faith that he will. Now that teaching is also often put like this: you must say to a man who is constantly defeated by a particular sin, “I think your only hope is to take it to Christ and Christ will take it from you.” But what does Scripture say in Ephesians 4:28 to the man who finds himself constantly guilty of stealing, to a man who sees something he likes and takes it? What am I to tell such a man? Am I to say, “Take that sin to Christ and ask him to deliver you?” No, what the apostle Paul tells him is this: “Let him that stole, steal no more.” Just that. Stop it. And if it is fornication or adultery or lustful thoughts, again: Stop it, says Paul. He does not say, “Go and pray to Christ to deliver you.” No. You stop doing that...”<sup>148</sup>
- III. It involves comprehension (v.19-24)
- A. Recognize the deeds of the flesh (v.19-21a)
- a. Four Categories for Deeds of the Flesh

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<sup>144</sup> John F. MacArthur, Galatians, *MacArthur New Testament Commentary* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1983), 146.

<sup>145</sup> John F. MacArthur, “Walking by the Spirit,” Online. Accessed November 23, 2018. <http://www.gty.org/Resources/Sermons/90-34>

<sup>146</sup> Thomas R. Schreiner, Galatians, *Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2010), 335.

<sup>147</sup> John MacArthur, *The Vanishing Conscience*, Electronic ed. (Dallas: Word Pub., 1994), 157.

<sup>148</sup> D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones, *Sanctified Through the Truth: The Assurance of Our Salvation* (Wheaton: Crossway, 1989), 54.

1. Immorality- any sexual engagement outside of marriage.
  - “It refers to any and all sexual activity outside the bounds of marriage, including homosexuality, premarital sex, and marital unfaithfulness... Impurity can refer to sexual sin, but it generally includes more than immorality. Sensuality, too, is broader than immorality and would include any sexual activity not necessarily involving fornication.”<sup>149</sup>
2. Idolatry- Worshipping anything other than God. It was and is often accompanied by drug use.
  - “Many ancient religious ceremonies involved occultic practices in which drugs were used to induce supposed communication with deities, and pharmakeia thereby came to be closely related to witchcraft and magic. Aristotle and other ancient Greek writers used the word as a synonym for witchcraft and black magic, because drugs were so commonly used in their practice.”<sup>150</sup>
3. Injuring- Actions that cause conflict in relationships.
  - ~ Enmities, Strife, Jealousy, Outbursts of anger, Disputes, Dissensions, Factions, Envy
4. Indulgence- Drunkenness and carousing
  - “A more fitting word in today’s vocabulary would be partying—having a celebration where liquor and drugs are freely used and abused, immoral activity is freely enjoyed, and fun and pleasure are indulged in at the expense of God’s glory and holiness...It is clear from this passage that these actions are not produced by demons, Satan, or the world but are the specific outworking’s of a mindset and lifestyle that are controlled by the flesh and produced by the volition of the individual.”<sup>151</sup>

b. People who habitually do this give no indication of being a Christian. [1 Cor. 6:9-11] (v.21b)

#### B. Recognize the deeds of the Spirit (v.22-24)

- a. The Spirit produces godly attitudes and actions in the Christian’s life. (v.22-23)
  - ~ Love, Joy, Peace, Patience, Kindness and goodness, Faithfulness, Gentleness, Self-Controlled
- b. Christians can live by the Spirit because our old man was crucified with Christ (v.24)
  - “The best understanding is to see ‘have crucified’ as an allusion to the cross of Jesus Christ, which, as a past event, fits the aorist tense used here by Paul. It looks back to the cross, the time at which the death of the flesh was actually accomplished. Yet, because we are still alive on the earth and still possess our humanness, we have not yet entered into the future fullness of that past event...Because the flesh is defeated forever, and we now live in the realm where Christ reigns over us by His Spirit, we should live according to the Spirit and not the flesh.”<sup>152</sup>

#### IV. It involves commitment (v.25)

##### A. The Spirit filled life is a command (v.25)

- “The simplest answer is a single test...If Christlikeness is developing (it will never be perfectly or fully developed in this life), if your life is given to soul-winning service, and if praise, worship, thanksgiving, and submissiveness are in your heart and actions, then the Spirit is in control. You need not look for some startling manifestation...some ecstatic experience. Yield control to God; keep it there, and use all the power available to develop the biblical characteristics of the Spirit-filled life.”<sup>153</sup>

#### Points to Ponder:

1. Sanctification is a process. You must actively engage in it to experience the Spirit’s filling.
2. Avoid temptation or situations that cause you to lose your testimony or walk.
3. As a Christian, you are never too far away from God not to come back. All it takes is one step at a time.

#### Helping Others Live the Spirit Filled Life

(Gal. 5:26-6:10)

<sup>149</sup> Robert Dean Jr. and Thomas Ice, *What the Bible Teaches about Spiritual Warfare* (Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 2000), 90.

<sup>150</sup> MacArthur, *Commentary*, 162.

<sup>151</sup> Dean and Ice, *What the Bible Teaches*, 93.

<sup>152</sup> MacArthur, *Commentary*, 171.

<sup>153</sup> Charles C. Ryrie, *Balancing the Christian Life* (Chicago: Moody Publishers, 1994), 128.

- I. Confront the erring Christian (v. 5:26- 6:1)
- A. Confronting a sinning Christian should be done with a view to spiritual restoration.
- a. Conditions for Confrontation:
1. One must be spiritual.
    - One who is characteristically spiritual or mature.
    - One who is not easily tempted.
  2. One must restore with gentleness.
  3. One must follow Jesus' discipline protocol. (Matt. 18:15-17)
    - "Spiritual believers restore a fallen believer first of all by helping him recognize his trespass as a trespass. Until a person admits his sin, he cannot be helped out of it. Once he has done that, he must be encouraged to confess his sin before God and turn away from it in repentance, sincerely seeking God's forgiveness." Members should then comfort and forgive the repentant Christian."<sup>154</sup>
- II. Carry each other's burdens (v.2-5)
- A. Christians must be willing to support other Christians. (v.2)
- a. 3 Ways to Bear Burdens:
1. Encouragement – Biblical counseling and consoling.
    - As Christians, we are to find our principles for living in the Scripture alone. (Ps. 1:1-2; Col. 2:8-10)
    - We are warned in Scripture not to trust our own wisdom because we can be deceived.
    - The Bible is sufficient to meet all of man's emotional and spiritual needs.
  2. Entreatment - Praying with and for others.
    - "Prayer is the most powerful weapon believers have in conquering sin and opposing Satan, and nothing helps a brother carry his burdens as much as prayer for him and with him. The brother who has been delivered from a trespass has an obligation to let his spiritual friends help him carry his burdens."<sup>155</sup>
  3. Engagement - Spending time with others for accountability and comfort. [2 Cor. 7:5-7]
- B. Christians must examine themselves lest they look down on the restored Christian. [ Matt. 7:2-4; Js. 2:12-14] (v.3-5)
- III. Contribute to each other's growth (v.6)
- A. Believers should share in both the work and the Word, from which come all good things. (v.6)
- "The one who is taught the word and the one who teaches have a common fellowship and should share all good things together...good things translates the plural of *agathos*, which is used in the New Testament primarily of spiritual and moral excellence. The spiritual Christian who has picked up and held up his fallen brother also builds him up in the word, in whose good things they fellowship together."<sup>156</sup>
- IV. Commend each other to service (v.7-10)
- A. Consequences in sowing (v.7-9)
- "Each sower decides what his harvest will be. If a person sows to please his sinful nature, that is, if he spends his money to indulge the flesh, he will reap a harvest that will fade into oblivion. On the other hand if he uses his funds to support the Lord's work, or sows to please

<sup>154</sup> John MacArthur, Galatians, *MacArthur New Testament Commentary* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1983), 179.

<sup>155</sup> Ibid., 180.

<sup>156</sup> Ibid., 182.

the Spirit, and promotes his own spiritual growth, he will reap a harvest that will last forever.”<sup>157</sup>

B. Calling of the saints [1 John 3:14, 4:20-21, John 13:35] (v.10)

- “The idea is, while we have opportunity during our life on earth. In other words, a believer’s entire life is his unique but limited opportunity to serve others in the Lord’s name. The idea is...to be active, to work effectively and diligently, and is here a self-call to great effort in taking every opportunity to sow for God’s glory.”<sup>158</sup>

Points to Ponder:

1. Receive the precepts and commands of Scripture with gladness.
2. Share what you have with others.
3. Be sensitive to every encounter you have with people. People are our ministry and mission field.

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<sup>157</sup> Donald K. Campbell, “Galatians,” in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, ed. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, vol. 2 (Wheaton: Victor Books, 1985), 610.

<sup>158</sup> MacArthur, Commentary, 191.

What's Most Important in Life  
(Gal. 6:11-18)

The most important thing in Paul's life, and that he sought to share, was the saving Gospel of Christ. Salvation is by faith alone in Christ alone.

I. It is pressing (v.11)

A. Paul wrote to the churches personally.

- "The large letters he used probably did not refer to the length of the epistle...but to the size of the letters he inscribed. It may be that Paul wrote the conclusion in capital letters...to give a final emphatic thrust to his message."<sup>159</sup>

II. It is particular (v.12-13)

A. Paul addresses his answer to a particular group. [2 Tim. 3:1-5]

a. Judaizers: Taught salvation is by faith plus keeping the Law.

1. Sought to please men more than God.

2. Sought to corrupt the Gospel.

3. Sought to make converts to their false doctrine.

- "...Religious acts and observances not only have no value in opposing the flesh but are most often produced by the flesh in order to please the flesh. They give the flesh great satisfaction in making displays of religious devotion that require no heart righteousness or reliance on the Holy Spirit. Because they are strictly superficial, the most fleshly and ungodly person can learn to practice them with skill and feigned sincerity."<sup>160</sup>

III. It is precise (v.14-16)

A. The cross was most important to Paul. (v.14-15)

- "Paul gloried in the cross because it was the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ on the cross that was the source of his and every believer's righteousness and acceptance before God and...Christians honor and praise the cross because Christ's sacrifice there provided redemption and eternal life, and that is why it is the supreme symbol of the gospel,"<sup>161</sup>
- "There are many things about the cross that I don't understand. But this one thing I know—it is the way of salvation, and I'm to come by faith. Even though it may seem foolish and irrational, and it may not seem the right thing to do, and people may laugh at it, yet God says He has chosen the preaching of the cross to bring men to Himself."<sup>162</sup>

B. The cross is an invitation to all (v.16)

a. Benefits of the Cross to those who believe:

1. Peace – Peace with God because of reconciliation.

2. Mercy- Forgiveness of sin and judgment.

b. Gentiles and Jews (The Israel of God)

- "The Israel of God refers to Jewish believers in Jesus Christ, to those who are spiritual as well as physical descendants of Abraham and are heirs of promise rather than of law. They are the real Jews, the true Israel of faith, like those referred to in Romans 2:28–29 and 9:6–7."<sup>163</sup>

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<sup>159</sup> Donald K. Campbell, "Galatians," in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, ed. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, vol. 2 (Wheaton: Victor Books, 1985), 610.

<sup>160</sup> John MacArthur, *Galatians, MacArthur New Testament Commentary* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1983), 197.

<sup>161</sup> *Ibid.*, 205.

<sup>162</sup> Billy Graham, *Why Does the Cross Offend People?* Online. Accessed Dec. 16, 2018. <https://billygraham.org/decision-magazine/march-2016/why-does-the-cross-offend-people/>

<sup>163</sup> MacArthur, *Commentary*, 210.

- “The term Israel is either used of the nation or the people as a whole, or of the believing remnant within. It is never used of the Church in general or of Gentile believers in particular.”<sup>164</sup>

#### IV. It is personal (v.17-18)

A. Paul’s appeal is not academic; he lived what he preached at a great cost. [2 Cor. 11:24–30] (v.17)

- “These “marks” meant signs of ownership such as were branded on slaves and cattle. Paul referred to the scars on his body, which were caused by persecution for Christ’s sake, because they demonstrated he was a slave of Christ and not just a people-pleaser.”<sup>165</sup>

B. Paul expresses God’s grace and love to the churches. (v.18)

- “Paul wanted to assure the Galatians that they were part of the family of God, the true children of Abraham...Paul concludes by reminding the Galatians of the power of such grace, and he prays that such grace will continue to be unleashed in their lives.”<sup>166</sup>

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<sup>164</sup> Arnold G. Fruchtenbaum, *Israelology: The Missing Link in Systematic Theology*, Rev. ed. (Tustin, CA: Ariel Ministries, 1994), 699.

<sup>165</sup> Campbell, *Galatians*, 611.

<sup>166</sup> Thomas R. Schreiner, *Galatians, Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2010), 385.