

Galatians – 6 Chapters

Title:

The Epistle to the Galatians – because it is written to the church(es) in Galatia (most likely the churches in southern Asia Minor which he evangelized in Acts chs. 13-14).

Author:

Written by Paul the apostle to the Gentiles. Paul was a strict Pharisee in Jerusalem until he had a revelation of Christ on the road to Damascus. Paul spent the rest of his life as a missionary proclaiming Jesus to Gentiles around the Mediterranean. Paul wrote 13 of the Books of the New Testament.

Occasion and Purpose:

After Paul had left the region, the churches were infiltrated with Jews who taught that it is necessary to keep the Law of Moses in order to be a Christian. They highlighted the rite of circumcision as necessary. And they called Paul's apostleship into question. Paul responds decisively that people are saved by grace, through faith, and not by works of the Law. Paul calls the interlopers false teachers and their teaching a false gospel. He responds by defending his apostleship, which was from Christ, by clarifying the Christian's relationship to the Law, and by proclaiming the true Gospel and its implications.

Themes:

1. **No Other Gospel!** – There is no other Gospel except for Jesus Christ crucified and raised to reconcile us to God by grace through faith, and NOT by works of the Law. The Judaizers had an orthodox view of Christ and God, but added requirements in order to be in right relationship with God. But to add to the Gospel is actually to take away, and Paul called them false brothers. It is not about morality or psychological happiness, but it is about Christ (who, by His Spirit, will bring morality and happiness)
2. **Paul's Gospel is from God** – Paul defends his Gospel, that it did not come from Jerusalem or any humans, but it agrees with Jerusalem and the church leaders. The Gospel from God judges leaders, and not vice versa. Gospel faithfulness is more important than credentials and reputation. If your own mother preaches a different gospel, don't believe it.
3. **Faith, NOT Works** – The Gospel comes to us through faith, and not works of the Law. It gives freedom from the requirements of the Law, but also freedom to uphold the character of the Law. The Law was NEVER meant for our justification, the Law was meant to bring us to Christ. And the time of the Law is finished.
4. **Live by the Spirit** – Because of the Gospel, we can live with character that pleases God and upholds the purpose of the Law. The fruit of the Spirit in our lives crushes sinful desires and enables us to live uprightly in service to one another.

Summary:

The teaching which says that Christians must also uphold the Law of Moses, including circumcision is false! The Law-free Gospel which Paul preaches is the true Gospel, because it is from God, and the leaders all agree. Paul's life, the Galatian's experience, and the Scripture all prove that salvation comes through believing in Christ, and not through obedience to the Law, and to insist on Law-keeping is to put yourself back under the curse. When we believe in Christ, we live by the Spirit, and actually uphold what God requires from us, in the freedom which the Spirit brings, not in the bondage of rule keeping.

Organization:

1:1-5 Introduction
Epistolary Introduction – Paul defends himself and the Gospel
1:6-9 Against the False gospel
Warning against False Gospels and defending the only Gospel
1:10-5:12 The Gospel Defended
1:10-2:21 Defended by Paul's Narrative
1:10-12 Theme statements 1:13-17 Paul's early life and conversion 1:18-24 Paul's first interaction with Jerusalem 2:1-10 Paul's second interaction with Jerusalem 2:11-14 Paul's rebuke of Peter 2:15-21 Paul's theological rationale for his rebuke of Peter
3:1-6 Defended by the Galatians' Experience
3:1-5 The Galatians' experience 3:6 The Scriptural proof
3:6-5:12 Defended by Scripture and Theology
3:6-14 Law curse vs. Faith blessing (proved by Scripture) 3:15-29 Relationship of the Law and Abraham's promise 4:1-7 Argument from Salvation History 4:8-18 Application – Galatians, Do no go back! 4:19-31 Illustration from the slave woman and the free woman 5:1-12 Encouragement to freedom by rejecting false gospels
5:13-6:10 The Gospel Applied
5:13-15 Living in Freedom 5:16-26 Living by the Spirit (not the flesh) 6:1-10 Living toward one another
6:11-18 Conclusion
Personal autograph, Final rejection of false teachers, Postscript blessing and warning

Key Verses:

1:6-9; 2:11-21; 3:1-5; 3:6-14; 4:3-7; 5:1-6; 5:16-26; 6:12-15