

**(The Epistle to the) Galatians** **Πρὸς Γαλάτας**

*Galatians is the Book of Law versus Grace. The Apostle Paul's first epistle characterizes his entire ministry in revealing the grace of God to the Church.*

*Galatians was written to believers who had been saved by grace, but returned to legalism for their subsequent walk. As a result, it is a practical book for believers in every generation.*

**Title:** Pros Galatas “to the Galatians” is named for the recipients of the epistle (Gal. 1:2).

**Author:** The Apostle Paul, formerly known as Saul of Tarsus. Saved by grace, called by grace, serving through grace, Paul teaches the infinite value of grace.

**Galatians Chapter One**

1. Paul’s letter to the Galatians was addressed to the local churches in the Galatian region of modern Turkey (Gal. 1:2).
  - a. These were the local churches established by Paul & Barnabas on their First Missionary Journey (Acts 13&14).
  - b. This letter was a rebuke for the Galatians’ departure from grace and return to Judaistic legalism (Gal. 1:6).
2. Those who proclaim a Gospel message other than the Biblical Gospel message are

- a. He detailed how his former manner of life was transformed (Gal. 1:13-16a).
- b. He detailed his training in Arabia (Gal. 1:16b,17).
- c. He detailed his cursory association with other true Apostles, noting how his Syrian and Cilician ministries were independent of any other Apostolic contributions (Gal. 1:18-24).

**Galatians Chapter Two**

1. Paul’s autobiography comes about to the very issue he is addressing with the Galatians—the

- ἀνάθεμα <sup>#331</sup>: anathema; *delivered up to God for immediate destruction.*
- a. False gospel messages can be preached to unbelievers, obscuring the true issue and hindering salvation (Matt. 23:13).
  - b. False gospel messages can be preached to baby believers, confusing the true issues and hindering edification (Gal. 1:7; 3:1).
3. Paul admonished the Galatians that the Truth he delivered to them was not of human origin, but personally given by the Lord Jesus Christ (Gal. 1:11,12).
  4. In order to make this point clear, Paul composed a bit of an autobiography.

Focus	Gospel of Grace Defended		Gospel of Grace Explained			Gospel of Grace Applied									
	1:1	2:21	3:1	4:31	5:1	6:18									
Divisions	Paul’s Apostleship	Paul’s Authority	Justification by Faith not Works	Justification by Faith not the Law	Law and Grace Cannot Coexist	Position and Practice of Liberty	Power for Liberty	Performance in Liberty: Fruits of the Spirit							
									1:1	1:24	2:1	2:21	3:1	3:9	3:10
Topics	Biographical Explanation		Doctrinal Exposition			Practical Exhortation									
	Authentication of Liberty		Augmentation for Liberty			Application of Liberty									
Place	South Galatian Theory: Syrian Antioch North Galatian Theory: Ephesus or Macedonia														
Time	South Galatian Theory: AD49 North Galatian Theory: AD53-56														

problem of a believer falling away from grace and returning to legalism.

2. Paul described a journey to Jerusalem in the company of Barnabas and Titus (Gal. 2:1-5).
  - a. Some associate this trip with the Grace & Law conference of Acts 15.
  - b. It is better to associate this trip with the famine relief mission of Acts 11:27-30.
  - c. On this journey, false brethren (Jews) infiltrated Jerusalem Bible Church intending to subject the believers there to legalism (Gal. 2:4).
3. The Apostles Paul and Barnabas departed from the Apostles James and Peter and John (Gal. 2:6-10).
  - a. They parted in fellowship with one another.
  - b. They understood that each Apostle had been given a different burden.
    - 1) Peter's was a burden to the Jews, and he used his Aramaic nickname Cephas to minister to the Aramaic-speaking Jews.
    - 2) Paul's was a burden to the Gentiles (despite personal patriotism for his fellow Jews).
  - c. They agreed to the principles of grace and the unity of the Church.
4. Paul saw how the dangerous threat of legalism in Jerusalem affected Peter on a subsequent visit of Peter's in Antioch (Gal. 2:11-21).
  - a. The influence of false brethren in Jerusalem developed into a distinctive "party of the circumcision" (NAS) or "circumcision group" (NIV) (v.12b).
  - b. The Apostle James got caught up in the Judaistic legalism (v.12a).
  - c. When the Apostle Peter compromised on the grace issue, Paul rebuked him privately (vv.11,12).
  - d. Peter continued in the hypocrisy and influenced many others in the same manner—even Barnabas was carried away (v.13)—so Paul launched into a

public rebuke and exhortation to grace (vv.14-21).

**Galatians Chapter Three**

1. Having established that the message of Jesus Christ is a message of grace (Gal. 1), and that even Apostles like Peter, James, & Barnabas can be side-tracked into legalism (Gal. 2), Paul returns his focus to the Galatian local churches (Gal. 3:1).
2. Paul's logical argument was phrased as a question: Was your salvation achieved by the Law, or by faith? (Gal. 3:2)
3. This logic showed how spiritual maturity must likewise be achieved through faith rather than through the Law (Gal. 3:3).
4. The Galatians were encouraged by the reality that their faith in Christ justified them in the pattern of Abraham's faith as "sons of Abraham" (Gal. 3:6-9).
5. The Law was a "curse," but salvation by grace through faith is a blessing (Gal. 3:10-14).
6. The Mosaic Law, coming 430 years after the Abrahamic Covenant could not and did not invalidate or nullify the promise of blessing through the Seed (Christ) (Gal. 3:15-18).
  - a. The Law served an instructive purpose in the Dispensational plan of God. It taught the inability of fallen man to measure up to God's standard of righteousness (Gal. 3:19-22).
  - b. By virtue of the work of Jesus Christ to fulfill the Law, the new Dispensation of grace teaches the grace of God to provide His very righteousness to man in response to each person's faith in Christ (Gal. 3:23-29).

**Galatians Chapter Four**

1. Paul uses the metaphor of a child and a slave to communicate the blessings we have as Sons of God (Gal. 4:1-7).
2. By returning to Judaistic legalism, the Galatian churches were returning to bondage (Gal. 4:8-11).

3. Paul urges the Galatian churches to remember back to the sacrificial love and joy they had as new believers in Christ (Gal. 4:12 20).
4. Paul contrasts Mt. Sinai & the present Jerusalem with the Jerusalem above in order to paint a Biblical allegory for the grace blessings of the Church in contrast with the law-bondage of Israel (Gal. 4:21 31).

#### Galatians Chapter Five

1. Paul amplifies the message of chapter four. Our freedom in the Church is not just a freedom from Law, but a spirit-led freedom from the flesh (Gal. 5:1ff.).
2. A believer in the Church who strives to fulfill the Law will receive no empowerment from the One Who fulfilled the Law (Gal. 5:2 4).
  - a. Legalism severs a believer from the grace power system that Christ has provided for him.
  - b. Legalism is a “fall from grace” in terms of the empowerment and benefit for our daily justification. This has nothing whatsoever to do with the eternal justification of our salvation.
3. Our true power system is the Holy Spirit, as believers walk by faith, working through love (Gal. 5:5,13 15).
4. The Christian Way of Life has enemies.
  - a. The external enemies of those who would impose legalism over grace (Gal. 5:6 12).
  - b. The internal enemy of the flesh, with its natural desire hostile to the Holy Spirit (Gal. 5:16 18).
5. The deeds of the flesh (Gal. 5:19 21) and the fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22,23) are laid out in sharp contrast (Gal. 5:24 26).
  - a. Our life by the Spirit is a product of our salvation in Christ (Gal. 5:25a).
  - b. Our walk by the Spirit is a volitional matter for each believer to pursue or to reject (Gal. 5:25b).
  - c. Our walk by the Spirit is not a matter for pride or competition (Gal. 5:26).

#### Galatians Chapter Six

1. Each believer fights the battle between the Spirit and the flesh on the battleground of their own soul.
  - a. Often times we lose that battle when we give in to temptation (Gal. 5:17b).
  - b. Some times we lose that battle when others give in to temptation, and we grow prideful (Gal. 5:26).
  - c. As a fellow soldier, each believer needs to come alongside their comrade in arms and lift them up when they do fall short (Gal. 6:1 5).
2. Paul closes the letter with a number of admonitions for practical application.
  - a. Be financially grace oriented towards others, especially the Bible teachers.
  - b. Be eternally oriented with respect to sowing and reaping.
  - c. Be aware of the real motivation behind the legalists.
  - d. Be in prayer for Paul’s continued ministry despite many health issues & persecution episodes.