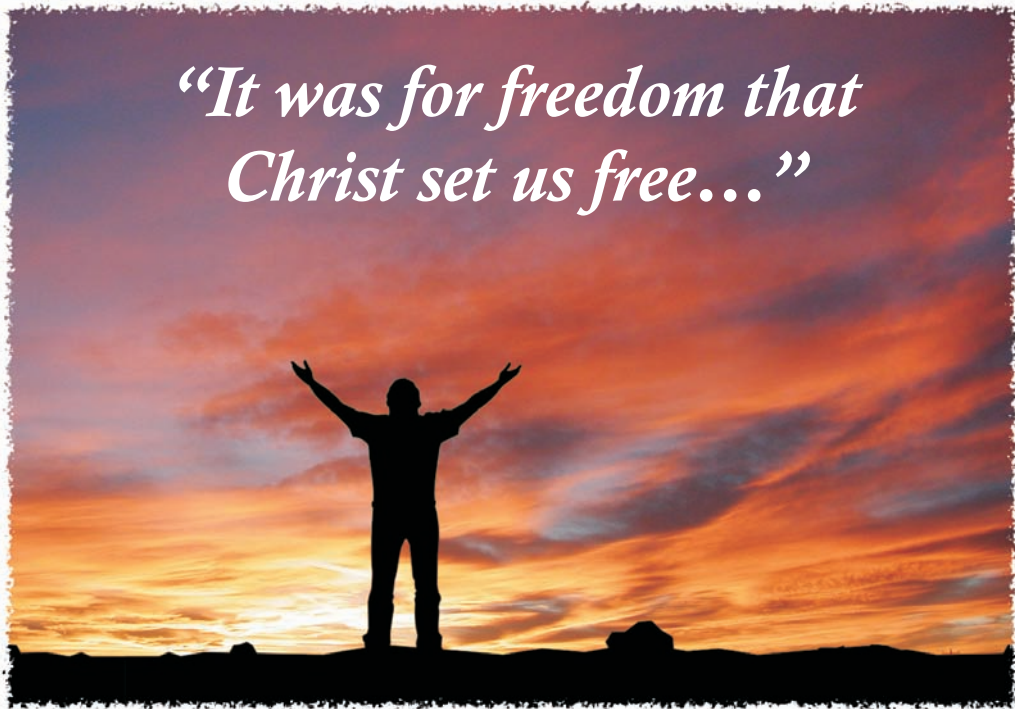


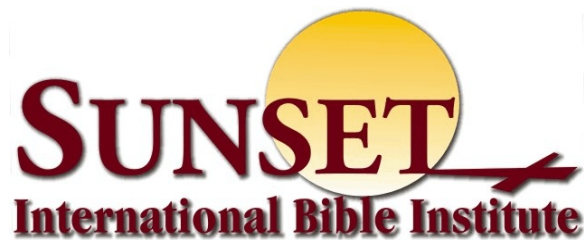
# Galatians

by Ed Wharton

*“It was for freedom that  
Christ set us free...”*



# **THE LETTER TO THE GALATIANS**



**INTRODUCTORY  
NEW TESTAMENT  
STUDIES**

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**Arranged for study by  
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## **The Book of Galatians**

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### **DISCLAIMER**

The textbooks used with this course were selected because we consider them to be the best commentaries available written by conservative authors. *Feed for Freedom*, written by Ed Wharton will follow closely the course itself. The Galatians section of the commentary *Galatians & Ephesians* by Kenneth L. Boles (The College Press NIV Commentary series), we believe, is an excellent commentary. This book will re-enforce the teaching you will receive from viewing the recorded lessons by Ed Wharton. As with all books there may be some things with which you and I would not agree. The principle, “use whatever is good and discard what is not good” applies to every textbook used with our courses. Please be wise enough to discard any and all teaching that is not biblical.

# Instructions and Requirements for Level II Students (Secondary Certificate Only)

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Each lesson is built around the instruction on either the DVDs or the CDs. Listen to or view the lecture as you follow along in the course Study Guide.

**Reading:** You are required to read the book of Galatians Three times during this course. One of your readings must be in a modern day version. **(10% of your grade)**

**Tests:** There is a Self Exam at the end of each lesson. Preview each lesson by reading these questions first. There will be only two tests to complete for this course. One test is to be done at the end of lesson six (6) and the other will be done at the end of the study and will cover lessons 7-12.

**MEMORY WORK:** Memory work will be done on the honor system. You are asked to write your verses from memory on your test in the presence of the administrator. After you have completed the test, and turned it in, correct the memory work with a different colored pen. Or you may quote them to the administrator during the course and he will keep track of the verses completed and report them to us. Please be diligent in doing your memory work. All memory work must be completed to pass this course. You will have fifteen (15) verses to memorize. **(This will be 10% of your grade).**

**Due with the mid-term test:** (7 verses)

Galatians 1:6-8; 1:11-14.

**Due with the final test:** (8 verses)

Galatians 3:26-29; 6:7-10.

## ASSIGNMENTS:

- \* The Self Exam for each lesson is to be read previous to listening to or viewing the material on the tapes.
- \* All the memory verses assigned must be either written or quoted before each assigned test is taken. These must be completed to pass the course. All must be done in the presence of the Administrator.
- \* All Self-Exams are to be completed at the end of each lesson.
- \* All work is due and ***must be completed*** at the time of the final test.

<b>Grading Scale:</b>	Memory Work	10%
	Reading	10%
	Two Tests	80%



# Instructions and Requirements for Level III Students (Bachelor Degree)

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Each lesson is built around the instruction on either the DVDs or the CDs. Listen to or view the lecture as you follow along in the course Study Guide.

**Reading: Read the book of Galatians six times** during the course of this study.

At least one reading must be in a modern speech Bible. Each time you read the book, do so at one sitting. You are also required to read the entire book *Freed for Freedom* by Ed Wharton and the section on Galatians in the commentary *Galatians & Ephesians* by Kenneth L. Boles (The College Press NIV Commentary series). Write a  $\frac{1}{2}$  **page evaluation of each chapter** of the commentary by Boles and send in with your final test.

**Memory Verses:** Memory work will be done on the honor system. You are asked to write your verses from memory on your test in the presence of the administrator. **Or you may quote them to the administrator** during the course and he will keep track of the verses completed and report them to us. Please be diligent in doing your memory work. All memory work must be completed to pass this course. You will have sixty-two (62) verses to memorize. **(This will be 10% of your grade).**

**Due by the mid-term test:** (33 verses)

Galatians 1:6-8, 11-14, 20-21; 3:6-29

**Due with the Final test:** (29 verses)

Galatians 4:1-6; 5:1-4, 16-24; 6:1-10

**Tests:** There will be only two tests to complete for this course. One test is to be done at the end of lesson six (6) and the other will be done at the end of the study and will cover lessons 7-12.

Add to your Study Guide (or make a notebook) notes from the taped lectures and other material gained in this study.

You must complete all the "Self Exam" questions in your Course Guide for inspection by the Administrator.

## **Grade Value Percentage**

Reading the book of Galatians six (6) times	10%
Reading the two (2) commentaries	10%
Evaluation paper on one commentary	10%
Memory work (62 verses)	10%
Two Tests	<u>60%</u>
Total grade possible	100%





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## LESSON ONE

# INTRODUCING GALATIANS

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### INTRODUCTIONS:



Galatians' principal subject matter is justification by faith in Christ. Its modern relevance is highlighted by contrasting man's characteristic disposition toward self-reliance to gain a right standing with God (e.g., Galatians 2:11-21), to the impotence of such self-power to achieve that right standing through a legal system of law (e.g., Galatians 3:1-14). In Galatians salvation emerges as the gracious result of divine atonement rather the outcome of human attainment.

In the course of his letter Paul reminds the Galatians of the extreme joy they experienced and of the uncommon reverence and gratitude they felt for him when originally he preached the gospel to them (4:13-15). This accounts for his deep paternal feeling for them, calling them "my children," and the fatherly perplexity he was experiencing over their recent engagement with Judaistic teaching (4:19-20).

The Book of Galatians falls into three natural divisions:

1. The Biographical (Historical) Argument – Chapters 1-2
2. The Scriptural (Theological) Argument – Chapters 3-4.
3. The Practical Argument – Chapters 5-6.

The letter opens with strong assertions (claims) of apostolic authority and divine power to save (1:1-5), and a warning challenge not to move away from the truth of the gospel (1:6-10).

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**LESSON TEXT:** Galatians 1:1-10; Galatians 2; Acts 15:1-35

**LESSON AIM:** To get an overall view of the book of Galatians – its characteristics, its purpose and design.

**LESSON OBJECTIVES:** You will . . .

1. Gain some insights into the book of Galatians and the identity of the churches to whom Paul was writing.
  2. Discover the reason for and the design of the letter including the message and theme of the book.
  3. Learn of the unusual nature of the book and the reason for its unique design.
-

## INTRODUCTORY INSIGHTS TO GALATIANS

### A. The Galatian Churches Were Established by Paul (1:8-9; 4:11-16)

1. His personal acquaintance with the churches is reflected in 4:13-15, 19-20.
  - a. Paul reminds the Galatians of the extreme joy they experienced and of the uncommon reverence and gratitude they felt for him when originally he preached the gospel to them (4:13-15).
  - b. He called them “my children,” – expressing his fatherly feelings toward them (v. 19).

### B. The Identity of These Galatian Churches

1. The letter is addressed to “the churches of Galatia.” The Book was written to the churches of Galatia (plural), Iconium, Lystra and Derbe and others. (Read the introductory material in your textbook.)
2. Probably the churches to the south – the churches Paul and Barnabas established during their first missionary journey. (Most American and British scholarship hold this view.)

## THE REASON AND DESIGN OF THE LETTER

The letter to the Galatians was written to expose the heresy of justification by law and to prove and maintain the doctrine of justification by faith in Christ.

### A. The Trouble at Galatia Exposed

1. **The problem** facing the Galatians churches was “Justification by Law” with faith in Christ added. The churches of Galatia, had been, and still were being invaded by “Law” teachers.
2. **The source** was the Jewish Legalist who came in among the Gentile churches (1:6; Acts 15).
  - a. Claimed to be Christians (2:4). They were “false brethren.
  - b. They insisted that Christians must keep the Law of Moses (5:2-4). The Gentiles must become proselyte Jews to be Christians.
  - c. Their doctrine compromised the cross (2:17, 21).
  - d. Their doctrine contradicted the gospel of justification by faith apart from the law (1:6-8; 2:16; 3:6-9, 21-22, 26) and threatened the security of the Galatian Christian’s salvation.
3. **The results** were that Paul’s apostolic authority was being undermined.
  - a. **His character was maligned** – He was accused of being two-faced (1:10; 4:12-20).
  - b. **His gospel was being maligned.**
    - 1) They claimed that his gospel differed from that of the original apostles (1:11-12; 2:1-10).
    - 2) His answer was direct and illustrated by historical proof.

### B. The Purpose of the Letter

1. To defend the gospel message.
2. To secure his spiritual children in the faith.

3. To defend his apostleship as genuine.
4. To expose the motives of the false teachers.

**C. The Definition and Explanation of Important Terms in Galatians**

1. LAW – a system of regulation, a rule of conduct, principle, norm.
2. JUSTIFICATION – to declare one righteous.
3. LEGALISM – a code of deeds and observances as a means of justification.
4. THE GOSPEL – a good news message.
5. FAITH – the trust or confidence the alien sinner must have in the person of Christ for justification.
6. JUDAIZER – to be or live like a Jew. Often used to identify the false teachers at Galatia with their Jewish nationality and their legalistic doctrine.

**NOTE:** These are listed and discussed in the text book, “*Freed For Freedom*.” Read these carefully and be able to discuss them on your test.

**D. The Message of the Book:** *Justification by faith in Christ.*

**E. The Theme of the Book:** *Freedom in Christ.*

**E. Our Aim in this Course Is Threefold:**

1. To come to an understanding of the book, the message of which is: Justification by faith in Christ.
2. To settle the question of the Christian’s assurance – Can you know you are saved?
3. To establish an obedience of faith.

**F. The Date of Writing: AD 50-53:** Be sure to read the related material about the date in your textbook, “*Freed For Freedom*.”

**PAUL’S DEFENSE OF HIMSELF (1:1-5)**

**A. An Unusual Introduction**

1. Paul defends his apostleship (1:11-12).
2. Paul defends his gospel.

**B. The Letter Is Unusual Because it Is Written in Very Large Letters**

1. Paul’s signature (6:11). “*See what large letters I use as I write to you with my own hand!*”
2. Paul did not dictate this letter to someone else as was his customary practice.

**C. The Letter Is Unusual as to its Form**

1. The form of ancient letters.
  - a. The greeting.
  - b. Prayer for their well-being.

- c. Thanksgiving for the recipients of the letter.
- d. The content of the message intended to be conveyed.
- e. The personal salutations.
- 2. The thanksgiving is left out of the book of Galatians. Paul did not give thanks for the Galatians.

**NOTE:** It was a part of the form of ancient letter writing to offer thanksgiving for the people to whom the letter was written. But, that is missing from this letter. It is not here in these first five introductory verses. Was that intentional? Did Paul intend not to give them thanks in order to rivet their attention? Or was it that Paul's intensity, and the spirit of brooding over these precious souls that could be lost, was actually at stake. Maybe he did not say thanks to them because he overlooked it.

### STUDY NOTES:

1. The origin of Paul's apostleship and authority.
  - a. He is a "sent, commissioned" one – An apostle.
  - b. He is fully clothed with the authority of the one who sent him.
  - c. His apostleship is equal to that of the twelve original apostles.
  - d. His commission was not from man nor through man.
  - e. The origin of his apostleship was Jesus Christ and God the Father.
2. Since his apostleship is genuine, so is the gospel which he proclaimed.
3. The Judaizers' claim concerning Paul and his gospel.
  - a. They claimed his commission was not derived from God but from men. He was not one of the original apostles.
  - b. They accused Paul of having received his commission through some man. (Ananias or one of the apostles.)
4. Paul's address: ". . . *to the churches of Galatia*" – Every commendatory modifier – for example, *beloved of God* etc. – is lacking here. The apostle loves them, but the urgency and tenseness of the intent prevent the usual greeting. The atmosphere is tense.
5. "*Grace and peace . . .*" (v. 3).
  - a. Grace – God's spontaneous, unmerited favor in action.
  - b. Peace – A state: reconciliation with God and a condition: the inner conviction that consequently, all is well (John 14:27; Philippians 4:7).
  - c. This grace and peace have their origin in God our Father.
6. The work of Christ – "*Who gave himself . . . to rescue us.*"
  - a. Paul says this in order to combat the teaching that the work of Christ must be supplemented by law-works.
  - b. The word "rescue" presupposes that those to whom it applies are in great danger from which they are unable to extricate themselves.
  - c. This present world – Greek, *AEON* – "the world in motion" in contrast to "the world at rest." It is the world which is hastening to its close. (This present world dominated by evil – 2 Peter 1:4).
  - d. When the wicked infiltrators minimize God's work of redemption, Paul will magnify it – ". . . *to whom be the glory forever and ever. Amen!*"

## THE CALLED AND THE TROUBLED

### A. The Gospel and The Curse

Consider that any addition to the gospel so perverts it that an anathema (curse) is pronounced upon both the preacher and receiver (1:8-10).

1. God's human representatives – Paul and his assistants.
2. God's heavenly representatives – Angels.
3. Anathema – accursed or doomed – cut off from God.
4. They had been forewarned – *“As we said before . . . so say I again.”*
5. Paul is not a man pleaser (v. 10). *“For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ.”*
  - a. The indictment of verses 6-9 would surely offend the Galatians.
  - b. Paul defends himself against the charge that he ever preached circumcision for Gentiles (5:11). *“But I, brethren, if I still preach circumcision, why am I still persecuted? then hath the stumbling-block of the cross been done away.”*
6. Accusations against Paul – “Paul is trying to win human rather than divine favor. He tries to please everybody, so that everybody may follow him. Among his own people he allows circumcision (Acts 16:3), for he knows that they believe in it. But he withholds this rite from the Gentiles because they welcome exemption from it.”

### SUMMARY:

His immovable position that “any gospel other than that which we preached” and “ye received” was both perverted and troublesome pointed to the fact that he was not “striving to please men.” (Compare also the conflict between Paul and Peter and their policies (2:11-14.))

**SELF EXAM FOR LESSON ONE:**

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1. Have you read the entire book of Galatians and the first chapter in Ed's book, "Freed for Freedom?" \_\_\_\_\_
2. Locate the Galatian churches to whom this letter was written and identify the author of the book. \_\_\_\_\_
3. Give the fourfold purpose of the letter.
  - 1) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 2) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 3) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 3) \_\_\_\_\_
4. Give the message and theme of the book.  
Message: \_\_\_\_\_  
Theme: \_\_\_\_\_
5. Give three things which reveal the unusual nature of the book.
  - 1) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 2) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 3) \_\_\_\_\_
6. List the six important terms given in your textbook with a brief definition of each word.
  - 1) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 2) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 3) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 4) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 5) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 6) \_\_\_\_\_



## LESSON TWO

# PAUL'S DEFENSE OF HIS APOSTLESHIP

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### INTRODUCTION:



Galatians is a defense of the truth of the gospel. Paul had only recently brought the Galatians to justification by faith in Christ. Soon afterwards, however, supposedly Christian Jews, convinced the Galatian churches that they had to be circumcised and keep the law of Moses in order to be saved (cf. Acts 15:1-5). For these Judaizers to succeed they had to superimpose their teaching on Paul's apostolic teaching. To accomplish this, they had to discredit Paul's apostleship, and consequently his authority, in order to discredit his gospel. And they succeeded, for the Galatians had already begun to observe Jewish ritual (Galatians 4:8-10), and apparently some had yielded to circumcision (5:2-4).

Paul had to fight for his apostolic authority against the accusations of false teachers that he was not an apostle. Making it appear that he was not an apostle would quite naturally cause the Galatians to lose confidence in the gospel he preached. Such a personal attack was essential if these false brethren would make headway with their particular doctrine where an apostle had been. Paul spends the first third of the letter in re-establishing his divine appointment to the apostolic office, his consequent authority to speak for Christ, and thus the reliability of his gospel – the major reason for his defensive efforts.

---

**LESSON TEXT:** Galatians 1:11-24

**LESSON AIM:** To show that Paul's claim to have been appointed to the apostolic ministry was true and that, therefore, his words (in his epistles) are the very words of God and are to be received as authoritative.

**LESSON OBJECTIVES:** You will . . .

1. Learn of Paul's line of defense as he offers a fourfold claim to prove his apostleship.
  2. See the significance of the word "for" (Greek – "gar") as Paul contrast the source of his gospel with that of the false teachers.
  3. Learn the first two (of four) proofs given by Paul that he did not receive his gospel from man but by revelation from God.
-

## PAUL'S LINE OF DEFENSE

### A. Paul's Fourfold Claim For His Gospel (1:11-12)

1. Paul's gospel originated in God, as shown by Paul's experiences before, during and shortly after his conversion.
2. Paul's claim for divine revelation from Jesus (1:11-12). Paul made four distinct claims about the gospel he preached:
  - a. *Paul's gospel was not according to man.* That is, it was not a man-made gospel; it was not an invention of human wisdom.
  - b. *Paul's gospel was not received from man.* Paul said he did not receive the gospel through the mediatorial efforts of any man.
  - c. *Paul was not taught the gospel by man.* It was not acquired "by the slow and progressive method of teaching" (McGarvey).  
In these last two statements the apostle claims that God did not pass the gospel on to him through any human instrumentality, not by any educational process employed by man.
  - d. *"But" he received the gospel by a direct revelation from Jesus Christ.* The "but" introduces a strong contrast between the foregoing statements and this one. This contrast is highlighted in the word "revelation."
    - 1) As used in the New Testament this means a miracle of imparting knowledge (cf. John 14:26; 1 Corinthians 2:1-10; Ephesians 3:3). Paul's claim is that he received the gospel from Jesus in a miraculous way even as the original apostles did at Pentecost (Acts 2:1-4).
    - 2) Paul makes this same claim to the church in Ephesus – "... *that is, the mystery made known to me by revelation, as I have already written briefly*" (Ephesians 3:3).

### B. The Significance of The Word "For"

1. There are several words in the original language translated "for."
2. This particular word (γάρ – *gar*) is used to offer the reason something is said or done. It sets in the same place as the word, "because" in Paul's reasoning.
3. Paul uses the word to introduce each verse in 1:10-13.
  - a. He uses it to mean, let me tell you why, or let me explain the reason back of that statement.
  - b. First he makes a claim for the gospel, "... *the gospel which was preached by me is not according to man.*"
  - c. Then in the following statement he offers the reason for the truth of that claim, and introduces it with the word "for," *"For I neither received it from man, nor was I taught it."*

## FOUR HISTORICAL PROOFS OF PAUL'S CLAIM

Paul supports his claim of divine intervention and special instruction from Christ (Galatians 1:11, 12) with three extraordinary facts from his Judaistic background. The first two will be considered in this lesson.

### A. Paul's First Proof – His Manner of Life in Times Past (1:13-14)

1. Paul persecuted the church **beyond measure**. HE WAS A FANATIC. The first argument reasons that no human being could have reached Paul with the gospel (1:13-14).
  - a. Historically, Paul (Saul) was known as “the” persecutor of Christians. Luke’s history in the Book of Acts, shows Paul (Saul) initiating a full scale persecution of the Jerusalem church.
    - 1) By the stoning of Stephen (Acts 7:58-8:1). He not only was present, but seems to be taking a leading role! “. . . *and they cast him out of the city, and stoned him: and the witnesses laid down their garments at the feet of a young man named Saul*” (Acts 7:58).
    - 2) Christian homes were violated and the occupants dragged off to prison. “*But Saul laid waste the church, entering into every house, and dragging men and women committed them to prison*” (Acts 8:3).
    - 3) Not even women were to escape the fury of his wrath.
  - b. He obtained authority from the chief priests to extend his persecutions beyond the borders of Palestine to Damascus, the capitol city of Syria (Acts 9:1-2). “*But Saul, yet breathing threatening and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest, and asked of him letters to Damascus unto the synagogues, that if he found any that were of the Way, whether men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem.*”
    - 1) There he would bind and imprison Christians with the intention of extraditing them to Jerusalem for trial (Acts 9:21).
    - 2) He pursued his persecution with a clear conscience putting Christians to death on the charge of blasphemy (Acts 26:9-13).
  - c. His intent was to annihilate Christianity, to make a scorched earth of the church of Christ (Acts 22:4) “. . . *and I persecuted this Way unto the death.*”

**NOTE:** This first argument reasons from those historical facts that Saul of Tarsus, in his life prior to conversion, was totally out of reach of the gospel; that no human effort to convert him to Christ could have by any means been successful. But the fact remains that Saul of Tarsus **was reached** with the gospel! Who, then, could have done it? If not a man, then that leaves God, with whom all things are possible. **PAUL WAS AN UNREACHABLE FANATIC!**

2. He advanced in the **Jews’ religion** – HE WAS PROMINENT.
  - a. He advanced, as a young man, socially and scholastically, and had gained powerful influence among even the Jewish hierarchy (cf. Acts 9:1-2; 26:12).
  - b. He was **prominent** among the Jews, even to the point that Gentiles heard of him and held for him a certain admiration (Acts 26:24-26).

3. He was exceedingly zealous for the *traditions of his fathers*. *HE WAS PREJUDICED!*
  - a. His “fathers” of which he refers were the Pharisees.
  - b. All his training from his youth had biased him in favor of the Jewish faith *as interpreted by the Pharisees*.

**NOTE:** These three facts from Paul’s “manner” of life in Judaism – his **fanaticism**, his **prominence** among the Jews, his **prejudice** – combine to make a very strong and reasonable argument that Saul of Tarsus was out of reach of any human being who might have attempted to win him to Christianity. He was simply untouchable! Yet he became a Christian.

**B. His Second Proof – He Had No Contact with Human Teachers (1:15-24)**

Apparently the Judaizers had charged that after conversion Paul had been further taught by these sources. To sustain his claim he offers the following evidence

1. The false teachers’ accusation was in two areas:
  - a. He got his gospel from men – from the apostles.
  - b. He got his gospel from men – from the Judean/Jerusalem churches.
2. Paul’s claim includes three statements:
  - a. God chose him from his mother’s womb.
  - b. God called him through His grace.
  - c. God called him to preach to the Gentiles.
3. The twofold proof of his claim as an inspired apostle.
  - a. **Paul had no contact with the original apostles** (1:15-20). After three years of preaching from the time of his conversion he saw only Peter and James for the short space of 15 days.
  - b. **Paul had no contact with the churches of Judea** (1:21-24). He was known to them only by reputation, not by face.

**CONCLUSION:**

Therefore, Paul learned nothing of the gospel he preached from these sources. This lends credence to his claim that he received the gospel, all of it, from Jesus and not from man. This was essential for an apostle.

**SELF EXAM FOR LESSON TWO:**

---

1. Give the fourfold claim Paul makes for his gospel in 1:11-12.
  - 1) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 2) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 3) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 4) \_\_\_\_\_
2. Give the Greek word translated “for” in this section of scripture and a brief definition of the word.  
The Greek word: \_\_\_\_\_  
Definition: \_\_\_\_\_
3. Give the two historical proofs of Paul’s claim that his gospel was by revelation and not from man.
  - 1) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 2) \_\_\_\_\_
4. List three characteristics of Paul before he was converted which offer proof that no man had taught him the gospel.
  - 1) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 2) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 3) \_\_\_\_\_
5. List and explain Paul’s twofold proof of his claim as an inspired apostle given in 1:15-24.
  - 1) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 2) \_\_\_\_\_
6. Write from memory the three natural divisions of Galatians.
  - 1) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 2) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 3) \_\_\_\_\_

## **NOTES**

## LESSON THREE

# PAUL ENDORSED BY THE OTHER APOSTLES

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### INTRODUCTION:

**J**ourteen years after Paul had met with Peter for a short time (15 days, Galatians 1:18-19) he again “went up to Jerusalem” (2:1) – according to the Lord’s own directive (2:2, “*I went up by revelation*”). This time he would meet with all the apostles. His purpose at Jerusalem was to preserve his apostolic ministry and “the truth of the gospel” as he preached it.

The Book of Acts mentions five Jerusalem visits made by Paul after his conversion: (1) the visit after he left Damascus (Acts 9:26-30; Galatians 1:18-20); (2) the famine visit (Acts 11:27-30); (3) the visit to attend the Jerusalem Council (Acts 15:1-30); (4) the visit at the end of the second missionary journey (Acts 18:22); (5) the final visit which resulted in Paul’s Caesarean imprisonment (Acts 21:15 – 23:35).

REVIEW: Paul’s line of defense is two-pronged in purpose; he not only proved his apostolic claim but also refuted the attacks made against him by the false brethren.

- The first argument (1:13-14) exposed the Judaizers’ charge that Paul received his gospel from men.
- The second argument (1:15-24) refuted their charge that he was further taught by the apostles or at the church in Judaea after his conversion.
- This third argument for his apostleship also reveals another charge which the false teachers made against him – that his gospel was not just like the gospel of the Jerusalem apostles (2:1-10).

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**LESSON TEXT:** Galatians 2:1-10

**LESSON AIM:** To examine the proof Paul offers to refute the claim that his gospel differed from that of the Jerusalem apostles.

**LESSON OBJECTIVES:** You will . . .

1. Examine a comparison of Galatians two and Acts 15.
  2. Understand that Paul’s gospel was certified by the Jerusalem apostles.
  3. Learn four arguments presented by Paul to show that his gospel was the true gospel.
-

**REVIEW:****A. Paul's fourfold claim (1:11-12)**

1. Not according to man.
2. Not received from man.
3. Not taught the gospel by man.
4. Gospel received by revelation.

**B. Historical proofs of Paul's claim**

1. His manner of life in times past (1:13-14).
2. He had no contact with human teachers (1:15-25).

**A COMPARISON OF GALATIANS TWO AND ACTS 15**

Learn that the events in Acts 15 exactly parallel those described in Galatians 2:1-10.

**A. The Problem Examined (Acts 15:1-5)**

1. The nature of law. Law condemns and cannot justify. See Deuteronomy 27:26 and Galatians 3:10.
2. The nature of grace. Grace is simply favor which one bestows.

**B. The Solution Presented (Acts 15:6-29) (Four strong arguments by Luke.)**

1. Peter's apostolic endorsement (Acts 15:7-11).
2. God's direct endorsement by miracles (v. 12).
3. The prophet's endorsement and the judgment of James (vs. 13-21).
4. The apostolic decree (vs. 22-29. Cf. Acts 16:4).

**C. Parallels Between Acts 15 and Galatians 2 (Galatians 2:1-10 and Acts 15:1-21)**

1. Paul's apostolic authority questioned (Galatians 2:2 and Acts 15:1-3).
2. The same persons involved: Paul, Barnabas, Peter, James, the false brethren, and Gentile Christians.
3. The same problem: Legalism versus the gospel (Galatians 2:3-5 and Acts 15:1, 5).
4. The same reason for Paul and Barnabas meeting with the Jerusalem apostles (Acts 15:2 and Galatians 2:2).
5. The same apostolic endorsement of Paul and Barnabas (Acts 15:22-27 and Galatians 2:7-9).

Paul's gospel of justification by faith in Christ apart from the law of Moses challenged by false brethren, was the reason for the Jerusalem gathering (Cf. Galatians 2:5; Acts 15:5).

**D. Comparison of Acts 11:27-30 with Galatians 2:1-10**

1. It would be a re-enactment of the situation and circumstances of Acts 15 of something that had already been accomplished in Acts 11. Reason indicates that this would not be so.
2. The reason for Paul's trip in Acts 11 differs from the reason for his visit in Acts 15 and Galatians 2.



- a. In Acts 11 he goes to take relief funds to the poor saints in Jerusalem.
- b. In Acts 15 and Galatians 2 he goes to defend the “truth of the gospel.”

**NOTE:** Be sure to read the related material concerning this in *Freed For Freedom* by Ed Wharton.

### **PAUL’S GOSPEL CERTIFIED BY THE JERUSALEM APOSTLES (2:1-10)**

#### **A. The Time Factor Considered**

1. Consider the use of “THEN” as a time indicator. Paul writes, “*Then after an interval of fourteen years I went up again to Jerusalem*” (Galatians 2:1).
2. Paul uses the word “then” three times in Galatians 1:15 – 2:1 to indicate a chronological sequence of events that begins from the time of his conversion.
  - a. “*Then three years later I went up to Jerusalem to become acquainted with Cephas*” (1:18). Clearly, it was three years from conversion to this visit with Peter. After this visit he states:
  - b. “*Then I went into the regions of Syria and Cilicia*” (1:21). This “then” easily follows the visit with Cephas.
  - c. “*Then after an interval of fourteen years,*” that is, following his last journey into Syria and Cilicia, he “*went up again to Jerusalem.*”

**NOTE:** The language is intentionally punctuated with his “then” statements clearly pointing out the time intervals from conversion to his meeting with Peter three years later, then on to Syria and Cilicia, and then to Jerusalem yet 14 years later. It was 17 years plus (if we add the unstated amount of time it required for Paul to go to Syria and Cilicia) to this important visit to Jerusalem “again.”

#### **B. The Authority For Going to Jerusalem.** 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**.

1. Direct assignment from the Lord (2:2). “*And I went up by revelation; and I laid before them the gospel which I preach among the Gentiles but privately before them who were of repute, lest by any means I should be running, or had run, in vain.*”
2. Assignment by the brethren. The brethren determined that they should go to Jerusalem (Acts 15:2). Compare Acts 13:1-4 where the Holy Spirit through the prophets at Antioch instructed the church to choose Paul and Barnabas for a special assignment.

#### **C. Paul Submits His Gospel to the Apostles in Private (2:1-2)**

“*. . . but privately before them who were of repute, lest by any means I should be running, or had run, in vain.*”

## PAUL'S FOUR-PRONGED ARGUMENT IN DEFENSE OF HIS GOSPEL (2:1-10)

- A. Titus, A Test-Case (vs. 1-2).** Titus was not compelled to be circumcised.
1. Titus, a Gentile, had never been circumcised. He would be a test case for Gentile freedom.
  2. If he was not required to be circumcised then neither would any Gentile.
  3. He was not compelled to be circumcised by the Jerusalem apostles.
    - a. Proof that the Gentiles did not have to keep the law of Moses to be saved.
    - b. Proof that Paul's gospel of justification by faith in Christ apart from such works of such a law was true.

**NOTE:** But this victory did not come easily. Pressure to have Titus circumcised was brought to bear by certain **false brothers** (2 Peter 2:1). No doubt these were Judaizers, whose chief slogan is found in Acts 15:1: *"Unless you are circumcised according to the custom taught by Moses, you cannot be saved."* These "false brothers" were like spies or fifth-column agents who penetrated to search out weak areas of enemy positions. In this case they **infiltrated** the **ranks**, that is, they intruded without invitation into the apostles' private conference. Their goals were twofold: first, **to spy on the freedom we have in Christ**. With hostile intent they purposed to observe the apostles' freedom from the Mosaic Law and from the legalism it engenders. Second, they intended to **make** Christians **slaves**. They wanted to bring believers back into bondage, to enslave them to the Law's rules and ceremonies. Specifically they strongly insisted that Titus be circumcised.

- B. The Apostles' United Stand Against the False Teachers (vs. 4-5)**
1. Paul and all the apostles stood together against the teaching of the false brethren.
  2. They taught the same thing about justification.
- C. The Apostles Could Add Nothing to Paul's Gospel (vs 6-8)**
1. In a private counsel with the apostles Paul laid his gospel before them alone (2:2).
  2. Paul's gospel was the same as the other apostles' gospel. Paul taught the same gospel, inspired by the same Spirit that the Jerusalem apostles taught themselves being inspired by the same Spirit!
  3. Therefore, neither Paul nor the apostles at Jerusalem taught the necessity of keeping the law.
- D. The Apostles Endorsed Paul and Barnabas (vs 9-10)**
1. They gave them the "right hand of fellowship." They endorsed Paul's message and received him as an equal. Further, **James, Peter, and John** recognized that Paul had been divinely commissioned to preach **the gospel to the Gentiles, just as Peter had to the Jews**. Thus, Paul jolted the

Judaists by declaring that the leaders in Jerusalem approved of his mission to the Gentiles.

2. Vindicated Paul's preaching the sufficiency of the gospel of justification by faith in Christ alone.
3. Peter and Paul did not preach two gospels, as might be inferred from the rendering, "the gospel of the uncircumcision" and "the gospel of the circumcision."
  - a. There was one gospel though it was preached by different apostles to two distinct groups of people.
  - b. The reason the apostles concluded that Paul's commission was equal to Peter's was the fact that God gave success to both as they preached.

**SUMMARY:**

The events at Jerusalem conclusively proved Paul's apostleship. Not only were he and they together doctrinally (theologically) but also practically – they all stood together against the false brethren at Jerusalem who would have bound the law on Gentiles as a necessary element unto salvation. Notice the "we" of verse five who gave no place to the false teachers. That "we" are both Paul and the rest of the apostles.

**SELF EXAM FOR LESSON THREE:**

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1. What problem confronted the churches which motivated the conference in Jerusalem as recorded in Acts 15? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Give the four strong arguments presented by Luke in Acts 15 as a solution to this problem.
  - 1) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 2) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 3) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 4) \_\_\_\_\_
3. List five parallels between Acts 15 and Galatians 2 which would indicate that both passages were talking about the same meeting.
  - 1) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 2) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 3) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 4) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 5) \_\_\_\_\_
4. Give two reasons why Acts 11 would not parallel with Acts 15.
  - 1) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 2) \_\_\_\_\_
5. By what authority did Paul and Titus go to Jerusalem? (Give a passage of scripture.) \_\_\_\_\_
6. Give the four-pronged argument in defense of Paul's gospel as seen in Galatians 2:1-10.
  - 1) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 2) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 3) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 4) \_\_\_\_\_

## LESSON FOUR

# THE CONSISTENT DEMANDS OF LAW AND FAITH

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### INTRODUCTION:

**I**n this lesson Paul makes a fourth and final defense for his claim that he received his gospel from Christ and not from man. We need to keep in mind that Paul's line of defense exposes the line of attack the false teachers used to discredit him and his gospel. This part of the letter appears to disclose an attempt by the proponents of the law to have modeled Peter as an example of law keeping to contrast with Paul who taught that it is not essential.

In this section Paul masterfully sustains himself against the false charge of inconsistency and at the same time manages to get in some positive teaching on the natural results to be expected from a life based on faith in Christ. This lesson contains two major areas of discussion: 1) Peter's dissimulation and Paul's rebuke, and 2) Law and faith both have consistent demands. Paul's ultimate reason for relating the incident with Peter was to expose the same erroneous implications upon the legalistic teaching at Galatia, and to defend the truth of the gospel as he originally taught it.

Historically, this incident follows the Jerusalem meeting just related in Galatians 2:1-10 where Peter stood with Paul against the legalism at Jerusalem. This is clearly indicated by the language, "But when Cephas came to Antioch..." The introductory word "But" sets up a contrast between Peter's teaching at Jerusalem and the inconsistency of his conduct at Antioch.

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**LESSON TEXT:** Galatians 2:11-21

**LESSON AIM:** To understand that Paul's rebuke of Peter's hypocritical act further established Paul as an apostle and his gospel as genuine.

**LESSON OBJECTIVES:** You will . . .

1. Examine Peter's hypocritical action in separating himself in Antioch.
  2. Understand that Peter stood condemned in his actions and not in his doctrine.
  3. Learn that the *truth of the gospel*, salvation by faith, was being threatened by Peter's dissimulation.
-

## THE GREAT CONFRONTATION (2:11-14)

In this final historical incident Paul related how he found it necessary to oppose even Peter, the reputed chief of the apostles, for conduct which threatened to compromise the gospel.

### A. The Occasion: Peter's Hypocritical Conduct at Antioch (vs. 11-13)

When he visited Jerusalem, Peter (and others) gave Paul "the right hand of fellowship" but when Peter visited Antioch, Paul opposed him to his face.

1. **Peter's initial conduct** – he ate and associated with the Gentiles.
  - a. A sharp contrast between Peter's *action* in Jerusalem and his *action* in Antioch. (Not in his TEACHING.) Why did Peter create this breach? Not because of any change in his theology, but simply out of fear.
  - b. Once, after preaching to Gentile Cornelius, Peter courageously defended himself before the Jerusalem leaders (Acts 11:18), but this time he capitulated to some Jewish friends.
  - c. The *fear* of Peter was so strong that even Barnabas was caused to dissimulate by Peter's example.
  - d. It was Peter's practice that was in error. This had nothing to do with his inspired teaching.
  - e. His love for his Gentile brethren carried him further than his later judgment was prepared to go.

**NOTE:** Like falling dominoes the defection of Peter brought the defection of **the other Jews** and finally **even Barnabas**. The pressure must have been great for Barnabas to succumb because he was from Cyprus, a Gentile center, and was involved in a missionary program with Paul to reach Gentiles with the gospel. 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.

2. **Peter's dissimulation:** Caused by expediency rather than by conviction. He withdrew from associating with the Gentiles.
  - a. In contrast to his action in Jerusalem.
  - b. He endorsed the gospel for all and insisted that since God made no distinction between Jew and Gentile, neither could he (Acts 15:7-11; Acts 10:47-48).
  - c. Peter acted inconsistently with his preaching. ***Peter stood condemned!***

**NOTE:** Peter was acting not only **against his conscience** and against the **clear revelation** that he had received in Acts 10, but also against **his past tradition and custom in Antioch**.

3. The reason for and the result of Peter's withdrawal from the Gentiles.
  - a. Fear of the Jews who had come from Jerusalem.
  - b. Peter began to be hypocritical. His practice was hypocritical and inconsistent with his teaching on the matter.

4. He drew back, separating himself from the Gentile brethren, leaving the dual impression that:
  - a. They were sinners outside the law of Moses.
  - b. That the law of Moses was itself essential to salvation.  
By this conduct he betrayed his own integrity and his inspired insight that “. . . *God is no respecter of persons*” (Acts 10:34).

#### **B. Peter Singled Out For Public Rebuke (v. 14)**

1. Peter was an apostle with apostolic authority.
  - a. His actions therefore carried much authority with the church.
  - b. If his dissimulation was allowed to go unchallenged, the incident could take on the appearance of an apostolic precedent.
  - c. *The truth of the gospel* – Justification for the whole creation was on the basis of “faith in Christ, and not by works of the law.”
2. Peter’s walk is challenged, not his talk.
  - a. When the apostles spoke for God, they spoke by the special guidance of the Holy Spirit.
  - b. Paul immediately perceived the contradiction between the gospel for all men without distinction and the discrimination of these Jews against the Gentile brethren at Antioch.
4. Peter stood condemned for practicing what the Galatians were taught by the Judaizers! Therefore, Paul’s rebuke of Peter’s action was a condemnation of legalism. What Peter had initiated created a public scandal and therefore deserved a public rebuke.
5. The apostles’ message was divinely preserved from error, but not their lives.

### **THE INCONSISTENT ACTIONS OF PETER (vs. 14-21)**

#### **A. Peter’s Conduct Constitutes an Attack on the Truth of the Gospel**

#### **B. Six Repudiations of the Gospel by Peter’s Action**

1. *The unity of the body of Christ* (Galatians 2:14).
2. *Justification by faith in Christ* (2:15-16).
3. *The ministry of Christ that removed the law* (2:17).
4. *The purpose of the law* (2:19).
5. *The source of power (faith) to live for God* (2:20).
6. *The grace of God and the cross of Christ as the ground of our justification* (2:21).

#### **C. Peter’s Inconsistency Shown in Eight Things**

1. **Inconsistent in his practice.** Inconsistent with his defense at Jerusalem of the Gentiles’ freedom from law (Galatians 2:3-5; Acts 15:7-11).
2. **Inconsistent in his Christian relationships.** Gentiles may be fellowshiped. Peter’s conduct in eating with the Gentile brethren at Antioch was inconsistent with his later conduct there when he separated himself from them.

3. **Inconsistent with what he knew to be true.** Peter's conduct was inconsistent with what he as an inspired apostle knew very well to be true, that we are justified by faith in Christ and not by works of law (vs. 15-16).
4. **Inconsistent with Christ's ministry.** Peter's conduct was inconsistent with the ministry of Christ who removed the law at the cross and who gave to Peter his gospel message (v. 17).
5. **Inconsistent with his former renunciation of the law as a means of salvation.** Peter's conduct was inconsistent with his implied indictment that the Gentile brethren were sinners without the law (v. 18).
6. **Inconsistent with the purpose of the law.** Peter's conduct in withdrawing from the Gentiles and implying the necessity of the law for salvation was inconsistent with their sinfulness and condemnation and their consequent need for justification (Galatians 3:19a, 22; Romans 3:19-20; 7:13).
7. **Inconsistent with the power source for righteous living.** Peter's conduct, which implied that his confidence was in the power of his own flesh to make himself acceptable to God by law keeping (v. 20).
8. **Inconsistent with the source of righteousness.** Peter's conduct was inconsistent with the universal human need for salvation by grace (v.21).

#### THINGS TO LOOK FOR:

1. Paul's statement to Peter begins in verse 14 and continues through verse 21.
2. Two things known by Paul and Peter. First argument:
  - a. Man is not justified by works of law.
  - b. Man is justified through faith in Jesus Christ.
3. Second argument: Your teaching on how to be saved – by faith in Christ – is now being contradicted by your action here at Antioch.
4. . . . *found to be sinners* has reference to the accusations of the false teachers.
5. On the phrase *is Christ a minister of sin?* See Wharton's discussion in the textbook. The Judaizers sought to argue that Paul's gospel would make Christ a minister of sin.
6. Peter's action would also destroy the meaning and purpose of Christ's death on the cross.
7. The law of faith and law of Moses cannot run concurrently.

#### STUDY NOTES:

##### A. The Consistent Demands of Law and Faith (2:15-17)

1. Law condemns, faith in Christ justifies (vs. 15-16). Therefore, the two systems cannot be blended together without the consequence of falling away from grace (see 5:2, 4). Since law (the law of Moses) condemned those Jews under it "*even we*" – Peter and Paul – "*believed on Christ that they might be justified.*" A return to the law system, as Peter's action indicated, would result in their condemnation.



2. The vice argument (v. 17).

Paul placed Peter in a vice between the condemnation of the law, which he had for the moment gone back to, and the Judaizers who would condemn him for seeking justification by faith apart from the law of Moses. In either case, Peter would be condemned! Would he accept the condemnation of the law by remaining under it, or would he renounce the law as essential – as he had preached – and be condemned by the false teachers?

Would Peter give credence to the Judaizers' argument that justification apart from the law would *make Christ a minister of sin*? If Peter maintained his position at Antioch, he would have to renounce the truth he had preached from the time of Cornelius. He would have to say that the early gospel he preached, that we can be justified without the law of Moses, actually made Christ a minister of sin for having taught that the law's requirement was removed at the cross. Paul's point in verse 17 is quite strong, would Peter remain under law? If so, that would be equal to saying that his former preaching made Jesus a minister of sin! **Was the Holy Spirit teaching false doctrine too?!** (See 2:8)

**B. The Life of Consistency (2:18-21)**

1. Law proves all men are condemned sinners (v. 18). Thus, law and grace cannot co-exist and bring salvation.
2. Death to legalism is essential to a life with God which is liberated from the condemnation of sin (v. 19).
3. Life by faith in Christ requires death to trust in self-righteousness (v. 20). (See Luke 18:9-14).
4. Salvation by grace is made void by seeking salvation through the Law of Moses (v. 21). For seeking justification at the hand of a system of condemnation is legalism by definition.

**CONCLUSION:**

Paul's fourfold argument for his apostleship has been sustained from the events of his life to this point. Therefore, his gospel is apostolic and he can turn the full weight of his authority to matters of justification by faith in Christ apart from the works of law.

**SELF EXAM FOR LESSON FOUR:**

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1. What action by Peter occurred in Antioch causing Paul to confront him with wrong doing?

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2. What does Paul's statement *the truth of the gospel* have reference to in this letter?

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3. Why do you think Paul thought it necessary to rebuke Peter in public?

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4. Was Peter being hypocritical in his doctrine or in his action? \_\_\_\_\_

5. List six repudiations of the gospel by Peter's action.

1) \_\_\_\_\_

2) \_\_\_\_\_

3) \_\_\_\_\_

4) \_\_\_\_\_

5) \_\_\_\_\_

6) \_\_\_\_\_

6. What two things were known by both Paul and Peter?

1) \_\_\_\_\_

2) \_\_\_\_\_

7. Can the law of faith and any meritorious law system, such as the law of Moses, run concurrently? \_\_\_\_\_ Explain why. \_\_\_\_\_

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## LESSON FIVE

# FAITH, JUSTIFICATION, AND THE LAW

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### INTRODUCTION:

**T**his lesson introduces the second major division of the letter, The Scriptural Division, chapters three and four. Paul dips back into the Hebrew scriptures no less than nine times to explain to the Galatians that the Old Testament scriptures themselves teach that we are justified by faith and not by the law of Moses.

Paul's emphasis in this section is that the human means of our justification and our receiving the Holy Spirit is faith in Christ, not works of law. He uses four major points of reasoning to substantiate his stand that we are justified by faith and not by works of law.

1. Four rhetorical questions which he assumes the Galatians will answer on the side of faith and not the law (Galatians 3:1-5).
  2. He reasons from Old Testament history that we are justified by faith as was faithful Abraham (3:6-9).
  3. He reasons from Old Testament scriptures that we cannot receive the Holy Spirit by works of the law, for even the law itself teaches that no one can be justified by law, but that all men are to be justified by faith (3:10-12).
  4. Christ's work at the cross paid the price of our sin so we can be justified by faith (3:13-14).
- 

**LESSON TEXT:** Galatians 3:1-14

**LESSON AIM:** To comprehend that we can know we are justified by faith because we have received the gift of the Holy Spirit by faith.

**LESSON OBJECTIVES:** You will . . .

1. See that reception of the Holy Spirit is proof that the Galatians were justified by faith in Christ Jesus.
  2. Learn that our justification follows the same pattern as that of Abraham.
  3. Discover the reasons why men cannot be justified by the works of law.
- 

In the first two chapters of the epistle Paul established the divine origin of his apostleship and his message. He then turned to the Galatians who were being urged to add works to faith, to keep the Mosaic Law in addition to placing faith in Christ

as the grounds of acceptance before God. The Galatian Christians would receive, the Judaizers thought, a more complete salvation and a greater sanctification if they would obey the Law. But, Paul argued, to supplement the work of Christ is to supplant it. There can only be one way of salvation, and that is by faith in Christ.

### **FAITH, THE LAW AND JUSTIFICATION (3:1-14)**

The second division of the book of Galatians is the *Scriptural Argument*, chapters three and four.

#### **A. Rejecting the Cross is Foolishness (v. 1)**

1. The word *foolish* is a term Paul used to reflect upon their failure to use good intellect in this case. To embrace a doctrine which declared the death of Christ unnecessary was irrational (cf. 2:21).
2. The Galatians were not reasoning sensibly from the implications of the cross of Christ to be the means of their justification. It would almost appear they had been **bewitched**, cast under some evil spell by a malicious influence.
3. If Christ had to die to save us then the law of Moses, which existed for 1,500 years before Christ, simply could not be the means of our salvation.
4. Christ, crucified, had been manifested openly and preached as the basis of justification.
  - a. They were without excuse because the Savior had been **clearly portrayed**.
  - b. The word means, “to write for public reading” as with the posting of a public announcement.

#### **B. Reception of the Holy Spirit is Proof of Justification by Faith (vs. 2-5)**

1. Their beginning experience (conversion). “*Did you receive the Spirit by the works of the Law, or by the hearing of faith?*”
  - a. They received the Spirit when they believed on and obeyed Christ (Galatians 3:26-27; 4:6).
  - b. The Holy Spirit is given only to the justified (Galatians 4:6; Acts 2:38; 5:32).
  - c. Paul’s conclusion: “If they had received the Spirit, they were therefore justified.”
2. Their beginning power. “*Having begun by the Spirit, are you now being perfected by the flesh?*”
  - a. Their entrance into justification was through the Spirit.
    - 1) They had obeyed the gospel – the Spirit’s medium.
    - 2) They had been baptized into Christ through the instruction of the Spirit’s gospel.
  - b. If it takes Spirit-power, gospel-power, faith-power to begin the Christian life, is it reasonable to think that we can complete the journey by the impotent means of flesh-power?

**NOTE:** Their concept of salvation is revealed by their action. They were made to be Christians by the work of Christ and the Spirit, but that salvation must be

*maintained* by works of law, specifically by the keeping of the Mosaic Law. There was no provision under the Law for the Holy Spirit to do a work of sanctification. The Galatian believers probably thought that keeping the old Law would aid them in their spiritual lives, but it would not.

3. Their experience after conversion. *“Did you experience (suffer) so many things in vain? if indeed it be in vain?”*
  - a. Their Christian experience (suffering) would have been vain (empty) if keeping the law was prerequisite to Christian living.
  - b. The Judaizers admitted that Gentiles were saved by faith in Christ.
  - c. The Judaizers also taught that believing Gentiles must keep the law of Moses and circumcision to maintain their salvation.
  - d. The false teachers had a name for their process of leading the Galatians away from Christ. It was called *becoming perfected*.

**NOTE:** As Paul and Barnabas retraced their steps at the end of the first missionary journey, they warned the Galatian converts that they would suffer as Christians (Acts 14:21-22). Persecution evidently soon followed, and Paul reminded them that if they turned from grace to Law they would brand their former position in error and would then have **suffered so much for nothing**.

4. Their observation of miracles. *“Does he then, who provides you with the Spirit and works miracles among you, do it by the works of the law, or by hearing with faith?”*
  - a. The miracles confirmed the truth of Paul’s gospel and their own justification. It was clear that these supernatural works were not the result of the works of **the Law** but from the hearing that leads to faith. The Galatians did not know the Law, and Paul’s message was that of justification by faith.
  - b. The gift of the Spirit and the miraculous confirmation of the gospel prior to the coming of the Judaizers precludes the need for the law.

### **C. They were Justified by Faith Even as was Abraham (vs. 6-9)**

1. Abraham a historical *precedent* (vs. 6-7).
  - a. If God can save one man by faith, He can save all men by faith.
  - b. Faith is God’s principle by which He has always extended salvation.
  - c. Abraham was justified before the law was given therefore the law could not be a requirement for justification. The Judaizers claimed to have the Old Testament on their side, especially looking to Moses as their teacher. But Paul went centuries farther back and said, **consider Abraham**.
2. God’s *promise* to justify Gentiles by faith (v. 8).
  - a. God promised to justify Gentiles through Abraham’s seed (Genesis 12:3). The justification of uncircumcised Gentiles was anticipated in the universal aspect of the Abrahamic Covenant when God **announced the gospel to Abraham**.

- b. The “seed” is Christ (3:16) and the “blessing” is justification by faith.
- 3. Paul’s conclusion (v. 9).
  - a. The “of faith” will be “blessed” together with Abraham.
  - b. The “of faith” stands in contrast to the “of works of law” (3:10).

**NOTE:** The apostle concluded this phase of his argument by stating that though provision was made for “all nations” (v. 8), only **those who have faith** receive the blessing of justification. Thus, Paul drew a distinction between God’s provision and human appropriation.

#### **D. Law Is Not the Ground of Our Justification (vs. 10-12)**

- 1. The doctrine of justification *by* law is contrary to the *nature* of law.
  - a. The threefold nature of law.
    - 1) **Law requires sinless observance** (Leviticus 18:5; Galatians 3:12).
    - 2) **Law condemns the violator** (Deuteronomy 27:26; Galatians 3:10).
    - 3) **Law cannot justify the sinner** (Habakkuk 2:4; Galatians 3:11).
  - b. The use and the non-use of the definite article.
    - 1) Law without the article “the” refers to the law principle.
    - 2) With the definite article Paul has reference to a specific law, the Law of Moses.
- 2. The doctrine of justification by law is contrary to the *pronouncement* of the law. The pronouncement of the law is that sinners are condemned to die.
  - a. The law is not “of faith.”
  - b. The law itself says we are justified by faith (Habakkuk 2:4).
  - c. The law of Moses cannot justify since it is not of faith.

**NOTE:** The necessity of the law of Moses for salvation is a contradiction of both the **nature** of the law of Moses and the **pronouncement** of the law of Moses to condemn sinners.

#### **E. The Basis of Our Redemption and of Receiving the Holy Spirit by Faith Is the Cross (vs. 13-14)**

- 1. The price of redemption from the Law’s curse.
  - a. Christ our redeemer.
    - 1) “Redeem” – to purchase and so to release a slave from one master to become the property of another.
    - 2) Involved in the word *redeem* is the idea of cost, a price paid. (See Ed’s discussion in the textbook *Freed For Freedom*)
  - b. Christ became a curse for us.
    - 1) To be born under the law, involves no curse if one keeps the law.
    - 2) Christ became a curse because He was hanged on a tree “. . . because anyone who is hung on a tree is under God’s curse” (Deuteronomy 21:22-23).
- 2. The curse transformed into blessing. Vindication of God’s justice and the satisfaction of the Law’s curse for sin has now been accomplished at the

cross. Sinful man can be blessed with justification and receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. Paul explains that this takes place by faith.

### **SELF EXAM FOR LESSON FIVE:**

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1. Paul's four rhetorical questions point them back to what in their lives?  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. What did the word *foolish* as used by Paul reflect concerning the Galatians?  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. Reception of the Holy Spirit is proof of what in this context? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. What four important questions does Paul present to the Galatian Christians in 3:2-5 which would disprove keeping the law as a means of salvation?
  - 1) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 2) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 3) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 4) \_\_\_\_\_
5. What is the argument Paul makes concerning Abraham and his relation to salvation?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. What is the threefold nature of law as given in this lesson?
  - 1) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 2) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 3) \_\_\_\_\_
7. The doctrine of justification by law is contrary to what two things about law in 3:10-12?
  - 1) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 2) \_\_\_\_\_

## **NOTES**



## LESSON SIX

# THE LAW AND THE PROMISE

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### INTRODUCTION:

**T**he previous argument (3:1-14) showed that the Law of Moses could not be the means through which the promised blessing of justification was to be bestowed. Paul anticipates two questions from this discussion. First, since the Law was from God, did it not in some way relate to the promise? Second, what was the purpose of the Law if only to be abolished at the coming of Christ? If it cannot bring salvation why did God give it?

Paul answers the question in three parts. He answers first that God both made and confirmed the promise to Abraham before the Law was given, and that neither the fulfillment of the promise nor the condition for its fulfillment could therefore be changed by giving the Law later (3:15-18). Next he explains how the purpose of the Law was to prepare humanity to receive the promise (3:19-25). He concludes that faith, the condition for receiving the promised blessing, brings all men to be heirs of the promised blessing (3:26-29). This faith is first expressed at baptism.

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**LESSON TEXT:** Galatians 3:15-29

**LESSON AIM:** To see the promise is in no way changed by the giving of the law of Moses.

**LESSON OBJECTIVES:** You will . . .

1. Discover that the Law cannot change God's confirmed covenant.
  2. See that the purpose of the Law was to prepare humanity to receive the promise.
  3. Learn that the condition for receiving the promised blessing is faith and baptism.
- 

### THE SUPERIORITY OF THE PROMISE OVER THE LAW (3:15-18)

The promise was given to Abraham before the Law and is not annulled by the Law.

#### A. The Nature and Characteristics of the Promise (vs. 15-16)

1. The promises (plural) have reference to the Abrahamic promise (singular).
  - a. New Testament writers often refer to the promise as "the promises" (Galatians 3:21; Romans 9:4; 15:8; Hebrews 6:12; 11:13, 17).
  - b. The "promises" answer to the many Old Testament messianic prophecies that are but different aspects of that single promise made to Abraham.

2. The promise took the form of a covenant.
  - a. The seed promise first made to Abraham (Genesis 12:3).
  - b. The seed is Christ and the blessing is justification by faith (Galatians 3:8, 16).
  - c. The promise became a covenant in Genesis 15:6-18.
3. Two facts presented by Paul concerning the covenant.
  - a. Confirmed covenants have two characteristics:
    - 1) They could not be annulled or set aside.
    - 2) They could not have conditions added later necessary to inherit.
  - b. The promises made were only to Abraham and to Christ, his seed.
    - 1) The word *seed* is singular in number and has reference to Christ.
    - 2) If *seed* had reference to physical seed then Gentiles would be excluded from the promise.

#### **B. The Preeminence of the Promise Over the Law (vs. 17-18)**

1. The Law can neither set aside the promise nor be added as a condition.
  - a. The promise preceded the giving of the Law by some five hundred years.
  - b. The Law cannot set aside the confirmed promise.
  - c. The Law cannot be added to the promise as a requirement to inherit.
2. The Law cannot be the means of receiving the promise. *“For if the inheritance is based on law, it is no longer based on a promise, but God has granted it to Abraham by means of a promise”* (v. 18).
  - a. God promised to justify us by faith.
  - b. Justification cannot come by law for *“the law is not of faith”* (3:12).

### **THE LAW’S RELATION TO THE PROMISE (vs. 19-25)**

#### **A. The Nature and Purpose of the Law (v. 19a)**

1. The Law was temporary – added until the seed should come – after which it was no longer needed.
2. Its purpose was to educate men to the sinfulness of sin.
  - a. It was given **because of transgressions**, that is, the Law was given to be a means for checking sins.
  - b. It served as a restrainer of sins by showing them to be transgressions of God’s Law which would incur His wrath (cf. 1 Timothy 1:8-11).

**NOTE:** With the death and resurrection of Christ, the Law was done away and now its righteous demands are fulfilled in us through the Spirit (Romans 7:4; 8:1-4).

#### **B. The Priority of the Promise Over the Law (vs. 19b-20)**

1. The priority of the promise – the promise came first.
2. God is one – the Law required a mediator.
  - a. The Law was *ordained through angels by the agency of a mediator*, Moses.
  - b. The promise came directly from God to Abraham.

### C. Two Important Characteristics of the Law of Moses

1. It was **temporal** “*till the seed should come*.” Then it was done away in Christ at the cross. (Cf. 2 Corinthians 3:14; Ephesians 2:15).
2. It was **inferior** to the covenant of promise. The Law was given by mediators: God – Angels – Moses – Israel. The promise was given to Abraham immediately: God – Abraham – no mediator between God and Abraham as between God and Israel.

**NOTE:** The priority of **the promise** over **the Law** is unquestionable: the promise came first, is permanent, and was delivered by God himself, while the Law which came much later, is servant to the promise, was temporary, and was given by angels through a human mediator.

### D. The Law Was Not Contrary to the Promise (vs. 21-25)

The Law served the promise in three ways.

1. It gave understanding that salvation is only by the promise (vs. 21b-23).
2. It served as a tutor (*paidagogos*) – leading men to Christ (vs. 24-25).
  - a. Literally “a boy-leader” – usually a man served in this capacity.
  - b. He was often a slave appointed by the parent to conduct the child to school and to have general charge of him until he came of age.
  - c. Competent attendants were highly esteemed by parents, and children were required to respect them.
3. It led us to the faith (vs. 23-25). Paul’s point is that:
  - a. The Law of Moses was **provisional and temporary**, it served the promise to its fulfillment in Christ, and was then removed (Galatians 3:25).
  - b. Now we are under the “law of faith” (Romans 3:27), “under the law of Christ” (1 Corinthians 9:21) that teaches us that we are justified by faith in Christ.

## FAITH IS THE MEANS OF SONSHIP AND INHERITANCE (vs. 26-29)

### A. Faith Identifies the True Family of God (vs. 26-27)

1. The means of becoming sons of God is by faith in Christ.
2. We become sons of God by faith at baptism. At baptism, Paul says, our faith makes us full-grown sons, heirs of the blessing of justification.
  - a. The Greek word for baptism is *baptizo*.
    - 1) It means “to dip, immerse, plunge, sink, and overwhelm.”
    - 2) The word *baptism* is not a translation. It is a transliteration.
  - b. The purpose of Christian baptism:
    - 1) Baptism is an expression of faith in Christ and repentance from sin.
    - 2) At baptism the lost sinner is united with Christ as His own possession (See Romans 6:1-7).
  - c. Baptism is an act of the alien sinner’s faith in Christ to forgive him (3:26-27). See a further discussion of this in Ed’s book *Freed for Freedom*.

- d. Baptism is the means by which one “puts on Christ.”

**B. Faith Unites the Family of God – Does Not Discriminate (v. 28)**

1. No racial discrimination (Jew or Gentile).
2. No social discrimination (slave or free).
3. No sexual discrimination (male or female).

**C. All Belonging to Christ Become Heirs of the Promise (v. 29)**

**CONCLUSION:**

The same God that gave the promise gave the Law. His great purpose for the Law was to serve the promise to its fulfillment for our sakes. The Law accomplished this by enlightening men to the fact that we are all long standing and chronic sinners, and that we are totally incapable of making ourselves right with God apart from the cross of Christ. In this way we see the Law was not contrary to the promise, but as a servant it led men to realize their need for Christ.

Those who would trust Christ and put him on in baptism become sons of God. These experience the triumph of freedom from sin and the condemnation of law.

**SELF EXAM FOR LESSON SIX:**

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1. What is the “promise” discussed by Paul and to whom was it first given?  
The promise: \_\_\_\_\_  
Given to: \_\_\_\_\_
2. To what/whom does the “seed” have reference in 3:15-16 and what is the blessing promised?  
The “seed” is: \_\_\_\_\_  
The blessing is: \_\_\_\_\_
3. What is Paul’s argument concerning the Law and the promise with reference to time?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. What is the twofold nature and purpose of the Law?  
Its nature: \_\_\_\_\_  
Its purpose: \_\_\_\_\_
5. In what three ways did the Law serve the promise?  
1) \_\_\_\_\_  
2) \_\_\_\_\_  
3) \_\_\_\_\_
6. According to 3:26-27 what is the identifying mark of the family of God?  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. Concerning the principle of unity in the body, in what three areas does faith prohibit discrimination?  
1) \_\_\_\_\_  
2) \_\_\_\_\_  
3) \_\_\_\_\_

## **NOTES**

## LESSON SEVEN

# LAW AND SONSHIP

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### INTRODUCTION:

**T**he word *heirs* is the connecting link between the close of chapter three and the beginning of chapter four. Paul picks up on his preceding statement in 3:29 that sons of God are heirs of the promise in order to illustrate in 4:1-11 that the law cannot produce heirs, but only slaves to sin. The Galatian Christians were now sons of God by faith and therefore heirs of the promise. To adopt the law, Paul teaches, would be to return to bondage as when they were in pagan idolatry.

The practical argument continues in the first part of chapter four as Paul describes the condition of those under the Law prior to the coming of Christ. They were “children,” and really no different from slaves. But when Christ came, He redeemed those under the Law and made it possible for them to receive the adoption as “sons.” A special blessing of this sonship was receiving the Spirit in their hearts, and now they are no longer as a slave but as a son and an heir of God through Christ (1-7).

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**LESSON TEXT:** Galatians 4:1-11

**LESSON AIM:** To show that the law of Moses or any other law system as a means of justification holds men in bondage and does not provide freedom from sin.

**LESSON OBJECTIVES:** You will . . .

1. See that Israel under the law of Moses was under bondage to sin as were the Gentiles without the Law.
  2. Learn that through the death of Christ believers are made to be God’s sons.
  3. Understand that placing ourselves under the law of Moses or any other law system as a means of justification makes us slaves again to sin.
- 

### ISRAEL IN BONDAGE UNDER THE LAW (4:1-3)

The rudiments of the world, of which were the ordinances of the law, could only hold people in bondage as children and could not provide freedom.

#### A. Paul’s Analogy (vs. 1-2)

1. They (both Jew and Gentile) were bond servants being **under law**. (Cf. John 8:32-36).
2. The principle of “law” is equal to the “rudiments of the world” and has no power except to regulate and penalize.

3. A bondsman cannot be freed from this bondage except through the grace of God. Law, even God's law, cannot do this (Galatians 2:16).

#### **B. Jews Under Mosaic Law Were in Bondage (v. 3)**

Paul's point is that since the Jews were in bondage under the Law, the Galatians (Gentiles) in like manner would be in bondage under the Law.

1. **"We," that is, Jews.** The "we" cannot properly embrace Christian Gentiles in their former life. The plural pronouns "we," "you," and "our" distinguish between "we" Jews, who under the Law were children but whom Christ made sons, and "you" Galatians Christians who "are sons" (as previously stated in 3:26). And now because "we" Jews and "you" Gentiles are sons, by faith in Jesus Christ, not law-keeping, God sent forth the Spirit of His Son into "our" hearts.
2. **Defining the bondage.** To what were the Jews in bondage while under the law?
  - a. It was not enslavement to Jewish ritual.
    - 1) The Law was good. David praised the Law, saying, *"O how I love thy law! It is my meditation all the day, and, Thy law is my delight"* (Psalm 119:97, 74).
    - 2) There was nothing wrong with the Law itself. It was "perfect" (Psalm 19:7).
    - 3) The Law's ritual was not a curse, but a blessing.
    - 4) However, it exposed man's utterly sinful practice, pronounced him in bondage to sin, and revealed his inability to save himself by such a legal system
    - 5) It was when men perverted the nature of the Law into legalism, as these false teachers had done, and attempted to be justified by law keeping that it became an unbearable "yoke" (Acts 15:10).
  - b. Bondage under the Law.
    - 1) Those who appeal to the works of the Law as a means of justification are "cursed" under the Law, and Christ came to redeem us from the curse of the Law (Galatians 3:10-13).
    - 2) Those who are cursed under the Law are "held in bondage" under the Law (4:3). The curse of the Law is that men stand condemned by the Law for their sins.
    - 3) What is that "bondage?" It is bondage to the law of sin and death from which the Law of Moses cannot set free (cf. Galatians 3:22; Romans 8:1-2).
    - 4) The works of the Law of Moses are "the elemental things of the world" in Paul's reasoning.
  - c. The terms "slavery" and "freedom" are used as opposites (2:4; 5:1).
    - 1) Paul's "slavery" is slavery to sin, his "freedom" is freedom from sin.
    - 2) The Galatians were freed from their **bondage to sin**. They were never under the Law of Moses to have been liberated from it.



- 3) Their bondage was to sin under idolatry. When they believed and obeyed the gospel, they were liberated from the curse of sin that the Law pronounced upon all sinners (cf. Galatians 3:13; Romans 3:19; 1 Timothy 1:8-11).
- 4) Since the Jews were in bondage to sin under the Law the Galatians would likewise be in bondage to sin under the Law.
3. **“The weak and worthless elemental things of the world.”** Existence **under the rudiments of the world** is equated with existence **under law** (vs. 4f). (See the material in Ed Wharton’s book *Freed for Freedom* for a full discussion of this statement.)

### **GOD MAKES US SONS AND HEIRS (4:4-7)**

#### **A. The Time – Fullness of the Time**

1. In His eternal purpose, before time began, God set the time for the coming of His Son to redeem men from sin.
2. When Christ appeared on the historical scene, it was the fullness of the time.
3. The coming of Christ was not by accident but by “divine appointment.”

#### **B. The Circumstances – Born of a Woman, Born under the Law**

1. While Christ was divine, His humanity came from His mother.
2. His humanity was essential in order to be “*under the law*” and to fulfill its requirement in our behalf.

#### **C. The Purpose – That We Might Be Redeemed and Adopted**

1. **Redeemed.** The believer’s freedom is purchased by Christ’s death on the cross.
2. **Adopted As Sons.** The New Testament word for “adoption” means “to place as an adult son.” It has to do with our *standing* in the family of God: we are not little children but adult sons with all of the privileges of sonship.

#### **D. The Result – Sons Receive the Indwelling Spirit**

1. *Abba* expresses intimate relationship. As adopted members of the divine family of God we receive the same Spirit by which Jesus so intimately addressed God as *Abba*, Father (Mark 14:36).
2. We do not receive the Spirit to **make** us sons. It is **because we are sons** that we receive the Spirit of Christ.
  - a. Not all men are sons of God.
  - b. We must be born again into the divine family.
  - c. Sons receive the indwelling gift of the Holy Spirit from the Father.
3. Intimacy of sonship in the divine family could not be achieved by the Law of Moses.
4. Only through Christ, and by faith in Him, could this inexpressible family privilege be obtained in our behalf.



### **LAW MAKES US SLAVES AGAIN (4:8-11)**

With these words, “However, at that time . . . But now,” Paul sets up a great contrast between the Galatians’ former status as slaves to sin under idolatry, their present status as men free from sin now that they know the true God, and their future status of returning to the bondage of sin if they accept the Law of Moses for salvation. Paul uses this same language in the Ephesian letter to set up the contrast between their former status as pagans when they were “far off” from God, and their present status “in Christ” of being “near” to God because of Christ’s blood (2:11-13).

#### **A. The Galatians’ Past Status “*At that time*”**

That is, when in idolatry prior to Paul and Barnabas preaching the gospel in the regions of Galatia.

1. “*You did not know God.*” As pagans the Galatians had no knowledge of the one true God.
2. “*You were slaves to no gods.*” That is, slaves to idolatrous ritual that had no power to free them from their bondage to sin.
  - a. No gods. Idols are non-realities. They are by their nature – wood, stone, marble, etc. – not gods at all. They represent nothing of substance or reality. (Cf. Acts 14:15; 1 Corinthians 8:4; 12:2).
  - b. Their hopeless condition. They were:
    - 1) Separate from Christ,
    - 2) excluded from the commonwealth of Israel,
    - 3) strangers to the covenants of promise,
    - 4) far off,
    - 5) aliens,
    - 6) having no hope, and,
    - 7) without God in the world.

#### **B. The Galatians’ Present Status “*But now*”**

1. You have come to know God.
  - a. As pagans they did not know God.
  - b. As sons they now know God.
2. Or rather to be known by God – because of their faith and obedience to the Gospel.

#### **C. The Galatians’ Future Status under Law “*to be enslaved all over again*”**

1. **A return to slavery.**
  - a. The Gentile Galatians were never under the Law to return to it.
  - b. If they accepted the Law, they would return “again” to the same **KIND** of slavery they experienced in the idolatrous rituals of their former paganism that could not free them from their sins.
2. **A return to vanity.** The Galatians’ observance of Jewish “days (Sabbaths) and months (new moons) and seasons (recurrent festivals) and years (jubilee years)” is classified as “vain.”



**CONCLUSION:**

Like Jewish ritual and pagan idolatry no traditional accretions of men today have the power to remove sin and its curse. Only Christ through the gospel has that power. Christ alone in His atoning sacrifice redeemed us from the curse of law and the penalty of sin and death. Only by faith in Him can we become heirs of the divine estate, become members of the divine family, and receive the Spirit of our adoption enabling us to have intimate conversations with the Father.

When Christians today place their trust in any person or system other than Christ himself, they return to the same weak and worthless rudiments that were powerless to make us right with God before we became Christians. This will result in a return to bondage issuing from our future sins from which there is no remission outside of Christ. See Hebrews 10:26.

**SELF EXAM FOR LESSON SEVEN:**

1. The “rudiments of the world” or “basic principles of the world” have reference to:
  - ☐ The time at the end of the world.
  - ☐ The law of Moses and its regulations.
  - ☐ The law principle by which the universe and inhabitants are governed.
  - ☐ The ABC’s of learning.
2. Bondage for both Jew and Gentile was because of:
  - ☐ The particular religious law they were living under.
  - ☐ Had nothing to do with any religious law.
  - ☐ They were under the law of sin and death.
  - ☐ Their relationship to the law of Moses.
3. What does Paul mean when he uses the phrase “in the fullness of time?”
 

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4. Sonship in the divine family is achieved by what means?
 

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5. What was the Galatian Christians’ past status before Paul preached to them, their present status and their future status under the law.
  - 1) 

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  - 2) 

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  - 3) 

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## **NOTES**

## LESSON EIGHT

# A CONTRAST OF AFFECTIONS AND MOTIVES

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### INTRODUCTION:

**I**n all of his letters this section is perhaps the most emotional and touching of Paul's verbal outpourings to his children in the faith. We know that Paul's great Christian heart was touched by the Corinthians as a caring father who spiritually begat them in Christ (1 Corinthians 4:15), and again by the Thessalonians for whom he tenderly cared like a nursing mother (1 Thessalonians 2:7). But in this letter to the Galatians Paul feels the distance that now separates them from him, not to mention from Christ, to the extent of such perplexity as to know just how to handle the situation. In his attempt to close the gap between them he reveals a painful anxiety that grips him like a woman's birth pangs.

The phrase *weak and beggarly elements* tell us the extent of their regression. They were giving up the power of the gospel for the weakness of law, and the wealth of the gospel for the poverty of law. The Law never made anybody rich or powerful; on the contrary, the Law could only reveal man's weakness and spiritual bankruptcy.

Paul was a wonderful spiritual father; he knew just how to balance his rebuke with love. Now he turns from "spanking" to "embracing" as he reminds the believers of their love for him and his love for them. At one point they were willing to sacrifice anything for Paul, so great was their love, but now he had become their enemy. The Judaizers had come in and stolen their affection.

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**LESSON TEXT:** Galatians 4:12-20

**LESSON AIM:** To see Paul's deep feelings for the Galatians as he pleads with them to renew their affection for him.

**LESSON OBJECTIVES:** You will . . .

1. Learn of Paul's special plea to the Galatian Christians.
  2. Investigate the motives of the Judaizers as they cause the Galatian Christians to cool toward Paul.
  3. See Paul's fatherly affection for the Galatian Christians.
- 

### A SPECIAL PLEA TO THE GALATIANS (4:12-13)

Had the false teachers accused Paul of preaching to these Galatians out of some motive other than a genuine concern for their souls? Had he been accused of exploiting them to aggrandize himself? It seems conclusive from one of his opening

statements (1:10) that he was accused of using flattery to gain the Galatians' confidence. Not only, then, had the Judaizers attacked Paul's apostleship and his gospel, but his character as well. He responds in the form of a plea.

**A. Identify with Me Even as I Identify with You**

1. Paul identifies more with the Galatian Gentiles than with Jews.
2. On this ground he pleads, “. . . *become as I am, for I also have become as you are.*”
3. Such a radical change of ground and such consistency of life offers evidence of the genuineness of his position.

**B. Remember the Reason I Preached the Gospel to You in the First Place**

1. Paul's real reason for choosing the Galatian province was due to a bodily affliction.
2. Paul's original evangelistic course did not include the route from Pisidian Antioch to Derbe.
  - a. Either he was stricken with some malady, or,
  - b. Some recurrence of a pre-existing affliction caused him to select the Galatian province as an alternative to his original plans.

**C. Remember How Eagerly You Received Me**

1. They accepted Paul and the gospel eagerly, which seems to be the meaning of, “*You have done me no wrong.*”
2. Their reception of Paul and his message was so enthusiastic that they treated him, in spite of his bodily appearance, as an angel of the Lord.
3. Even as Jesus Himself (reflecting their reception of his person).

**THE GALATIANS' FEELINGS FOR PAUL (4:12-16)**

**A. Their Former Feelings for Paul (vs. 12-16)**

When Paul first preached the gospel to them, the Galatians response was commendable as well as enthusiastic.

1. **They neither despised nor loathed him.**
  - a. Their response was not one of revulsion for his physical condition, though they seemed to have been tempted to.
  - b. Nor did they “spit out” when they saw him (a literal translation of “you despised not”). Ridderbos explains that, “Illness, physical infirmity, and adversity were regarded even by the Jews, as representing the opposition and penalty of the deity, but more so by the Gentiles (cf. Acts 28:4).
2. **They received him as an angel, as Jesus Christ.**

The Galatians received Paul and the gospel as both God's messenger and as one who represented Christ himself.
3. **They would have given Paul their own eyes.**

Paul is reminding them of the gratitude and the excitement the Galatians experienced when first they heard the gospel.



**B. Their Present Feelings for Paul (v. 16)**

1. Originally there was a genuine love between them, a relationship born of the gospel. But now the atmosphere has changed. Paul senses it.
2. They now seem to be regarding him as their enemy.
  - a. May have been because of the indictments made by the Judaizers against Paul.
  - b. May have been due to the abruptness and cutting edge of his letter. The latter seems to be preferred.

**A CONTRAST OF MOTIVES FOR PURSUING THE GALATIANS' CONFIDENCE (4: 17-18)**
**A. The Wrong Motives of the Judaizers**

1. They were eagerly courting the Galatians' confidence.
2. So was Paul, now, in his letter. And Paul makes it clear that to be sought after in a commendable manner for a commendable matter is good.
3. But the Judaizers' would manipulate the Galatians.
  - a. By persuading them to think they were not yet saved, "they wish to shut you out."
  - b. In order to build up themselves and their own work before others (cf. 6:13-14).

**B. The Right Motives of Paul**

1. He had brought the Galatians salvation, confidence, joy, and hope.
2. He had not promoted himself and his ministry but their welfare.
  - a. Paul told them the truth, but the Judaizers told them lies.
  - b. Paul sought to glorify Christ, but the Judaizers glorified themselves and their converts.

**C. Paul's Parental Affection for Them (vs. 19-20)**

1. Paul's feeling for the Galatians was like a parent whose heart breaks for a child who chooses the path of destruction.
  - a. He had begotten them in the gospel, and now he is in emotional labor over them again.
  - b. He addresses them as parents would address their children. He pleads with them as "my little children."
  - c. He hurts for them as a woman about to be delivered of her baby, "*... I am again in labor until Christ is formed in you.*"
  - d. He wishes he could do more than write a letter to them.
2. He is in a quandary as to how to handle the matter at Galatia. "*I am perplexed about you.*"

**CONCLUSION:**

Had Paul, the great psychologist, knowing both human nature and the nature of these Galatians, judged correctly that they would take exception to the cutting edges of his letter thus far? Did he then, in anticipation of their emotions ruling over their reason, make this loving attempt to persuade them that, while such stringent measures were

necessary, they were said from a loving heart that was drenched in tears and frustrated with perplexity? In the same spirit with which he sought to strengthen the Ephesians by “speaking the truth in love,” he wrote this statement to his children in the Lord. They were fickle, but they were also babes in Christ. And a loving parent uses every means at his disposal to correct an unthinking and wayward child.

## **STAND FAST IN YOUR FREEDOM!!**

### **SELF EXAM FOR LESSON EIGHT:**

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1. What was Paul’s three-pronged plea to the Christians in Galatia in verses 12-14?  
 1) \_\_\_\_\_  
 2) \_\_\_\_\_  
 3) \_\_\_\_\_
  
2. How had the Galatians received Paul when he first preached the gospel to them? (v. 14)  
 \_\_\_\_\_
  
3. What three statements in verses 12-16 reflect the Galatians’ former feelings for Paul?  
 1) \_\_\_\_\_  
 2) \_\_\_\_\_  
 3) \_\_\_\_\_
  
4. In what way were the Christians regarding Paul when he wrote this letter?  
 \_\_\_\_\_
  
5. What motives were the Judaizers portraying for seeking or courting the Galatians’ confidence? \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_
  
6. Why did Paul wish he could be with them and change his tone? (v. 20)  
 \_\_\_\_\_

## LESSON NINE

# ALLEGORY OF HAGAR AND SARAH

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### INTRODUCTION:



Paul's allegory is his capstone argument concluding his appeal to the authority of Old Testament scripture in a final attempt to clarify the basic error of legalism and the truth of the gospel.

Why does Paul employ an allegory? It seems very likely that the Judaizers did. (Once again we see the need to interpret a bit of Galatians as we would a telephone conversation of which we hear only one side). They could have reasoned with the Galatians as follows: "Even as Abraham married Sarah so God entered into a marriage covenant with Israel. Even as Isaac, born of that union, was born free, so those under the law are the only ones that are free. Since Gentiles are not under the law, they are slaves and must come under the law to be free." So Paul responds with an allegory of his own. He does this with two goals in mind: (1) to demonstrate that a correct allegorizing of the historical facts of scripture demonstrates that the law produces bondage, not freedom from sin, and (2) to expose the fallacy of the Judaizers' allegory.

There are three stages in Paul's reasoning. The first is historical, recalling the facts as recorded in Genesis (4:21-23). The second is allegorical, presenting the spiritual truths that are by nature resident in the facts (4:24-27). The third is the application to Legalists and to Christians (4:28-31).

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**LESSON TEXT:** Galatians 4:21-31

**LESSON AIM:** To see Paul's use of the allegory of Hagar and Sarah in disproving that the Abrahamic blessings were to be obtained through the physical lineage of Abraham.

**LESSON OBJECTIVES:** You will . . .

1. Review the history of the allegory presented by Paul, learning the meaningful differences between the two mothers and their two sons.
  2. See that these two women represent two covenants of different nature.
  3. Learn that Christians relate to Sarah, the free woman, set free, in contrast to those in bondage who sin under the law, represented by Hagar and her son.
-

## **HISTORY: THE HISTORICAL FACTS RECORDED IN SCRIPTURE (4:21-23)**

Did the Galatians **want** to be under the law? It appears so. Paul has just said that they “desired to be enslaved all over again.” This time it would be to the elemental things of the law (4:9). That being true he bases his message on the authority of scripture: “*you who want to be under law, do you not listen to the law?*”

### **A. Abraham Had Two Sons – Isaac and Ishmael**

1. The emphasis should be on the word *two*, “Abraham had *two* sons,” as if Paul’s opponents had spoken only of Isaac.
2. The Jew placed much value on being Abraham’s fleshly descendant, as if that biological relationship guaranteed salvation.
3. The Jews might argue from Genesis 12:3 and 22:18: that God had promised the redemptive blessing to Abraham’s fleshly seed. Thus:
  - a. The Gentiles should imitate the Jews to the point of circumcision and keeping the law.
  - b. Hence, Paul’s argument on the singularity, rather than the plurality, of that seed promise in Galatians 3:16.
  - c. But Abraham had **two** sons; Ishmael by Hagar as well as Isaac by Sarah.

### **B. Isaac by Sarah and Ishmael by Hagar**

There is a distinct difference between Isaac and Ishmael, even as between their mothers Sarah and Hagar, and that difference is significant to the allegory and its application.

### **C. A Basic Difference Between These Mothers and Their Sons**

1. The difference between Hagar and Sarah and their sons.
  - a. Hagar was a *slave woman*. Her offspring would have been *born into slavery*.
  - b. Sarah was a *free woman*. Her offspring would have been *freeborn*.
2. The difference in the birth of their sons.
  - a. Ishmael was born “*according to the flesh*,” that is, the natural way.
  - b. Isaac was born “*through the promise*” by means of divine intervention.
  - c. Isaac’s birth required God’s special attention to an old couple in order for them to have children.

## **ALLEGORY: OTHER TRUTHS TO WHICH THE FACTS CORRESPOND (4:24-27)**

### **A. The Facts and the Truths to Which They Correspond**

1. An allegory is a true story with another meaning corresponding to the nature of the facts.
  - a. It is more than an illustration.
  - b. An allegory is another real spiritual truth embodied in the nature of actual historical events.

2. The facts must be correctly allegorized. The historical facts in the story correspond to other truths of like nature.
3. The word **correspond** (v.25), used in a military sense, means “to be in line with, to be in the same row with, as soldiers in a file.”
  - a. The idea is to answer to, or to be in the same category with.
  - b. The facts and events in the story correspond **in nature** with other truths to be discovered.
4. Paul says, “*these women are two covenants.*”
  - a. Both Sarah and Hagar correspond in nature to the nature of the old and new covenants.
  - b. One, a slave woman, bears children into slavery. She corresponds to the old covenant that condemns and holds sinners in bondage.
  - c. Sarah, a free woman, bears children into freedom. She corresponds to the new covenant that frees sinners from their bondage.

**NOTE:** Parallel between Hagar and Sarah:

Hagar – bondwoman	Sarah – free woman
<u>Corresponds to:</u>	<u>Corresponds to:</u>
Old Covenant	New Covenant
bearing slave children	bearing free children
earthly Jerusalem	heavenly Jerusalem
in bondage	free

**B. The Allegory must Correctly Represent the Historical Facts**

1. Sarah, a free woman, corresponds to the **New Covenant**.
  - a. Neither Sarah nor Isaac could possibly correspond to the law that enslaves men to their sins.
  - b. The old covenant as a legal system could make no one free from sin.
  - c. The law could only bring men into bondage.
  - d. The law, by its very nature, could not possibly be a true spiritual parallel to Sarah or to her freeborn son Isaac.
2. Hagar, a slave woman, corresponds to the **Old Covenant**. The law, the old covenant, is a perfect spiritual parallel to Hagar the bondwoman and her slave-born son inasmuch as it holds men in slavery to sin and death.
  - a. The law cannot give LIFE (3:21).
  - b. The law cannot give RIGHTEOUSNESS (2:21).
  - c. The law cannot give THE GIFT OF THE SPIRIT (3:2).
  - d. The law cannot give a SPIRITUAL INHERITANCE (3:18).
3. Hagar corresponds To **Mount Sinai in Arabia**.
4. Hagar corresponds to **the present Jerusalem** in slavery with her children.
  - a. Jerusalem figuratively parallels Hagar and Ishmael.
  - b. It was the center of Judaism and legalism.

**C. Jerusalem Above Is Free**

1. Paul quotes Isaiah 54:1 where the prophet sees Jerusalem desolated in Babylonian captivity.
  - a. Sarah answers to Jerusalem's condition in captivity: she was "desolate," being without children.
  - b. But Isaiah sees Jerusalem set free from captivity to return to her land where she will multiply greatly and serve her purpose to bring in the Messiah to make men free from sin.
  - c. The point of the quotation is to compare the exceedingly greater number of spiritual children born to Sarah through Isaac than were born to Hagar.
2. This Jerusalem, which Isaiah foresaw and to which Sarah corresponds, is our mother. This is the heavenly Jerusalem (Hebrews 12:22-23; Revelation 3:12; 21:2), the church of Christ, set free from the bondage of sin. She stands in contrast to those in bondage to sin under the law.

**APPLICATION: TO CHRISTIANS AND TO THOSE UNDER LAW (4:28-31)****A. The Natural Correspondence Between**

1. Isaac and Christians (v. 28).
  - a. Like Isaac Christians are children of promise.
  - b. Both promises God made to Abraham, the seed promise and Isaac's birth, were fulfilled by a supernatural intervention by God.
  - c. Without God's supernatural intervention into history, by means of a virgin conception and by means of the death and resurrection of Christ, we could not be saved from sin. The natural parallels are obvious.
2. Ishmael and Isaac — Legalists and Christians (v. 29).

**B. The Authority of Scripture (vs. 30-31).**

1. God told Abraham to listen to Sarah and to cast out the bondwoman and her son (Genesis 21:10, 12).
2. We are to remove all legalism from the body of Christ. How can this be accomplished?
  - a. We can try to change them. This must fail, for we cannot change either the law or the old nature.
  - b. We might compromise with the Legalists. This did not work in Abraham's home, and neither will it work in our lives.
  - c. We can cast them out. This is what we are supposed to do.

**CONCLUSION:**

*"So then, brethren, we are not children of a bondwoman, but of the free woman."*  
 The "so then" is a statement of conclusion. The facts in the matter, the allegory, and the application all considered we must conclude that God's new family members are not bond-slaves to either the old covenant or to any law system like it. *The law cannot give life or fruitfulness; legalism is barren.*

**SELF EXAM FOR LESSON NINE:**

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1. What was the basic difference between the two women and two sons in this allegory?

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2. To what does each mother and son relate?

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3. Fill out the graph below relating to the parallel between Hagar and Sarah.

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4. What are three possible solutions to legalism in the body and the outcome of each?

1) 

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2) 

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3) 

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## **NOTES**



## LESSON TEN

# CONSEQUENCES OF LEGALISM UPON OUR FREEDOM

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### INTRODUCTION:



Paul's statement: *It was for freedom that Christ set us free; therefore keep standing firm and do not be subject again to a yoke of slavery* (Galatians 5:1), would fit well as a conclusion to the allegory. As the letter is now divided, it serves as a transition statement from the allegory to the apostle's exhortation to stand fast in our Christian freedom, and it introduces the final division of the letter, The "practical section," chapters five and six.

A STATEMENT OF TRANSITION. With these opening words Paul makes a distinct transition from argument to application. Chapters one through four are written in the **indicative** mood. Paul reasons, argues, and concludes. He battles theologically to expose the error of legalism and to sustain the truth of the gospel. But in this last section of the letter there is a distinct change of content and thrust. Chapters five and six are written in the **imperative mood**. Paul now gives commands and urges directives. He asks for a response. In these closing chapters he makes a transition from theology to practical application. He uses the verbs be, wait, walk, work, love, live, do and do not.

PAUL'S POINT in this section seems to be that while Christ freed us from the deadly curse of the law it is our responsibility to maintain that freedom. Belief is not enough. We must trust **and** obey. In this lesson Paul not only exhorts the Galatians to stand fast in their Christian freedom but to recognize and take caution against the consequences of legalism.

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**LESSON TEXT:** Galatians 5:1-12

**LESSON AIM:** To see the inability of legalism and grace to coexist in a system of salvation.

**LESSON OBJECTIVES:** You will . . .

1. Learn that salvation by grace through the death of Christ gives the Christian true freedom.
  2. See several consequences of trying to live the Christian life under any legal system of law.
  3. Discover five fallacies in relation to legalism.
-

## THE APOSTLE'S PROCLAMATION (5:1)

### A. Christians Are Freed for Freedom

Legalism is a lie and actually cuts one off from Christ.

1. ***Freed from the law of Moses.***
  - a. The churches of Galatia were predominantly Gentile.
  - b. The Gentile Christians at Galatia were never under the Law of Moses to have been freed from it, nor could they return to it "again."
  - c. If they placed themselves under the Law, it would not be a return to it.
2. ***Freed from the curse of the Law.***
  - a. The wages of sin is death, and since all have sinned all have come under the curse of death (Romans 6:23; 3:23).
  - b. The Law pronounced the curse of sin and death upon the entire human race whether under the Law or not (Galatians 3:13, 22; Romans 3:19).
  - c. The purpose of the Law was to educate all men to the fatality of their sin and to the curse of death pronounced by that Law.
3. ***Freed from sin to be free from sin.***
  - a. We are set free from the Law's curse of our future sins.
  - b. Rather than our sin condemning **us** He now condemns our **sin** (Romans 8:1-3).
  - c. By faith in Christ sinners are set free from the bondage of past sins to be free from bondage to our future sins.
4. **Positively it is freedom to:**
  - a. Walk and live in the Spirit (5:25).
  - b. Produce the fruit of the Spirit (5:22-23).
  - c. Do the will of God with joy and gratitude (5:14; Romans 8:4).
  - d. Freedom of access to the Father – for the blessing of which Paul speaks is enjoyed by *sons* (4:6; Romans 8:15).

### B. Christians Are to Maintain That Freedom

1. ***"Stand fast."*** We came into freedom by an obedience of faith (Galatians 3:26-27) and we will "stand fast" in that freedom by a continual obedience of faith.
2. ***"Do not be subject again to a yoke of slavery."***
  - a. The term "yoke" strongly hints of the language of Peter when, at the Jerusalem conference, he spoke of the Law as "*a yoke which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear*" (Acts 15:10). Why could they not bear the yoke of the Law of Moses?
  - b. The Law requiring sinless perfection, **became** an unbearable yoke to those who appealed to it for salvation, for by its nature it can only condemn.
  - c. Therefore the Law yokes men to their sins and pronounces upon them the curse of death.

## CONSEQUENCES OF LEGALISM (5:2-6)

### A. Four Consequences of Going Back to the Law (vs. 2-4)

1. ***Christ will be of no benefit to you.***
  - a. Obedience of faith earns nothing, however, it is obedience that perfects our faith (James 2:20-24).
  - b. Not perfect obedience, but an obedient lifestyle and a continual struggle against sin and self. Accordingly scripture says, “*Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life*” (Revelation 2:10).
2. ***You are under obligation to keep the whole law.***
  - a. If the Galatians placed themselves under the law they assumed the obligation to keep it perfectly, or be condemned (cursed) immediately upon the first infraction.
  - b. Since men **will** sin those under the law **will** be cursed.

**NOTE:** Legalism is a lie, it affirms the impossible: it offers a system that condemns sinners as a system of salvation for sinners! Both Legalists and their converts expose themselves in the light of God’s word as greatly lacking in the knowledge of the gospel and as well in the knowledge of the nature of law.

3. ***You will be severed from Christ.***
  - a. Alternative translations for “severed” are “discharged,” “alienated,” “estranged.”
  - b. The same verb is used in the opposite sense in Romans 7:6 . . . *we have been released from the law*. Circumcision would be “the sacrament of their excision from Christ.”
4. ***You have fallen from grace.***
  - a. The gospel message is salvation by God’s grace through our faith in Christ.
  - b. Only Christ is our access to God (Ephesians 2:18), and He becomes our access only when we place our faith in Him (Romans 5:1-2).
  - c. If a Christian places his faith for justification in another he will fall from grace, he will become estranged from Christ, alienated from him as he was before salvation.

### B. Reasons for the Consequences (vs. 5-6)

1. “For” in the original language means that the reason is to be given.
2. Christians wait through the Spirit by faith for the hope of righteousness.
  - a. **“Wait.”** That is, wait patiently by being faithful to Christ. This is due to our hope.
  - b. **“Through the Spirit by faith.”** What we do through the Spirit we do by faith.
    - 1) The believer is to “walk by the Spirit” (5:16).
    - 2) The believer is to “walk by faith” (2 Corinthians 5:7).
    - 3) The believer is to “live by the Spirit” (5:25), but he/she, Paul tells us in Galatians, is to “live by faith in Christ” (Galatians 2:20). (See Ed’s book for more discussion on this section.)

- c. **“The hope of righteousness.”**
  - 1) We have a living hope of an inheritance that cannot be defiled and will not fade away (1 Peter 1:3-4).
  - 2) This hope is not based on law. It is based confidently on Christ.
  - 3) The Christian’s hope, based on the confidence that he/she is justified, is a dynamic motivation to live for God though we live in tension with the world.
- 3. In Christ neither circumcision nor uncircumcision means anything. Paul has already said that we are all one man in Christ regardless of race or gender (Galatians 3:28).

### **LEGALISM’S FALLACIES (5:7-12)**

#### **A. Legalism Hinders Obedience (v. 7)**

Legalism kills the spirit of willing service and requires a specific commandment for every deed.

#### **B. Legalism Is Not from God (v. 8)**

If a doctrine hinders obedience of faith to Christ it is not of God and is to be jettisoned when recognized. *“Cast out the bondwoman and her son.”*

#### **C. Legalism Corrupts the Entire Body (v. 9)**

- 1. Like leaven in dough, it grows. It will not go away if left alone.
- 2. We have to purge out the old leaven (1 Corinthians 5:6-8) to keep the body sound, unified, and productive.

#### **D. Legalism Compromises the Gospel (v. 11)**

- 1. It removes the need for the cross (as in 2:21).
- 2. Legalism does not understand the cross by grace and justification by faith.

#### **E. Legalism Mutilates the Gospel (v. 12)**

### **CONCLUSION:**

The freedom Christians have from the guilt of sin is by faith in the person and work of Christ Jesus. When that faith leads a sinner to renounce his life of sin and takes Jesus to be the Lord of his life, and to be baptized into Christ, that person is justified, he is freed from sin (Romans 6:1-7). And the Lord has freed him to remain free from the guilt of sin. But the ongoing nature of justification is conditional. It is conditioned on keeping faith in Christ. Paul pleads with the Galatians, and us, not to return to the bondage of our sins again by yoking ourselves to any other person or system that takes faith out of Christ. The consequences are fatal. So even as we were set free from sin by an obedience of faith in Christ we are to stand fast in our freedom from sin by a continual obedience of faith in Christ. Stand fast therefore.

## **CHRISTIAN FREEDOM – IMPERILED BY LEGALISM**

**SELF EXAM FOR LESSON TEN:**

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1. What are three things the Christian is freed from?
  - 1) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 2) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 3) \_\_\_\_\_
  
2. What are the two exhortations given by Paul in relation to a Christian maintaining that freedom?
  - 1) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 2) \_\_\_\_\_
  
3. List four consequences to going back to the Law of Moses.
  - 1) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 2) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 3) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 4) \_\_\_\_\_
  
4. List five fallacies of legalism as given in verses 7-12.
  - 1) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 2) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 3) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 4) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 5) \_\_\_\_\_
  
5. Complete the following sentence:  
Obedience of faith \_\_\_\_\_ nothing, however, it is  
\_\_\_\_\_ that perfects our faith (James 2:20-24).

## **NOTES**

## LESSON ELEVEN

# THE LIBERATED LIFESTYLE OF THE SPIRIT-GUIDED MAN

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### INTRODUCTION:

**C**hristian freedom is not merely theoretical, but intensely practical. To bring practicality to his message the apostle raises upon the foundation of his gospel theology the superstructure of a corresponding Christian lifestyle. Paul now seeks to commit the Galatian churches to a life that is commensurate with a mature faith in Christ.

We are prone to go to extremes. One believer interprets *liberty* as *license* and thinks he can do whatever he wants to do. Another believer, seeing this error, goes to an opposite extreme and imposes law on everybody. Somewhere between *license* on the one hand and *legalism* on the other hand is true Christian liberty.

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**LESSON TEXT:** Galatians 5:13-26

**LESSON AIM:** To understand that Christian freedom empowers one to live a lifestyle which reflects that freedom.

**LESSON OBJECTIVES:** You will . . .

1. Learn that Christian freedom does not allow for a perverted lifestyle.
  2. Discover what it means to walk by the Spirit.
  3. Examine the contrast of walking by the Spirit versus walking by the flesh.
- 

### CHRISTIAN FREEDOM MUST NOT BE PERVERTED INTO LICENSE (5:13-15)

Paul knows that men are often characterized by extremes.

#### A. Freedom's Responsibility

1. Responsibility not to indulge the desires of the flesh.
  - a. We have been delivered from the law of sin and death, as we sin Jesus condemns our sin (Romans 8:1-3).
  - b. This is conditioned on our willingness from the heart to walk after the Spirit's directives (Romans 8:4; 1 John 1:7).

- c. Some will reason that if we are free from sin then we can sin with freedom from punishment. God forbid! (See Romans 6:1-2)
- 2. Responsibility to be righteous. Galatians does not emphasize what we are free to do, but what we are free from.
  - a. We are free from law, from sin, and from death.
  - b. We are not free to do as we please.
  - c. As Christ's freemen we are at the same time bondslaves to Him to walk in righteousness (Romans 6:15-18; 1 Peter 2:16-17).

### **B. Love Is the Alternative to Law**

- 1. The commandment, ". . . *through love serve one another.*"
  - a. Liberty plus love = service to others.
  - b. Liberty minus love = license (slavery to sin).
- 2. Love is the total approach to life. "*The entire law is summed up in a single command: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.*" This approach solves every problem in human relations.
- 3. Love in the heart is God's substitute for laws and threats.

### **C. Freedom's Reality**

- 1. Sin has no dominion over us for we are not under the condemnation of a legal system.
  - a. We are free from sin's death-penalty.
  - b. Our faith has been reckoned for righteousness.
  - c. Our sins are not reckoned against us.
  - d. We have been freed from the law of sin and death.
  - e. God condemns our sins as we walk in the light of the Spirit's word.
- 2. This gospel reality is a dynamic that will eventually mature into a selfless lifestyle that is more an expression of gratitude to a wonderful loving Savior than of mere grudging obedience to law.

## **WHAT IS INVOLVED IN WALKING BY THE SPIRIT (5:16-18)**

This part of the letter presents the contrast between the kind of lifestyle the flesh wants to live and the lifestyle into which the Spirit of Christ would guide us.

### **A. It Is Not Subjectivism**

- 1. God, knowing the propensity of man to follow after his own heart into error, has warned us to be directed by His word (Numbers 15:37-40).
- 2. He has warned us that a way that seems right could nevertheless be the course of death (Proverbs 14:12), and that we cannot determine God's intended course for man by some existential experience (Jeremiah 10:23).

### **B. It Is Following after the Spirit's Teaching**

- 1. God may guide us through:
  - a. Our Christian lives in answer to prayer.
  - b. By agents other than God's word.
  - c. By the ministration of angels (Hebrews 1:14).



- d. By the Spirit. Such guidance is providential.
- 2. Acts of God's providence are to be distinguished from acts of revelation.
- 3. It is by the means of this Word, the New Testament, that He saves us, bears His fruit in our lives, and directs us into our Christian walk.
  - a. **The Spirit Saves Us by The Word of The Gospel.**
  - b. **The Spirit Bears His Fruit by His Word.**
  - c. **The Spirit Guides Us by His Word.**

### **C. It Is Not to Be Led under a Legal Law**

- 1. No scripture speaks of man's inability to keep the Law. *"For this commandment which I command you today is not too difficult for you, nor is it out of reach . . . But the word is very near you, in your mouth and in your heart that you may observe it"* (Deuteronomy 30:11).
- 2. Scripture does teach, however, that man is unable to come into a right relationship with God through the Law because of man's sin and the Law's nature to condemn the sinner.
- 3. The Holy Spirit, then, will not lead the Christian under the Law to his condemnation (Galatians 5:18).
- 4. God is not responsible for man's sins by providing him a law he is unable to observe.
  - a. Man is morally responsible for his sins.
  - b. He is guilty before God.
- 5. While walking by the Spirit is not sinless perfection, God nevertheless accounts the faithful Christian walk as a perfect fulfillment of the Law's requirement (Romans 8:4). This is the astonishing message of the gospel of salvation by faith in Christ.

## **CONTRAST OF TWO WALKS (5:19-26)**

"Walking by the Spirit" vs. "Walking by the Flesh"

### **A. The Flesh-guided Man (vs. 19-21)**

- 1. **The Flesh.** In this instance the flesh is man's sinful nature. The fleshly, carnal, or "natural man" (1 Corinthians 2:14) is governed by his fleshly desires. Such a person *"does not accept the things of the Spirit of God"* – the gospel things revealed by the Spirit to the apostles and conveyed to us through their word (1 Corinthians 2:10-13).
- 2. **The Works of The Flesh.** These works of the flesh can be placed into four categories:
  - a. **Sexual** – immorality, impurity, sensuality.
  - b. **Religious** – idolatry, sorcery (witchcraft, as in the case of Simon the magician, Acts 8:9-13).
  - c. **Social or inter-relational** – enmities, strife, jealousy, carousing.
  - d. **Substance abuse** – drunkenness.
- 3. **"Things Like These."**
  - a. God expects us to have enough intellectual and spiritual insight to identify and crucify (5:24) "such things" of the flesh.

- b. The Spirit-led man will train his senses “to discern good and evil” (Hebrews 5:14).
- 4. **Practice Such Things.**
  - a. There is a difference between a practice and an act, between a settled course of action and an isolated incident.
  - b. John indicates that even as Christians we will sin (1 John 1:10), and that some of those sins will be committed even while we are making dedicated efforts to walk in the light (1:7).
  - c. The Spirit and the flesh are in opposition to one another, and he who walks by the Spirit is not doing the things that pleases the flesh (Galatians 5:17).
  - d. Though imperfect he is not practicing “such things” of the flesh.
- 5. **“Shall Not Inherit the Kingdom of God.”**
  - a. Usually refers to the reign of God over the lives of His people, to which reign His church is of a trusting disposition to submit.
  - b. Here the “kingdom” appears to embrace more than God’s sovereign dominion. Paul speaks of the kingdom as the object of our inheritance.

#### **B. The Spirit-guided Man (vs. 22-26)**

- 1. The fruit of the Spirit takes time to flower and grow into full bloom.
  - a. The word “fruit” carries the idea of growth (Ephesians 4:11-15).
  - b. To bear the fruit of the Spirit requires an objective look at oneself in the mirror of the Spirit’s word (James 1:23-25).
  - c. A constant struggle is required to walk by the Spirit as opposed to the flesh.
- 2. Against the fruit of the Spirit “there is no law.”

#### **CONCLUSION:**

The message of the gospel is that if we by faith in Christ practice walking by the Spirit we can have the confidence of our salvation that will motivate us to a greater life of holiness and to higher attainments of spiritual insight and development. *“If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit.”*

**SELF EXAM FOR LESSON ELEVEN:**

---

1. Present two things “walking by the Spirit” is not, and one thing it is.

1) \_\_\_\_\_

2) \_\_\_\_\_

3) \_\_\_\_\_

2. The “works of the flesh” can be placed into four categories. List these below.

1) \_\_\_\_\_

2) \_\_\_\_\_

3) \_\_\_\_\_

4) \_\_\_\_\_

3. List the works of the flesh as given by Paul in Galatians 5:19-21.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

4. List the fruit of the Spirit as given by Paul in Galatians 5:22-23.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## **NOTES**

## LESSON TWELVE

# CHRIST'S CROSS THE TRUE MOTIVE FOR SERVING

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### INTRODUCTION:

**I**n this final section Paul reasons for a radically new family lifestyle in Christ where members of the divine family help one another over their hardships. He teaches that the motive for this kind of fellowship is rooted, not in proud flesh, but in the cross of Christ. Paul's closing statement in the preceding chapter, "*Let us not become boastful, challenging one another, envying one another,*" is a natural lead-in to this instruction.

"One another" is one of the key phrases in the Christian's vocabulary. "Love one another" is found at least a dozen times in the New Testament, along with "pray one for another" (James 5:16), "edify one another" (1 Thessalonians 5:11), "prefer one another" (Romans 12:10), "use hospitality one to another" (1 Peter 4:9), and many other like admonitions.

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**LESSON TEXT:** Galatians 6:1-18

**LESSON AIM:** To discover that the ultimate motive for serving in the body of Christ is the cross of Christ.

**LESSON OBJECTIVES:** You will . . .

1. Learn the principle of family problem solving in the church.
  2. See that receiving spiritual things brings us under obligation to share our material things with the teacher.
  3. Examine the motives behind the ministries of Paul and that of the law-binders.
- 

### THE PRINCIPLES OF FAMILY PROBLEM SOLVING (6:1-5)

God's spiritual men, cross-motivated and Spirit-led, employ principles of problem solving that are very different from those who are motivated by the flesh.

#### A. Spiritual Principles of Family Problem Solving

1. **You who are spiritual.** Those led by the Spirit of Christ.
2. **Restore.** Paul uses a hypothetical case to illustrate real and abiding family problems. A brother is caught, or overtaken, in a trespass.
  - a. The "trespass" says that he knew it was wrong when he engaged in the sin.
  - b. Being "caught" in the trespass tells us it was not premeditated.

- c. How shall we deal with “such a one?” Shall we expose him and shame him into repentance?
  - 1) This would humiliate the poor soul.
  - 2) Diminishes the human spirit, and may indeed inflame the brother into another negative act of defensive anger.
  - 3) This in turn infuriates the accuser for such a transparent attempt to justify an obvious sin.
  - 4) And so the satanic cycle downward is unfortunately often begun.
- d. Spiritual men do not shoot their own wounded family members.
  - 1) The Spirit-led brother remembers the cross and his own reconciliation to God, and in the gentleness of Christ seeks to restore the brother to spiritual health and self-confidence in Christ.
  - 2) The word “restore” was used of setting a bone so it could heal properly and be restored to its former healthy condition.
- 3. **Fulfill the law of Christ.** Christ-like men do not demand a list of laws which they cross off and then reason they are under no further obligation.
  - a. Spiritual men have the mind of Christ (Philippians 2:1-11).
  - b. In bearing one another’s burdens we imitate the life of Christ and in this manner fulfill Christ’s new command to love one another even as He loved us (John 13:34-35).

## **B. The Legalist’s Modus Operandi**

- 1. The Legalist’s view of himself – **he thinks he is something else.**
  - a. The fleshly man’s problem solving principles include intimidation, manipulation, and sometimes violence.
  - b. He does not bear burdens, he creates them by tying up heavy burdens and laying them on men’s shoulders (figuratively speaking), but as for himself he is unwilling to move them with so much as his finger (cf. Matthew 23:4).
  - c. His motive, says the Lord, is self-interest: “*They do all their deeds to be noticed by men*” (Matthew 23:5-7).
- 2. The correct view of the Legalist – **he is nothing.** “*If anyone thinks he is something when he is nothing, he deceives himself*” (6:3).
  - a. The fault-finder is as guilty of sin as the brother he is exposing.
  - b. But by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ we would all stand condemned before God.

## **THE PRINCIPLE OF FAMILY SHARING (vs. 6-10)**

### **A. Spiritual Brethren and Sharing**

- 1. The good things of God’s providence (v. 6).
  - a. What we do with *material* things is an evidence of how we value *spiritual* things (Matthew 6:21).
  - b. The spiritual leader in the church is to be supported by the gifts of the people (Luke 10:7; 1 Corinthians 9:11, 14).
- 2. The greater blessing in giving (vs. 7-8).

- a. The principle of sowing and reaping is found throughout the entire Bible.
- b. God has ordained that *we reap what we sow*.

**B. Spiritual Brethren Are Recipients of Gods' Promise (vs. 9-10)**

1. "*In due season we shall reap.*" The seed that is planted does not bear fruit immediately.
2. The danger of growing weary in the work of the Lord.
  - a. Sometimes spiritual fainting is caused by a lack of devotion to the Lord.
  - b. Sometimes we faint because of lack of prayer (Luke 18:1).
3. From the word *koinonia* comes our word "share." It means to participate, to have fellowship with another by receiving or giving.

**A CONTRAST OF MOTIVES – PAUL AND THE LAW-BINDERS (6:11-17)**

**A. Paul's True Ministry-motives Revealed in His Letter (v. 11)**

1. His motives of parental feeling and care were genuine, inherent in the very writing of the letter.
2. The content of the letter revealed his motives for writing as he has. (See Ed's book *Freed For Freedom* for a list of topics covered by Paul.)

**B. True Motives and Practice of the Legalists (vs. 12-13)**

1. **The motive of personal glory.** Wanting to make a good show in the flesh before the unbelieving Jews by capturing the churches of Galatia for Judaism, they compelled them to be circumcised.
2. **The motive of fear – of the unbelieving Jews.**
  - a. Fear of persecution by the unbelieving Jews.
  - b. To do away with the cross compromises the gospel (5:11).
  - c. The cross implies the abolition of the Law, and that eliminates circumcision.
  - d. If these Judaizers preached the gospel of the cross, they would not compel circumcision.
  - e. That would mean war with the Jews as surely as Paul had experienced it.
  - f. Their real motives emerge in the practice of their hypocrisy.
3. **Inconsistent in practice.** They bind circumcision on others but do not themselves keep the Law (6:13). Their doctrine is hypocritically motivated and their practice is inconsistent.

**C. The Cross Is the Sole Ground for Salvation and Confidence (vs. 14-16)**

1. **The cross is the Christian's ground for boasting.**
2. **The cross crucifies the world to me.**
3. **The cross produces a new creation** (2 Corinthians 5:17).
4. **The cross is the rule for the Christian walk.**
5. **The cross gives peace and mercy.** The results for those who "walk by this rule," that is, the rule of a death (crucified with Christ, 2:20), burial (in

baptism where we die to sin and self, Romans 6:1-7), and resurrection to a new creation in Christ. “Peace” expresses our confidence for salvation and eternal life (Romans 5:1). “Mercy” for our sins while we keep faith with Christ (cf. Romans 9:23-24).

6. **The cross relates people to God – the Israel of God.** Jews who become Christians are the Israel of God.

#### **D. The Brand-marks of Christ (v. 17)**

Paul bore upon his body the scars of persecution for the cross of Christ. These were proof of his integrity and commitment to Christ.

1. ***Let no man trouble me.*** The marks of his persecution quieted the accusations that he preached the gospel for ulterior motives.
2. ***I bear on my body the brand-marks of Jesus.*** Without a doubt these brand-marks were scars left from the persecutions by stoning, beatings, and imprisonment (cf. Acts 14:19; 2 Corinthians 11:22-30).
  - a. From *stigmata* we derive the word stigma, a disgraceful term, a mark of reproach.
  - b. This is a reference to the branding of slaves as a sign of ownership.
  - c. Paul’s point appears to be that these scars in his body identify him as an uncompromising preacher of the truth of the gospel, and whose integrity in Christ is unimpeachable.

#### **E. A Christian Wish for All Believers (v. 18)**

Every letter written by the apostle Paul opens and closes with a sincere reference to the grace of Christ as a wished-for blessing upon his readers. From what we now know about the saving, healing, strengthening grace of God in Christ, what greater, more needful blessing could be wished upon anyone? Paul closes the Galatian letter.



**SELF EXAM FOR LESSON TWELVE:**

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1. List three principles of spiritual problem solving given by Paul in Galatians 6:1-4.
  - 1) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 2) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 3) \_\_\_\_\_
  
2. Give a definition of the word “restore.” (The one in your Study Guide.)  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
  
3. What we do with \_\_\_\_\_ is an evidence of how we value \_\_\_\_\_ (Matthew 6:21).
  
4. What is the concept presented in Galatians 6:6? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
  
5. What great statement of truth is found in Galatians 6:7-8? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
  
6. What are two possible causes of spiritual fainting?
  - 1) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 2) \_\_\_\_\_
  
7. List six things concerning the cross which manifest its importance to the Christian.
  - 1) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 2) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 3) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 4) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 5) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 6) \_\_\_\_\_
  
8. Paul bore the scars of persecution for the cross of Christ upon his body. These were proof of what two things concerning Paul?
  - 1) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 2) \_\_\_\_\_

## **NOTES**

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# Study Guide

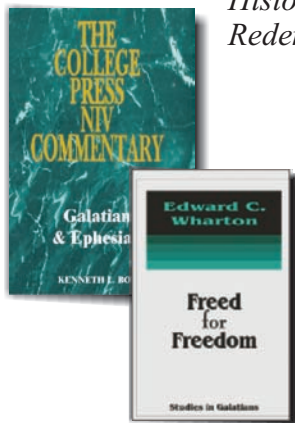
## Edward C. Wharton

Ed Wharton has preached the Gospel for more than 50 years. He was one of the first instructors at Sunset International Bible Institute in Lubbock, Texas, where he continues to serve on the faculty. He also serves as both teacher and evangelist in travels to Asia, Australia, Europe, and South America. Ed and Martha raised four children.



In this study Ed discusses the concept presented and called by Paul “the truth of the gospel” – salvation by faith in Christ. He lays down from Scripture, as foundational, the fact that Christianity is founded upon the redemptive work of a crucified Savior and can never be based upon law-keeping or works of merit.

Ed Wharton has written many books, to include: *Christ and the Church*, *The Church of Christ*, *Freed for Freedom*, *God Among the Nations*, and *Redemption Is*. Working with SIBI External Studies Ed has produced video courses on *The Distinctive Nature of the Church*, *Historical Christian Evidences*, *Galatians*, *Scheme of Redemption*, *Homiletics I*, and *Baptism*.



→ The College Press NIV Commentary on *Galatians and Ephesians* and *Freed for Freedom* by Ed Wharton are companion books to this study.

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