



Walking Thru The Bible

GALATIANS

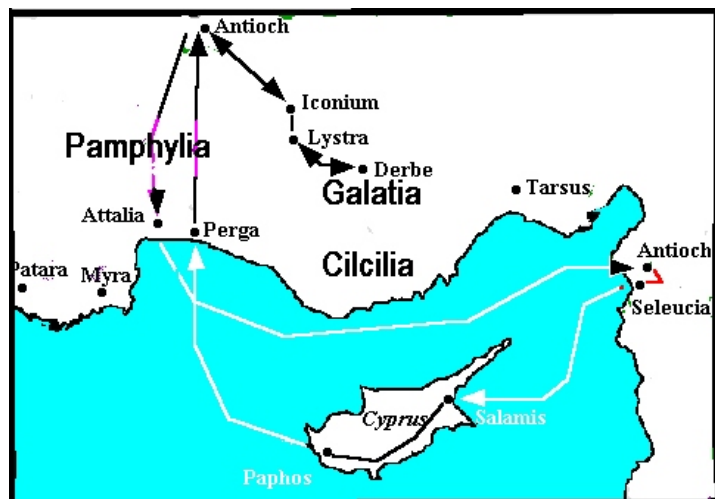
Introduction

AUTHOR AND RECIPIENTS: Galatia was not a city but a Roman district and Paul addressed this letter to all of the churches (congregations) within that district. Roman districts frequently changed boundaries and it is believed that when this letter was written the cities of Antioch, Iconium, Lystra, Derbe and possibly others were included in the area. Galatia was located in the center of the interior of the great peninsula now called Asia Minor and the country of Turkey today.

Paul and Barnabas started all of those congregations on their first missionary journey described in Acts 13-14.

DATE: This brief letter to the Galatians is the first of Paul's New Testament letters that have been preserved for us. It was written to those churches founded on his first missionary journey (AD 46-47). Thus, the date of the book is about AD 48, just before or immediately after the conference in Jerusalem mentioned in Acts 15.

BACKGROUND: Paul's work had been successful in Galatia, but shortly after he left Judaizing teachers came among them and began teaching another gospel (Galatians 1:7). These false teachers were telling these young disciples of Christ that their conversion was imperfect until they adopted and observed the requirements of the Law of Moses (Gal. 3:1-3). When Paul heard about this he wrote this epistle pointing out the error in such a doctrine. This letter explores the relationship of the Mosaic Law to the Gospel of Christ and concludes that the Law was temporary while preparing the way for Christ.



The Bible teaches that we are saved by a number of things such as faith, grace, baptism, ourselves, works, and obedience so it cannot be said that we are saved by any one thing exclusively. Paul points out that it was by the grace of God that he was saved ("called me though his grace," 1:15) and that God had directed the means of salvation by his grace down through time (see the allegory in 4:21-31) and tells the Galatians that they are saved by the grace of God. However, they set aside this grace if they attempt to retain the Law of Moses or parts of the law as binding upon Christians, in fact, when they do this they fall from grace (5:4) Cf. Ephesians 2:8. Faith is inseparably tied to grace and to abide in the grace of God one must possess an active faith. Justification by faith is covered by Paul in chapter 3 verses 23-29 which should be read and studied diligently.

Outline of Galatians

A brief outline of the book would be:

- 1) Defense - chap 1-2; 2) Doctrinal - chap 3-4; 3) Duty - ch. 5-6.
- I. Introduction 1:1-5
- II. Paul's Arguments For His Apostleship 1:6-2:21
 - A. Warning against perverting the gospel 1:6-10
 - B. Paul's apostleship was from God 1:11-17
 - C. His apostleship was not from man 1:18-24
 - D. His apostleship recognized by others 2:1-10
 - E. His message was maintained before Peter 2:11-14
 - F. His message was according to God's plan 2:15-21
- III. Paul's Arguments For The Gospel 3:1 - 4:31
 - A. The Holy Spirit was received by faith 3:1-5
 - B. Abraham was justified by faith 3:6-9
 - C. The curse of the law 3:10-14
 - D. The law cannot annul the promise 3:15-18
 - E. The purpose of the law 3:19-22
 - F. Sons of God through faith and baptism 3:23-4:7
 - G. Legalism is no better than paganism 4:8-10
 - H. Rehearses his points of contact with them 4:11-18
 - I. The two covenants are contrasted 4:19-31
- IV. Paul's Arguments for Christian Living 5:1 - 6:16
 - A. The danger of falling from grace 5:1-12
 - B. The law of love 5:13-15
 - C. The war between the Spirit and the flesh 5:16-26
 - D. The marks of spirituality 6:1-10
 - E. The warning against the Judaizers 6:11-16
- V. Conclusion 6:17-18

Overview of Galatians--

A. Paul's Defense of his Apostleship (1:1-2:21)

Paul begins with a declaration of his heavenly credentials as an apostle (1:1-5) and resounding condemnation of the false teachers who are misleading the Galatians (1:6-9). What Paul preached came by revelation from Jesus (1:10-24) and had been endorsed by the leaders of the Jerusalem church (2:1-10). He had even rebuked Peter when the latter was untrue to that gospel by virtue of showing partiality to Jews over Gentiles (2:11-21).

B. Paul's explanation of his gospel. Gal. 3:1- 6:10

The gospel Paul preached demanded faith rather than ritual performance (3:1-5). The Law of Moses was not added to nullify faith (3:15-18) but to make men see what sin is (3:19-22) and to bring men to Christ (3:23-4:7). Going away from the gospel to embrace the Law as a legalistic code would be surrendering to a cruel bondage (4:8-31). Christians have liberty in Christ (5:1-15), yet this liberty is not to be taken as freedom to indulge the flesh (5:16-17). God's people live by the Spirit (5:18-26), help one another (6:1-5), support faithful teachers (6:6), and do good to all (6:7-10).

C. Conclusion. (6:11-18). The letter ends with Paul's hand-written summary and authentication (6:11-17) and a benediction.

Some Lessons Learned From Galatians

1. We can be assured that the Gospel of Christ comes to us by revelation from God and does not originate with man (1:11-12).
2. When we become Christians Christ is to live in us (2:20).
3. The Law of Moses served as a "paidagogos" [a servant in charge of children] to bring men to Christ that they might be justified by faith. Now that we are mature sons we are no longer under the charge of the "paidagogos" (3:24-25).
4. Those who are spiritually "in" Christ have been baptized into this spiritual relationship (3:26-27).
5. As Christians we are adopted as sons of God (3:26; 4:4-7).
6. We learn what the "works of the flesh" and the "fruits of the Spirit" are (5:17-21; 5:22-23).
7. We learn that the principle of "sowing and reaping" applies to both the physical and spiritual realm (6:7-8).

Pillars In The Church

Galatians 2:8-10

Introduction:

1. A pillar is the main support of something, therefore, Peter, James and John were referred to as a main support in the church. Why were they thought of as a main support in the church?
 - a. They were present when the Lord need them (Acts 2:1).
 - b. Because they spoke when the Lord needed them to speak. (Acts 2:14; Acts 3; Acts 15:13-21).
2. Would one think of **me** as a pillar in the church?

DIFFERENT USES OF PILLAR IN THE BIBLE

1. Jacob took the stone that he used for his *pillow* and set it up as a *pillar* (Genesis 28:18).
 - a. This is a great need in the church today. Many brothers & sisters need to turn their pillows into pillars. They need to quit sleeping on the job and become a monument to remind people of interest and deep concern for spiritual things.
 - b. Jacob made a great vow and set his life right with God. This pillar became a monument, a marker, a reminder of all these things.
 - c. Do I stand as a reminder of God's presence, of God's family, and of vows made to God?
2. God led Israel by a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night (Exodus 13:20-22).

REASONS WHY PETER, JAMES, AND JOHN WERE PILLARS

1. They took a stand on important controversial issues.
 - a. Acts 15:9; 19. They took an unpopular stand for truth.
 - b. Are **we** ready to stand up in the midst of controversy?
2. They perceived the grace of God given unto Paul to preach to the gentiles (2:9).
 - a. Do we see the hand of God in the great missionary opportunities in Eastern Europe and Liberia today?
 - b. Do we stand for more missionary work being done, even when there is opposition to it as in the situation Peter, James and John faced?
3. They gave Paul and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship. Do **we** cooperate and encourage good works in the church?
4. They were interested in the poor (2:10). The Lord blesses those who remember the poor (Mt 25:34f). (Acts 11:20-30).

CONCLUSION: Am I a pillar? How much funds would the church have to support mission work and remember the poor if each Christian gave as **I** give? How much work in the local church would be accomplished if it was supported as **I** do?