

Epistle to the

Galatians



A Bible Study of

East Wenatchee First Baptist Church

Introduction

Author:

Paul is identified as the author of Galatians. But what do we know about Paul? He grew up in Tarsus in Cilicia, a Roman city known for its timber industry. His parents were Jewish in race and religion, but Roman in citizenship as freemen. At a young age he was sent to Jerusalem to study in the synagogue of the renowned rabbi Gamaliel. Gamaliel, as grandson, and student of Hillel, taught a more gracious approach to the Law, hence Paul likely learned a great deal about the spirit of the law verses a letter of the law.

As a devout Pharisee, Paul was zealous about adherence to the Jewish faith. This prompted his campaign against the Christians in their infancy. Of course, he came to meet Christ just outside of Damascus through miraculous circumstances and was saved. As a new convert, Paul spent three years in the wilderness, presumably with God alone, learning a new doctrine of the church and Christianity. Consequently, Paul became the leading apostle to the Gentiles and was mightily used of God.

In Galatians, Paul's background is important to understand because it profoundly shapes his perspective. The specific teaching is God's, but the articulation is Paul's. He is therefore the perfect penman to write this letter.

Audiences:

Immediate: The Galatians were not a church, but a group of churches in the region, or province of Galatia. Their struggles were so foundational that they had to be addressed.

Date: The precise year of writing is a matter of some debate and discussion in Christendom. North Galatians tend to ascribe a later date (53-58 A.D.) because Acts 16:6 and 18:23 suggest that Paul visited Galatia, and thus must have logically wrote this epistle from either Ephesus or Corinth on his final missionary journey. On the other hand, southern Galatians ascribe an earlier date (50-55 A.D.) because Paul visited prominent cities in that region on his first missionary journey (Acts 13; 14), and so would have logically written this letter between his first and second missionary journey from Corinth or Syrian Antioch.

The primary marker to identify a more specific date comes in comparing Paul's references in 1:18ff and 2:1-10 with the record of Acts. Most conservative students place Paul's reference in 2:1-10 as either Acts. 11:30, or Acts 15:1-21. McArthur takes the later view, while Ryrie the former. For this study, we conclude that Paul is indeed referencing Acts 11 in Galatians 2 simply because an earlier writing date would explain why Paul does not include the ruling of the council in Acts 15 as part of his teaching to the churches of Galatia.

Language: This letter was written in Greek, the common language of the time. Though Rome had taken control of the region years earlier, the transition from Greek to Latin was still forthcoming. To maintain community and cohesion in the empire, trade, industry, and retail were all dependent upon Koine Greek. This was a relaxed form of Greek that followed the classical form used during the Greek empire.

Culture: The record in Acts 13-16 tells us about the audiences to whom Paul preached as he evangelized several prominent cities of this region. From this record we conclude that while the group was primarily Jewish, it wasn't exclusively so. Furthermore, the believers came from both monotheistic and polytheistic backgrounds. The Jews had a rich spiritual history, whereas the Gentiles a very pagan past. In Lystra, Paul miraculously healed a crippled man and the crowd immediately assumed he was the god Hermes (the messenger of Mt. Olympus which was often seen as the guide to the crossing over of the world of the gods and humans).

On the other hand, the Jews, in jealousy over the vast crowds that gathered to hear Paul, sought to take his life. On more than one occasion the Jews of Galatia stoned, or beat Paul with the intent to kill him. He was severely persecuted for preaching the gospel to these cities.

The only other point of interest regarding Galatian culture is the fact that it is probable that the southern part of the region was significantly populated by a race that had originally migrated from the region of modern-day France. (The northern section was almost entirely populated by descendants of that migration.) They were Celtic, or Gaulish, hence the regional name given by the Greeks, Galatia.

Spirituality: Having discussed their spiritual background previously, we are more interested here with the setting for Paul's letter. It is obvious that the churches of this region were being plagued by teachers who had wandered north from Jerusalem with a very erroneous doctrine: that Christians were to adhere to the Jewish Torah. Their teaching was so compelling and convincing that it swayed the faith practices of many believers and their churches. As in many churches before and since, these taught that salvation came through faith in Christ's death, burial, and resurrection, AND adherence to Jewish rites and rules. Included would have been matters like circumcision, keeping feasts, dietary restrictions, and perhaps even Sabbath worship.

Consequently, the whole reality of salvation was being compromised by a subtle introduction of works for salvation, not from salvation. This error was predominantly being developed on the progressive sanctification side of salvation. It was certainly causing confusion in some cases as well as misplaced confidence in others.

Location: The region of Galatia (the southern area) is a basin with mountains forming a basic horseshoe opening to the north. The mountains provide a break from climate extremes, but the interior plateau is quite harsh. Winters are cold (below zero Fahrenheit), summers are hot (90's Fahrenheit), and it averages approximately 12" of rain a year. This is a tough land, and likely bred a tough people.

The boundaries of this region are difficult to establish but appear to stretch east to west about 150 miles, and north and south about 400 miles. Traveling through this Roman province on the road system gave you very few options as Rome only built three converging highways into Iconium, the major city of the region. To the north and south were other highway options. And though they traversed through milder climates, they also navigated more difficult terrain.

Extended: We believe that Galatians is absolutely canonical. As such it has proven its authority as inspired Scripture and must therefore be applied by believers of all generations, and in every location. It is true that the letter was specifically directed to the believers of the churches of Galatia in times now long gone, but it was generally directed to believers at large. So then, we believe interpretation must consider that the letter has specifics that are not intended for us (EG 3:1), but that understanding that context, it is for us. Galatians is for God's people.

Genre:

The final section to discuss as we introduce this study is the literary genre of Galatians. It is categorized as an epistle, and more specifically in the New Testament as a Pauline epistle. This means that it is a personal letter written by the apostle Paul. And as with any letter, there is a definite format congruent with the time and culture in which he lived. It opens with an introduction of the writer(s), followed by an identification of the receivers, gives brief introductory remarks, delves into the meat of the address, and then finally closes with parting words.

Questions regarding introductory material:

1. What did you learn about Paul from this discussion?
2. What did you learn about the Galatians': Lingua franca? Culture? Spiritual background and epistolary context? Homeland?
3. Did God write Galatians to you? Briefly explain or discuss.
4. What does it mean that Galatians is an epistle? Can you identify any other literary genres in the New Testament?

Galatians as outlined by the renowned New Testament scholar Richard Longenecker:

Salutation – 1:1-5

Rebuke section 1:6-4:11

Occasion for writing/issues at stake – 1:6-10

Autobiographical statements in defense – 1:11-2:14

Thesis statement – 1:11-12

Early life, conversion, and commission – 1:13-17

First visit to Jerusalem – 1:18-24

Second visit to Jerusalem – 2:1-10

The Antioch episode – 2:11-14

The proposition of Galatians – 2:15-21

Arguments in support – 3:1-4:11

Righteousness apart from the Law: against legalism – 3:1-18

The believer's life not "under Law" but "in Christ": against Nomism – 3:19-4:7

Paul's concern for the Galatians – 4:8-11

Request section 4:12-6:10

Exhortations against the Judaizing threat – 4:12-5:12

Personal appeals – 4:12-20

The Hagar-Sarah allegory – 4:21-31

Holding fast to freedom – 5:1-12

Exhortations against libertine tendencies – 5:13-6:10

Life directed by love, service to others, and the Spirit – 5:13-18

The works of the flesh and the fruit of the Spirit – 5:19-26

Doing good to all – 6:1-10

Subscript – 6:11-18

Galatians 1:1-5

There is an immediate introduction of the author as well as other participants in the writing. Who is the primary author?

Not only is the primary author identified by name, but also by office, or position. What is his position? And what do you know about that office?

There is residual explanation about the office Paul holds. He is sure to state that men are not the source of his apostleship, nor are they the agents who commissioned him. Instead, it is Jesus Christ and God the Father who commission Paul. Why is this important to understand?

Paul also purposefully mentions that the Father is responsible for Christ's resurrection. (The Scriptures do indicate that that responsibility isn't exclusive, for Christ and the Holy Spirit are also credited with the resurrection.) How does this reference support Paul's statement of authority in his own commissioning?

There were others involved in the writing of this letter. How are they identified?

Paul gives clear address as to the intended audience. To whom is Paul writing?

The first thing Paul wants his audience to know is his own well wishes. There are two blessings that he bestows in his initial writing, what are they, and what is the significance of these thoughts?

Now, true to Paul's style, theology, and heart he notes the sources of his blessing, "God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ." But Paul cannot just mention them, he seems compelled to add a brief summary of the sacrifice of our Savior. What is the purpose of including that information?

The technical information may be helpful to know, so let's parse this further. Paul says that "Christ gave himself for our sins."

1. For what purpose?
2. By whose design?
3. What is the believer's response? (Paul leads us in his exclamation in verse 5.)

Galatians 1:6-24

Paul launches into the basic content of his letter in this passage. These verses serve as a starting point for Paul's teaching. He will develop an important doctrine in his letter, but needs to address the foundational issue: the purity, importance, and foundational vitality of the gospel. When you read verses 6-12 you get a strong sense of Paul's passion for the gospel. Take a minute and explain the following:

1. The reality that the gospel is singular. Is there any other gospel in the world?
2. The importance of the truth in the gospel. Is there alternative gospels preached in the world? Can you give examples?
3. The purity of the gospel is to man, from God. Briefly outline the basic elements of the gospel.

Now, based on what you know of God's gospel, reflect on why its source in God is so important to us as humanity.

In the next few verses Paul explains his own involvement with the preaching of the gospel. He starts out with a quick reminder of his religious zeal. How would you summarize Paul's enthusiasm based on what he recorded in verses 13 and 14?

Now Paul, in order to strengthen the doctrine he has introduced, testifies that he himself has practiced what he is preaching. His own salvation had no human involvement. When did Paul's own salvation story begin?

Did he come to be saved by the efforts of anyone?

Did he confirm his salvation or call to ministry through anyone?

Finally, Paul appears to have made it a special point to avoid overexposure with believers so as not to taint his sanctification. The result was that the word of his conversion spread through the churches on its own. What was the powerful result of this approach?

Galatians 2:1-14

In the introduction, some time was spent on the appropriate dating of this reference. For this particular study the assumption is being made that Paul, Barnabas, and Titus went to Jerusalem as Luke records it in Acts 11:27-30. Paul had helped collect materially and monetarily for the suffering Christians in Jerusalem, and then he and Barnabas made the delivery. While he was in Jerusalem, Paul explained his ministry directed toward the Gentiles to the Jewish leadership. Though Acts does not record this happening, it is likely the right timing. But why not equate Galatians 2:1-10 with the record of Acts 15:1-30? Following is some rationale:

1. Acts 15 records Paul and Barnabas having a large and intent audience whereas Galatians specifically mentions a private meeting.
2. Acts 15 says the church in Antioch sent them to answer some doctrinal questions, but Galatians says Paul came by personal revelation.
3. Galatians 1:20 records a strong affirmation of integrity which leads us to conclude that if Paul had visited Jerusalem a third time, he would have had to mention it. (IE Acts 9; 11; and 15) The fact that he only references two visits seems to point to taking Acts 11 and Galatians 2 as the same visit.
4. If Acts 15 was the visit being mentioned in Galatians 2, Paul would have doubtless mentioned the ruling of the Messianic council in his argument to the churches, but he doesn't. Why doesn't he? Likely because it is the Acts 11 visit, not the Acts 15.

Ok. Now that there is a more significant defense of interpreting Galatians 2:1-14 in light of the Acts record, what difference does it make? Theologically, little. Practically, little. But my purpose here is simply to explain the rationale for taking the position I did. If there is anything of importance to our study it is the fact that Paul likely did not have any resolutions from Jerusalem on which to draw when it came to his diatribe with the Galatians. He taught cutting edge doctrine to a very needy audience without the availability of corroborating apostolic teaching.

Now we know that Paul headed to Jerusalem. In verse two Paul gives a reason for his journey. What was that reason? (The very first part of the verse gives his reason for the trip.) Explain what that is.

Paul also gives the purpose of his trip in verse two, to affirm to the apostles and church leaders in Jerusalem the truth of the gospel doctrine he was preaching. This gospel doctrine is at the heart of what Paul has to teach the Galatians. Verse three gives us a very large example from Paul's ministry on the issue. What is that issue?

The pure truth of the gospel is distinguished from the adulterated truth of the false teachers. The true gospel liberates. Any false gospel brings what?

Paul's love for the people of Galatia was proven by the fact that he persevered in preaching the true gospel. Why

After Paul explained the gospel he preached, as well as demonstrated his own calling to the Gentiles, the Christian leaders, namely Peter, James, and John, acknowledged the truth of his ministry. This was symbolized by what act?

The calling of Paul and Barnabas was confirmed in their ministry to the Gentiles. Along with that the elders requested on last thing. What was it? And, why do you think they asked such a thing?

Now, in his letter, Paul has to give another example of him teaching, defending, and consistently living out the true gospel in verses 11-14. It was the basic hypocrisy of Peter and other Jewish believers. Summarize what happened and explain why that was a problem.

Galatians 2:15-21

Paul starts really digging into his intended doctrinal lesson with this passage. He recognizes the importance of establishing his and the Galatians Jewish roots. They are definitely not “Gentile sinners.” What does this imply?

The Jews elevated the teaching of the Law to unhealthy levels, but once they started getting saved through the gospel of Jesus Christ, thinking began to change. Paul places the working of the Law at one extreme, in essence pitting it against faith in Jesus Christ at the other extreme. According to verse 16, Paul reminds the Galatians that the working of the Law cannot accomplish what faith in Christ accomplishes. What is that? Please explain what you know about justification.

Paul asks a very logical question. “If, in our endeavor to be justified in Christ, we too were found to be sinners, is Christ then a servant of sin?” This is the point; through faith in Christ we find justification, but we still sin. If we are still sinning, yet justified, doesn’t that make Christ someone who is serving sin? What is Paul’s response at the end of verse 17?

How does Paul explain the issue of recurring sin in the life of the justified in verse 18?

Paul then uses a logical (yea philosophical) statement to move our thinking from the justification we find in Christ to the strange blessing of the Law: it kills. Paul simply says, “For through the law I died to the law...” The result of this death is that Paul could then live to God. I summarize this way, when we desire God, we may logically look to keep the Law as a standard for righteous living, but as we keep looking to God we have to abandon the Law for it is incapable of justification, salvation, or life. So where is saving hope found? In Christ. Please summarize how life is found in Christ according to verse 20.

Now faith is huge, but Paul says, “I do not reject God’s grace” in the matter. Can you give a short definition or explanation of grace? (Please include how it works in salvation.)

Paul’s concluding statement in verse 21 is centered on the matter of righteousness. How is righteousness achieved? How is it not achieved? (And for practical exercise, how does natural man perceive righteousness? How does that weigh into the doctrine of verse 21?)

Galatians 3:1-18

How does Paul’s blunt statement and question in verse one grab attention?

Paul reminds his audience of their knowledge of the preaching of the gospel in the end of verse one. He then proceeds to move their thoughts logically by asking several rhetorical questions. Summarize Paul’s questioning in verses 2-6:

Question 1 – “Did you receive the Spirit by works of the law, or by hearing with faith?”

Question 2 – “Are you so foolish?”

Question 3 – “Having begun in the Spirit, are you now being perfected by the flesh?”

Question 4 – “Did you suffer so many things in vain (if indeed it was in vain)?”

* Note * The Galatians have been persecuted for their faith in Christ. This persecution doubtless came from the Judaizers and Jews who intended to move the religious exercise of the Christians. However, the word suffer is a neutral term that simply means *to experience*. Context dictates whether that was positive or negative. Here it may be much better to understand this question as: “Did you experience so much blessing for nothing (if it was really for nothing)?” After having come to Christ, the Galatians, like every other believer, saw blessing in true salvation. Was that blessing a fluke?

Question 5 – “Does he who supplies the Spirit to you and works miracles among you do so by works of the law, or by hearing with faith...?”

Abraham is the prototype of saving faith. We who trust Christ as our Savior do so with the same trust that Abraham exhibited. God even told Abraham, “In you shall all the nations be blessed.” What does that mean for the Gentiles of Galatia? Or for us Gentiles?

In contrast, those who continue to try and keep the Law get no salvation, only condemnation. Paul quotes Deuteronomy 27:26 when he says, “Cursed be everyone who does not abide by all things written in the Book of the Law, and do them.” Furthermore, Paul bluntly states that faith and works are salvation opposites. He makes a plain reminder that Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us.

In this context he points to the curse of crucifixion. This form of death wasn't the problem, it was the legal context that was the problem. Jews did not execute by hanging but by stoning. The Jews hung people post-mortem as a statement of the vileness of the offender. Thus, Jesus was seen as the worst of criminals or sinners, yet it wasn't His sin for which He died. Verse 14 tells us why He did this. Why did Jesus hang on the cross of Calvary?

Now, just think about a legal contract. Once it has been signed and recorded it cannot be changed. This is how it went with Abraham. God made a “contract” with Abraham and his offspring. That offspring is whom?

Paul says we can obviously conclude that God's plan from day one was Christ, not the Law. Summarize Paul's argument in verse 17 and 18.

Galatians 3:19-29

In light of the fact that God's plan was always Christ, and that He even promised Abraham according to that perfect plan, why did He even give the Jews the Law? How does Paul explain this in verse 19?

Explain how verse 20 fits into the context? What does it mean?

Well then, if the Law isn't necessary for salvation, but it does show and limit our sin, is it opposed to God's promises (probably thinking of the Abrahamic Covenant)?

The Law cannot save, but God's Word teaches that all are under sin, and so, those who believe in Christ will receive the promise (Christ, as mentioned in verse 16), by faith in Him. Now, until that object of our faith came, we were imprisoned under the law. Does this mean that no one could be saved until Christ came? Explain your answer, and try to use Scripture to shape your thoughts.

The Law of God did fill a very important role: it gave us religious structure until we knew the object of our faith. Verses 24-26 teach a sometimes difficult doctrine to understand. The Law was never intended to save, or sanctify; it simply established a moral standard, and taught us of the need to trust in God instead of the efforts of self. At this point, we ought to consider, as Gentiles we really don't understand the function of the Law in the lives of the Jews. However, we tend to become legalistic at times ourselves. How would you define or explain legalism?

When Christ comes, all religious background gets thrown out of the window. If you "were baptized into Christ" then you "have put on Christ." There is no such thing as Jew, Greek, slave, nor free, male, nor female. Why? Because we are Christians. Nothing more, and nothing less. In this we relate to Abraham because of faith. Our faith in Christ unifies us. Think of some ways that segregations are overcome because of Christ.

Galatians 4:1-20

In order for us to get a fuller picture of verses 1-7 we must ensure that we understand the closing verses of chapter three. The Law has acted as our guardian until the time in history was right for God the Son to incarnate and atone for mans sins. Paul likens this to the relationships familiar to the Galatian culture, children and slaves. In the following excerpt from Plato's *The Republic* there is a dialogue recorded between Socrates and Lysis.

Socrates: Do they (your parents) let you control your own self, or will they not trust you in that either?

Lysis: Of course they do not.

Socrates: But someone controls you.

Lysis: Yes, my guardian here.

Socrates: Is he a slave?

Lysis: Why certainly; he belongs to us.

Socrates: What a strange thing; a free man controlled by a slave! But how does this guardian exert his control over you?

Lysis: By taking me to the teacher

Plato also wrote in *Laws*:

Just as no sheep or other witless creature ought to exist without a herdsman, so children cannot live without a guardian, nor slaves without masters.

The Greeks were not the only ones to see the relationship of the guardian so clearly. In the Midrash (a commentary included in the Talmud) the Rabbi's depicted Moses as the guardian of Israel. So too were David and Jeremiah.

With this in mind, Paul likens the faith in Christ to a child who is in the care of slaves (those under the Law) until he comes to maturity. Once the child comes to the appropriate age, he no longer requires the aid of the slave. So it is with faith in Christ and those under the Law. The Law was in place for hundreds of years, protecting and aiding the believers, but when Christ came the role of the Law ceased.

Now, being sons, not slaves, God has blessed us with a gift. According to verse 6, what is that great gift? How big of a deal is this gift?

Along with that thought, how big of a deal is verse seven? Explain.

At this point Paul changes gears. He takes more of a scolding tone in his address. He reminds them of their pagan backgrounds, enslaved to idols (their devotion to the Law). Now that they are known by God, and know Him, Paul asks, "How can you turn back again to the weak and worthless elementary principles of the world, whose slaves you want to be once more?" According to verse 10, what evidence of their return to the Law?

In verses 12-20 Paul pleads with deep emotion. Summarize Paul's pleas and challenges to the churches of Galatia.

Galatians 4:21-31

If I were to title this study it would be *The Tale of Two Women*. In these few verses Paul uses Sarah and Hagar as an allegory of the Law and faith in Christ. Below is a small chart to depict the doctrine.

	<u>Hagar</u>	<u>Sarah</u>
The children	Those serving the law	Those trusting in Christ
The reward	Earthly Jerusalem	Heavenly (New) Jerusalem

As Paul begins this section of his letter he asks a strong rhetorical question. "Tell me, you who desire to be under the law, do you not listen to the law?" Though this question is rhetorical, what kind of answer could this question render?

He then draws parallels between Isaac, the son of promise, and us who are born of the Spirit. Whereas Ishmael is the son born in slavery and pictures those born of bondage to legalism in the Law. The children of promise receive their reward of the new Jerusalem. What do you know about that city (see Rev. 21:9-22:5)?

The children of slavery receive their reward of the old Jerusalem. More specifically, Jerusalem as the home to the temple. What do you know about the temple (see Exodus 25-27 if necessary)?

Now, in order to take this discussion to some theological conclusion, Hebrews 9-10 discusses the differences between worship in the old temple in Jerusalem versus the worship in the new Jerusalem. Note anything here that highlights the blessing of inheriting the new Jerusalem.

Galatians 5:1-15

The first verse of chapter 5 makes a sobering declaration, “For freedom Christ has set us free...” We don’t think about it a lot, but any time we adhere to a set of rules as a means of gaining grace we abuse the grace we’ve already been given. God intended us to be free from restrictive requirements in our religion so we could freely express our love by obedience to His leading. Therefore, we must “stand firm, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery.” Paul emphasizes this doctrine to the extent that he says plainly, “if you accept circumcision, Christ will be of no advantage to you. Read verses two through six carefully and summarize Paul’s teaching in your own words.

Did you notice the summary in verse six? Circumcision, dietary restriction, Sabbath worship, observing high holy days, etc. etc. etc. are nothing in acquiring grace. What counts?

Now in verses 7-12 Paul gets pretty personal. If we were to boil down this short passage it may sound something like: *What happened? You’ve drifted, but must come back. For those who have misled you, I desire their castration.* Rough, but certainly clearly understandable. What emotions do you believe Paul felt as he wrote this to the Galatians?

The reality of false teaching is ever with us. What false teaching is altering the standing of the Galatians?

Why is this false teaching so devastating to a believer?

As a side note, you notice in verse 11 that Paul asks a question as a means of defense. Apparently, the false teachers had been making the claim that Paul was actually teaching circumcision. However, they also were attacking him for his doctrine. Paul is essentially saying, you can’t have it both ways. No one likes being misrepresented. It takes time and dedication to know someone’s doctrine. We have to be careful when we hear other people’s perspectives on preachers, Bible teachers, pastors, theologians, etc. We all have a tendency to hear what we want to hear and misrepresent someone on false grounds.

Galatians 5:13-25

The self-enslaving pattern of the Galatians has caused real frustration and question from Paul. Now he lovingly proclaims, "For you were called to freedom, brothers." Conduct a mini Bible study and explain Christian freedom or liberty.

Now, lest we incorrectly assume that freedom means religious anarchy where anything goes, Paul pulls gently on the reins. In verses 13-15 there is a fundamental element of doctrine that keeps us centered and focused: love. Paul quotes our Savior when he says, "The whole law is fulfilled in one word: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'" Define or explain biblical love.

Walking in love is an exercise of spirituality. That spiritual lifestyle keeps you and I from the desires of the flesh. Furthermore, to be led by the Holy Spirit is how we keep from being brought back under the Law. The instruction then is clear and precise, walk in the Spirit and you will avoid pursuing the sin that follows living in the flesh. As we look at some of the bigger works of the flesh, briefly explain each.

Sexual immorality:

Impurity:

Sensuality:

Idolatry:

Sorcery:

Enmity:

Strife:

Jealousy:

Fits of anger:

Rivalries:

Dissensions:

Divisions:

Envy:

Drunkenness:

Orgies:

Things like these... Can you think of one or two more obvious sins of the flesh?

Paul says that people who do these types of things exhibit an unaltered depravity. Their character is demonstrated in their persistence in sin, thus they will miss the blessing of heaven.

On the other hand, there are works of the Spirit that results in certain manifestations. Paul refers to these as fruits of the Spirit. They aren't actions, but are really what is left after the action has taken place. For instance, recently the Holy Spirit convicted me about apologizing to someone I had wronged. I obeyed His instruction and made my apology. The fruit of the Spirit, born from my obedience in apologizing was peace and kindness

between me and the person I had offended. As we look at Paul's short list of Spiritual fruits, give a brief explanation of each one.

Love:
Joy:
Peace:
Patience:
Kindness:
Goodness:
Faithfulness:
Gentleness:
Self-control:

As Paul says, "There is no law against these." What does he mean when he says that?

Now we know that someone who belongs to the Lord has put the flesh to death, though that is an ongoing work in sanctification. So to close out this section, Paul concludes that living in the Spirit demands two commitments. Give a brief explanation of both.

1. "Let us walk by the Spirit"
2. "Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another."

Galatians 6:1-10

Paul gives a more "rapid fire" approach as he rounds the last bend of his letter. He's helped his audiences distinguish between works born of the flesh, and fruit born of the Spirit, and now he gets direct in how to live as a child of God. Below is a basic outline of subtopics of Paul addressing the issue of self-control in ministry. Please comment on each.

1. How you address sin in others. (1)
2. How you show love to others. (2)
3. How you evaluate yourself. (3-5)
4. How you use what you've learned. (6)
5. How you live has consequences. (7-8)
6. How you do good should be a matter of commitment and thorough. (9-10)

Galatians 6:11-18

Paul is wrapping up his letter with very personal and brief parting words. This final bit is not by dictation, but by Paul's very own hand. Many believe that Paul's eyesight was failing by this time, which is why he wrote in such large text. Regardless, it is commonly agreed that Paul took up the pen in order to emphasize these parting thoughts.

First, he wants the Galatians to pay attention to the subsurface motives of those preaching circumcision. According to verse twelve, why were the Judaizers forcing circumcision on the new Gentile converts?

According to verse thirteen, what is the second reason the Judaizers were forcing circumcision on the new Gentile converts?

An evangelist of pure doctrine preaches a singular message for salvation. Paul is an example of that kind of evangelist. By his own confession, what is his core message?

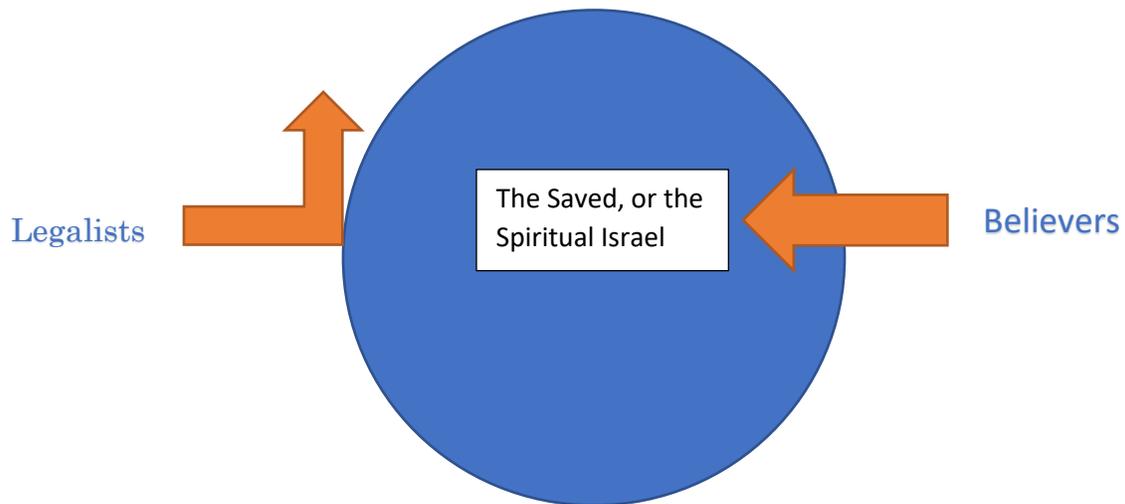
Paul bluntly states that circumcision is nothing in salvation. NOTHING! Christ makes the old new. According to verse sixteen, there should be a special blessing for those who do not confuse this doctrine. What is that blessing. (For hypothetical extra credit, can you give some explanation of Paul's use of the phrase *the Israel of God* at the end of the verse?)

With some final strokes of the pen, Paul calls for some self-blessing. What is that?

He signs off with a common Pauline blessing to his readers. What is that?

GALATIANS IN REVIEW

The book of Galatians can be summarized by some basic explanations. Below is a pictorial aid to encapsulate this epistle.



So, what is legalism?

Can you give modern day examples of "Judaizers?"

Can you explain the way our belief system works based on the person and work of Christ alone? (To help, these following issues can be part of your thoughts: faith; election; justification; sanctification; atonement)

How critical is your thinking when you listen to preaching or Bible teaching? (Not based on your tastes as much as your knowledge of truth or pure doctrine.)