

GALATIANS

THE LETTER OF PAUL TO THE CHURCH IN GALATIA

Address^a

Rm 1:1+ 1 From Paul to the churches of Galatia, and from all the brothers who are here 1
1:11f with me, an apostle who does not owe his authority to men or his appointment 2
to any human being but who has been appointed by Jesus Christ and by God the 3
Rm 1:4+ Father who raised Jesus from the dead. •We wish you the grace and peace of 3
God our Father and of the Lord Jesus Christ, •who in order to rescue us from 4
1 Tm 2:6 this present wicked world^b sacrificed himself for our sins, in accordance with 4
1 Jn 5:19 the will of God our Father, •to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen. 5
Rm 16:27+

A warning^c

2 Th 2:2 I am astonished at the promptness with which you have turned away from the 6
Mt 9:16 one who called you and have decided to follow a different version of the Good 6
2 Co 11:4 News. •Not that there can be more than one Good News; it is merely that some 7
5:10 troublemakers among you want to change the Good News of Christ; •and let 8
me warn you that if anyone preaches a version of the Good News different from 9
the one we have already preached to you, whether it be ourselves or an angel 10
Rm 9:3+ from heaven, he is to be condemned.^d •I am only repeating what we told you 9
1 Co 11:2+ before: if anyone preaches a version of the Good News different from the one 10
1 Th 2:4 you have already heard, he is to be condemned. •So now whom am I trying to 10
please—man, or God? Would you say it is men's approval I am looking for?^e If 11
Rm 1:1 I still wanted that,^f I should not be what I am—a servant of Christ.

I. PAUL'S APOLOGIA

God's call

1:1 The fact is,^g brothers, and I want you to realise this, the Good News I 11
preached is not a human message •that I was given by men, it is something 12
Mt 16:17 I learnt only through a revelation of Jesus Christ.^h •You must have heard of 13
Ac 8:1-3+ my career as a practising Jew, how merciless I was in persecuting the Church of 13
2 Co 11:12+ God, how much damage I did to it, •how I stood out among other Jews of my 14
Mk 7:3f generation, and how enthusiastic I was for the traditions of my ancestors.
Ac 26:4-5
Is 49:1 Then God, who had specially *chosen* me while I was *still in my mother's* 15
Jr 1:5 *womb*, called me through his grace and chose •to reveal his Son in me,ⁱ so that 16
Lk 1:15 I might preach the Good News about him to the pagans. I did not stop to discuss 17
Mt 16:17 this with any human being, •nor did I go up/ to Jerusalem to see those who were 17
Ac 9:3-19+ already apostles before me, but I went off to Arabia^k at once and later went 18
Rm 1:1 straight back from there to Damascus. •Even when after three years I went up 18
Ac 9:23-30+ to Jerusalem to visit Cephas and stayed with him for fifteen days, •I did not see 19
2:9 any of the other apostles; I only saw James, the brother of the Lord,^l •and I 20
Ac 12:17+

21 swear before God that what I have just written is the literal truth. •After that
 22 I went to Syria and Cilicia, •and was still not known by sight to the churches of
 23 Christ in Judaea, •who had heard nothing except that their one-time persecutor
 24 was now preaching the faith he had previously tried to destroy; •and they gave
 glory to God for me.

Rm 1:9+

Ac 9:30; 11:
25-26

The meeting at Jerusalem

Ac 11:30+;
15:1+

1 **2** It was not till fourteen years^a had passed that I went up to Jerusalem again.
 2 I went with Barnabas and took Titus with me. •I went there as the result of
 a revelation, and privately I laid before the leading men the Good News as I
 proclaim it among the pagans; I did so for fear the course I was adopting or had
 3 already adopted would not be allowed.^b •And what happened? Even though Titus
 4 who had come with me is a Greek, he was not obliged to be circumcised.^c •The
 question came up only because some who do not really belong to the brotherhood
 have furtively crept in to spy on the liberty we enjoy in Christ Jesus, and want
 5 to reduce us all to slavery. •I was so determined to safeguard for you the true
 meaning of the Good News, that I refused even out of deference to yield to
 6 such people for one moment.^d •As a result, these people who are acknowledged
 leaders—not that their importance matters to me, since God has no favourites—
 7 these leaders, as I say, had nothing to add to the Good News as I preach it.^e •On
 the contrary, they recognised that I had been commissioned to preach the Good
 News to the uncircumcised just as Peter had been commissioned to preach it to
 8 the circumcised. •The same person whose action had made Peter the apostle of
 9 the circumcised had given me a similar mission to the pagans. •So, James,
 Cephas and John,^f these leaders, these pillars, shook hands with Barnabas and
 me as a sign of partnership: we were to go to the pagans and they to the
 10 circumcised.^g •The only thing they insisted on was that we should remember to
 help the poor, as indeed I was anxious to do.

Ac 4:36+

2 Co 2:13+

Ph 2:16

Rm 6:15+

Dt 10:17+
Ac 10:34Ac 15:3f,12
Rm 15:17-19
1 Tm 2:71:19+
Ac 12:17+
Ep 3:8
Rv 3:12

1 Co 16:1+

1 a. This opening is shorter and less friendly than in any other letter: there is not a single word of praise for the Galatians. In vv. 1 and 4, Paul brings in the two main themes of his letter: 1. he is a true apostle, ch. 1-2. 2. he brings the Good News that we are saved through faith in Jesus Christ, and that Christians are therefore free, ch. 3-5.

b. The present world as opposed to the 'world to come' of the messianic era. It coincides with the rule of Satan, Ac 26:18, 'god of this world', 2 Co 4:4, cf. Ep 2:2; Jn 12:31, and with the rule of sin and law, Ga 3:19. By dying and rising Christ has freed us from these forces and made us members of his kingdom, of God's kingdom, Rm 14:17; Col 1:13; Ep 5:5, though we will not be completely freed till we also rise from the dead at the *parousia*, cf. Rm 5-8.

c. This warning takes the place of the thanksgiving with which Paul's letters usually begin, Rm 1:1+.

d. Lit. *anathema*, cf. Rm 9:3+.

e. It appears that the Judaisers accused Paul of trying to make the pagan's conversion easier by not insisting on circumcision. But on this occasion at least, he retorts, he cannot be suspected of a conciliatory attitude.

f. As once he did, i.e. before his conversion when he preached circumcision.

g. Var. 'But' or 'Now'.

h. The two aspects of revelation, i.e. 'as made by Christ' and 'about Christ' v. 16. This should not be taken as meaning that Paul received all his doctrine without human intermediaries, and much less that on the Damascus road all was revealed to him at once. He is referring to the doctrine that it is not obeying the Law that saves, but having faith: this is the only topic of discussion here.

i. Others translate 'revel his Son to me'. Paul is not denying that his vision was real, 1 Co 9:1; 15:8; cf. Ac 9:17; 22:14; 26:16, he is stressing the inwardness of this real vision and relating this inwardness to his

call as apostle of the gentiles.

j. Var. 'leave for', 'go to'.

k. Probably the kingdom of the Nabataean Arabs to the S. of Damascus, 1 M 5:25+, where Paul took refuge from Aretas, 2 Co 11:32.

l. Lit. 'but only James...'. Others translate 'except James', either identifying this James with the son of Alphaeus, Mt 10:3p, and taking him for one of the Twelve, or else understanding 'apostle' in the wider sense, cf. Rm 1:1+.

2 a. Reckoning from the last meeting with Peter or else, preferably, from Paul's conversion. It is possible that the 'three years' of 1:18 and the 'fourteen' of 2:1 are no more than one-and-a-half and twelve-and-a-half respectively, since it was customary to count even the last few days or the first few days of a year as a whole year.

b. Lit. 'for fear I was running or had run to no purpose'. Paul is not having second thoughts about the truth of his gospel, he is concerned that when new churches are founded they should keep in touch with the mother church; this is why he felt the collection for the 'poor' in Jerusalem to be important, cf. 1 Co 16:1+; see v. 10.

c. Paul insisted that Timothy be circumcised since his mother was a Jewess, Ac 16:3, cf. 1 Co 9:20: a Jew being defined as one whose mother is Jewish.

d. Lit. 'we did not yield...'. By omitting 'not', the Old Latin version makes Paul admit that he gave way for a moment. Om. 'out of deference'.

e. Lit. 'laid down nothing more for me', cf. v. 2.

f. 'James, Cephas and John'; var. 'James, Peter and John', or 'James and John'.

g. This distinction is not racial but geographical: 'the circumcised' (lit. 'the circumcision') refers primarily to the Jews in Palestine, and when Paul went among the gentiles the resident Jews were his first concern, Ac 13:5+.

Ac 15:1 **Peter and Paul at Antioch**

When Cephas came to Antioch, however, I opposed him to his face, since 11
 he was manifestly in the wrong.^a •His custom had been to eat with the pagans,⁴ 12
 but after certain friends of James arrived he stopped doing this and kept away
 from them altogether for fear of the group that insisted on circumcision. •The 13
 other Jews joined him in this pretence, and even Barnabas felt himself obliged
 to copy their behaviour.

When I saw they were not respecting the true meaning of the Good News, 14
 I said to Cephas in front of everyone, 'In spite of being a Jew, you live like the
 pagans and not like the Jews, so you have no right to make the pagans copy
 Jewish ways.

The Good News as proclaimed by Paul

Ac 10:28 Rm 3:22 Ph 3:9 'Though we were born Jews and not pagan sinners,^k •we acknowledge that 15
 what makes a man righteous is not obedience to the Law, but faith in Jesus 16
 Christ. We had to become believers in Christ Jesus no less than you had, and
 now we hold that faith in Christ rather than fidelity to the Law is what justifies 17
 us, and that *no one can be justified* by keeping the Law. •Now if we were to
 admit that the result of looking to Christ to justify us is to make us sinners like 18
 the rest, it would follow that Christ had induced us to sin, which would be
 absurd. •If I were to return to a position I had already abandoned, I should be 19
 admitting I had done something wrong. •In other words, through the Law I am
 dead to the Law,^l so that now I can live for God. I have been crucified with 20
 Christ, •and I live now not with my own life but with the life of Christ who
 lives in me.^m The life I now live in this bodyⁿ I live in faith: faith in the Son of 21
 God^o who loved me and who sacrificed himself for my sake. •I cannot bring
 myself to give up God's gift:^p if the Law can justify us, there is no point in the
 death of Christ.'

II. DOCTRINAL MATTERSRm 1:16+ **Justification by faith**

1 Co 2:2 **3** Are you people in Galatia mad? Has someone put a spell on you, in spite 1
 of the plain explanation you have had of the crucifixion of Jesus Christ?^a
 Let me ask you one question: was it because you practised the Law that you 2
 received the Spirit, or because you believed what was preached to you? •Are you 3
 foolish enough to end in outward observances^b what you began in the Spirit?
 Have all the favours you received been wasted?^c And if this were so, they would 4
 most certainly have been wasted. •Does God give you the Spirit so freely and 5
 work miracles among you because you practise the Law, or because you believed
 what was preached to you?

Gn 15:6 Rm 4:3 Jm 2:23 St 44:19-21 Take Abraham for example: *he put his faith in God, and this faith was 6*
considered as justifying him. •Don't you see that it is those who rely on faith who 7
 are the sons of Abraham? •Scripture foresaw that God was going to use faith 8
 to justify the pagans, and proclaimed the Good News long ago when Abraham
 was told: *In you all the pagans will be blessed.* •Those therefore who rely on 9
 faith receive the same blessing as Abraham, the man of faith.

Rm 7:7+ **The curse brought by the Law**

Ac 15:10 On the other hand, those who rely on the keeping of the Law are under a 10
 curse, since scripture says: *Cursed be everyone who does not persevere in observing 11*
everything prescribed in the book of the Law. •The Law will not justify anyone
 in the sight of God, because we are told: *the righteous man finds life through faith.*
 The Law is not even based on faith,^d since we are told: *The man who practises 12*
these precepts finds life through practising them. •Christ redeemed us from the 13

curse of the Law by being cursed for our sake,^f since scripture says: *Cursed be everyone who is hanged on a tree.* • This was done so that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might include the pagans, and so that through faith we might receive the promised Spirit.^f

Dt 21:23
Ac 5:30 +

Rm 5:5 +
Ep 1:3
Heb 6:12

The Law did not cancel the promise

Compare this, brothers, with what happens in ordinary life. If a will has been drawn up in due form, no one is allowed to disregard it or add to it. • Now the promises were addressed to Abraham *and to his descendants*—notice, in passing, that scripture does not use a plural word as if there were several descendants, it uses the singular: to his posterity,^g which is Christ. • But my point is this: once God had expressed his will in due form, no law that came four hundred and thirty years later could cancel that and make the promise meaningless.^h • If you inherit something as a legal right, it does not come to you as the result of a promise, and it was precisely in the form of a promise that God made his gift to Abraham.

Gn 12:7 +
Mt 1:1 +;
21:38
Rm 8:16

Gn 15:13
Ex 12:40

Rm 11:6

The purpose of the Law

What then was the purpose of adding the Law? This was done to specify crimes,ⁱ until the posterity came^j to whom the promise was addressed. The Law was promulgated by angels,^k assisted by an intermediary. • Now there can only be an intermediary between two parties, yet God is one.^l • Does this mean that there is opposition between the Law and the promises of God? Of course not. We could have been justified by the Law if the Law we were given had been capable of giving life, • but it is not: scripture makes no exceptions when it says that sin is master everywhere. In this way the promise can only be given through faith in Jesus Christ and can only be given to those who have this faith.^m

Rm 7:7 +

Rm 5:20

Ac 7:38, 53 +
Heb 2:2
4:3 +
Col 2:15 +

Ps 14:1-3
Rm 3:9-20,
23

Rm 11:32

b. Peter's conduct was not in itself blameworthy, and in different circumstances Paul was to do the same, Ac 16:3; 21:26; 1 Co 8:13; Rm 14:21; cf 1 Co 9:20. But on this occasion such a policy suggested that the only true Christians were converted Jews who observed the Law, and threatened to produce two separate communities that could not even meet to celebrate the Eucharist. Peter's behaviour should have advertised his real attitude but instead of that he disguised it, v. 13.

i. Converts from paganism, so also in v. 14, as opposed to the 'circumcised' who are converted Jews.

j. Paul is not only speaking to Peter but more particularly to all the Judaizers, e.g. those of Antioch and still more those of Galatia.

k. This is slightly ironical, though Paul never doubted that Israel kept a privileged position, Rm 1:16; 3:1; 9:4-5, even when unfaithful, Rm 11:12f.

l. So laconic as to be obscure: there have been various explanations 1. Christians, crucified with Christ, are dead with Christ and therefore, like Christ, dead to the Mosaic Law, cf. Rm 7:1f.—and indeed in virtue of that Law, Ga 3:13; this is why Christians already share the life of the risen Christ, Rm 6:4-10; 7:4-6 with notes. 2. Christians only renounced the Law for a deeper obedience to the O.T., Ga 3:19, 24; Rm 10:4. 3. Christians are only dead to the Mosaic Law in obedience to a higher law, the law of faith and of the Spirit, Rm 8:2.

m. The living acts of a Christian become somehow the acts of Christ.

n. Lit. 'In the flesh'. Though still physically alive, Rm 7:5+, Christians are already spiritually alive, cf. Ep 3:17; on this paradox, cf. Rm 8.

o. Var. 'faith in God and in Christ'.

p. By returning to the Law, cf. 3:18.

3 a. The foundation of everything Paul teaches is the idea that we are redeemed because Christ died and rose again, cf. 1 Co 15:3f.

b. Reference to being circumcised as urged by Judaizing preachers.

c. Others translate 'Have you suffered so much and all to no purpose?'

d. Laws expect to be obeyed in every point, v. 10 and 5:3; cf. Jm 2:10, but do nothing, of themselves, to assure this, cf. Ac 15:10; Rm 7:7+.

e. To free the human race from the curse God laid on it for defying the law, Christ made himself answerable for the curse, cf. Rm 8:3+; 2 Co 5:21+; Col 2:14+. The somewhat remote analogy between the crucified Christ and the criminal of Dt 21:23 is used merely to illustrate this doctrine.

f. Lit. 'the promise of the Spirit'. Var. 'the blessing of the Spirit'.

g. Lit. 'It does not say "And to posterities" as if there were several people, but "And to your posterity" as if there were one'. The use in scripture of a collective capable of indicating an individual enables Paul to illustrate his argument with a verbal pun.

h. God would have contradicted himself had he replaced a scheme of salvation based on a spontaneous promise (compared to a will in v. 15) with one based on a bilateral contract, v. 20. He could not have made the fulfilment of the promise depend on the observance of a law, as this would have been to make the promise a promise no longer, vv. 21f. The Law was given for quite a different purpose, vv. 19, 24.

i. On the meaning of this terse statement, lit. 'on account of crimes', cf. Rm 7:7+.

j. Lit. 'Why then the Law?' It was added on account of crimes until that posterity came... Var. 'Why then the law of works? It was added until that posterity came...'

k. In Jewish tradition angels were present at Sinai when the Law was given. The 'intermediary' is Moses, cf. Ac 7:38+.

l. The Law was given through an intermediary; the promise came directly from God.

m. Justification is a free gift; to receive this gift a person must first recognise that it is not the payment of a debt.

The coming of faith

Before faith came, we were allowed no freedom by the Law; we were being
 Rm 3:22; looked after till faith was revealed. •The Law was to be our guardian until the
 10:4 Christ came and we could be justified by faith. •Now that that time has come
 4:5-7 we are no longer under that guardian, •and you are, all of you,^a sons of God
 Jn 1:12 through faith in Christ Jesus. •All baptised in Christ,^o you have all clothed
 Rm 8:14f; 29 yourselves in Christ, •and there are no more distinctions between Jew and
 Rm 6:4+; Greek, slave and free, male and female, but all of you are one in Christ Jesus.^p
 Ep 4:24 Merely by belonging to Christ you are the posterity of Abraham, the heirs he
 Rm 10:12 promised.
 1 Co 12:13
 Col 3:11
 Jn 17:21f
 Heb 6:12
 Jm 2:5

Sons of God

Rm 4:1+ Heb 9:16 **4** Let me put this another way:^a an heir, even if he has actually inherited 1
 everything, is no different from a slave for as long as he remains a child.
 He is under the control of guardians and administrators until he reaches the 2
 Col 2:8 age fixed by his father. •Now before we came of age we were as good as slaves to 3
 Ep 1:10 the elemental principles of this world,^b •but when the appointed time^c came, 4
 Rm 1:3 God sent his Son, born of a woman, born a subject of the Law, •to redeem the 5
 Rm 3:24+ subjects of the Law and to enable us to be adopted as sons.^d •The proof that you 6
 Rm 8:15-17 are sons is that God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts: the Spirit
 Jn 15:15 that cries, 'Abba, Father', •and it is this that makes you a son, you are not a 7
 slave any more; and if God has made you son, then he has made you heir.
 1 Co 12:2 Once you were ignorant of God, and enslaved to 'gods' who are not really 8
 1 Co 8:4-5 gods at all; •but now that you have come to acknowledge God—or rather, now 9
 1 Co 13:12 that God has acknowledged you—how can you want to go back to elemental
 Col 2:16,20 things like these, that can do nothing and give nothing, and be their slaves? •You 10
 and your special days and months and seasons and years! •You make me feel I 11
 Ph 2:16 have wasted my time with you.

A personal appeal

1 Co 9:21 Brothers, all I ask is that you should copy me as I copied you.^f You have 12
 2 Th 3:7+ Ac 16:6+ never treated me in an unfriendly way before; •even at the beginning, when th: 13
 illness^g gave me the opportunity to preach the Good News to you, •you never 14
 showed the least sign of being revolted or disgusted by my disease that was such
 Mt 10:40+ a trial to you; instead you welcomed me as an angel of God, as if I were Christ
 Jesus himself. •What has become of this enthusiasm you had? I swear that you 15
 would even have gone so far as to pluck out your eyes and give them to me. •Is it 16
 telling you the truth that has made me your enemy? •The blame lies on the way 17
 they have tried to win you over: by separating you from me, they want to win
 you over to themselves. •It is always a good thing to win people over^h—and 18
 I do not have to be there with you—but it must be for a good purpose, •my 19
 1 Co 4:14-15 children! I must go through the pain of giving birth to you all over again, until
 2 Co 6:13 Christ is formed in you. •I wish I were with you now so that I could know exactly 20
 1 Th 2:7-8 what to say; as it is, I have no idea what to do for the best.
 Phm 10

The two covenants: Hagar and Sarah

You want to be subject to the Law? Then listen to what the Law says.ⁱ •It 21
 Gn 16:15; 21:2 says, if you remember, that Abraham had two sons, one by the slave-girl, and one
 by his free-born wife. •The child of the slave-girl was born in the ordinary way;^j 23
 Gn 17:16 the child of the free woman was born as the result of a promise. •This can be 24
 1 Co 10:6+ regarded as an allegory: the women stand for the two covenants. The first who
 comes from Mount Sinai, and whose children are slaves, is Hagar—•since Sinai 25
 Jn 8:32f is in Arabia^k—and she corresponds to the present Jerusalem,^l that is a slave like
 Ps 87:5 her children. •The Jerusalem above, however, is free and is our mother, •since 26
 Rv 21:2 scripture says: *Shout for joy, you barren women who bore no children! Break into* 27
 Is 54:1 *shouts of joy and gladness, you who were never in labour. For there are more sons of*

- 28 *the forsaken one than sons of the wedded wife.* • Now you, my brothers, like Isaac,
 29 are children of the promise, • and as at that time the child born in the ordinary
 30 way persecuted the child born in the Spirit's way, so also now.^m • Does not
 scripture say: *Drive away that slave-girl and her son; this slave-girl's son is not to*
 31 *share the inheritance with the son of the free woman?* • So, my brothers, we are
 the children, not of the slave-girl, but of the free-born wife.

Gn 21:9
 1 P 3:6
 1 Th 2:14+
 Gn 21:10
 Jn 8:35

III. EXHORTATION

Christian liberty

- 1 **5** When Christ freed us, he meant us to remain free.^a Stand firm, therefore,
 2 and do not submit again to the yoke of slavery. • It is I, Paul, who tell you
 this: if you allow yourselves to be circumcised, Christ will be of no benefit to
 3 you at all. • With all solemnity I repeat my warning: Everyone who accepts
 4 circumcision is obliged to keep the whole Law. • But if you do look to the Law
 to make you justified, then you have separated yourselves from Christ, and have
 5 fallen from grace. • Christians are told by the Spirit to look to faith for those
 6 rewards that righteousness hopes for,^b • since in Christ Jesus whether you are
 circumcised or not makes no matter—what does matter is having faith.
 7 You began your race well:^c who made you less anxious to obey the truth?
 8 You were not prompted by him who called you! • The yeast seems to be spreading
 10 through the whole batch of you. • I feel sure that, united in the Lord, you^d will
 agree with me, and anybody who troubles you in future will be condemned,
 11 no matter who he is. • As for me, my brothers, if I still preach circumcision,^e
 why am I still persecuted? If I did that now, would there be any scandal of the
 12 cross? • Tell those who are disturbing you I would like to see the knife slip.^f

Rm 6:15+
 Jn 8:36
 Mt 11:29
 Ac 15:10
 2:21
 3:10
 Jm 2:10
 Rm 8:23,25
 1 Co 7:19
 6:15
 1 Co 13:13+
 Jm 2:14
 1 Co 9:24
 Ph 2:16
 Qo 10:1
 1 Co 5:6
 Ph 2:1-3
 1 Co 3:17
 1:7
 1 Co 1:23
 Ph 3:2

Liberty and charity

- 13 My brothers, you were called, as you know, to liberty; but be careful, or this
 liberty will provide an opening for self-indulgence. Serve one another, rather, in

Rm 6:15+
 1 P 2:16
 Jude 4

n. All, i.e. not only 'we', who are Jews, but 'you', who are pagans.

o. Faith and baptism are not being contrasted: one involves the other, cf. Rm 6:4+.

p. Var. 'you are all of Christ Jesus'.

4 a. A further comparison, again taken from the law courts. Though the Jews are chosen as the heir presumptive, yet they are only slaves, v. 3, to the Law: a Christian who wants to submit to this slavery is going back to a state of childhood, cf. v. 9.

b. Reference to the elements that make up the physical universe, cf. v. 9; Col 2:8,20; Paul uses the phrase to indicate both the Law that minutely regulated the use of these elements, v. 10; Col 2:16, and the spirits that used the Law, Ga 3:19+; Col 2:15+, to dominate the universe, Col 2:18+.

c. Lit. 'fulness of time': the phrase indicates how when the messianic age comes it will fill a need felt for centuries, rather like filling up a jug. Cf. Ac 1:7+ and Mk 1:15; 1 Co 10:11; Ep 1:10; Heb 1:2; 9:26; 1 P 1:20.

d. The two aspects of redemption, negative and positive: the slave attains freedom by becoming a son. First and foremost the adoption to sonship is not simply a legal right to inherit, v. 7, but the real and inward giving of the Spirit, v. 6.

e. The Galatians were converted by God who 'knew' them before they 'knew' him.

f. Probably by refusing to practise the Law's ritual, cf. 1 Co 9:21.

g. This probably prolonged Paul's stay in Galatia, and he took the opportunity to preach the Good News.

h. Var. 'Be won over to what is good'.

i. I.e. the witness of the scriptures, cf. Rm 3:19+; to inherit the promise it is not enough just to be a descendant of Abraham, cf. Mt 3:9; it is not enough

to be descended from Abraham like Ishmael, it is necessary to be descended as the result of promise, like Isaac, v. 23; it is necessary to be a spiritual descendant, not just a genealogical one, v. 29; thus Isaac's birth prefigured the rebirth of Christians, v. 28; cf. Rm 9:6f. This basic argument is embellished with other more contrived comparisons.

j. Lit. 'according to the flesh', i.e. in the ordinary course of nature, cf. Rm 7:5+, without God working a miracle to fulfil his promise.

k. 'since Sinai is in Arabia'; var. 'Hagar stands for Sinai in Arabia' (or 'in Arabic').

l. I.e. enslaved to the Law, as opposed to the messianic Jerusalem, cf. Is 2:2, long barren, now a mother, v. 27; cf. Is 54:1-6.

m. Having demonstrated the Ishmael-Jews, Isaac-Christians, parallel, Paul makes two observations, vv. 29 and 30. According to some Jewish traditions Ishmael 'persecuted' Isaac, and according to the sacred text itself, Sarah sees Ishmael as her son's rival and demands Hagar's expulsion. Gn 21:9.

5 a. Human beings must choose either Christ or the Law as author of salvation. Some witnesses (Vulg.) join these words with the preceding verse 'with the freedom by which Christ has made us free'.

b. Or else 'The righteousness that was hoped for'.

c. One of Paul's favourite images, cf. 2:2;

1 Co 9:24-26; Ph 2:16; 3:12-14; 2 Tm 4:7; Heb 12:1.

d. Or else 'I have confidence in the Lord that you'.

e. As Paul's enemies apparently claimed, cf. 1:10;

2:3+.

f. Lit. 'I wish that those who are disturbing you might go even further (than circumcision) and castrate themselves'. Perhaps alluding to castration in the cult of Cybele, the sarcasm resembling that of Ph 3:2.

Rm 13:8-10+ works of love, •since the whole of the Law is summarised in a single command: 14
 Lv 19:18 *Love your neighbour as yourself.* •If you go snapping at each other and tearing 15
 each other to pieces, you had better watch or you will destroy the whole
 community.

Rm 8:5f Let me put it like this: if you are guided by the Spirit you will be in no danger 16
 Rm 7:14f of yielding to self-indulgence, •since self-indulgence is the opposite of the Spirit, 17
 Jm 4:1 the Spirit is totally against such a thing, and it is precisely because the two are
 so opposed that you do not always carry out your good intentions. •If you are 18
 led by the Spirit, no law can touch you. •When self-indulgence is at work the 19
 Rm 8:14 results are obvious: fornication, gross indecency and sexual irresponsibility;
 Mt 7:17 idolatry and sorcery; feuds and wrangling, jealousy, bad temper and quarrels; 20
 Rm 1:29+ 1 Co 3:3+ disagreements, factions, •envy;^o drunkenness, orgies and similar things. I warn 21
 Ep 5:3 you now, as I warned you before: those who behave like this will not inherit the
 Jm 1:21 kingdom of God. •What the Spirit brings is very different: love, joy, peace, 22
 1 Co 6:10 patience, kindness, goodness, trustfulness, •gentleness and self-control.^a There 23
 2 Co 6:6 can be no law against things like that, of course. •You cannot belong to Christ 24
 1 Tm 4:12 Jesus unless you crucify all self-indulgent passions and desires.

1 Co 13:4-7 Since the Spirit is our life, let us be directed by the Spirit. •We must stop 25
 1 Tm 1:9 being conceited, provocative and envious. 26
 Rm 6:6
 Rm 8:14
 Ph 2:3

On kindness and perseverance

Mt 18:15 6 Brothers, if one of you misbehaves, the more spiritual of you who set him 1
 2 Th 3:14-15 right should do so in a spirit of gentleness, not forgetting that you may be
 2 Tm 2:25 tempted yourselves. •You should carry each other's troubles and fulfil^a the 2
 Jm 4:19f law of Christ. •It is the people who are not important who often make the 3
 1 Co 10:12 mistake of thinking that they are. •Let each of you examine his own conduct; 4
 Jn 13:34 if you find anything to boast about, it will at least be something of your own, not
 Rm 8:2 just something better than your neighbour has. •Everyone has his own burden 5
 1 Co 4:7 to carry.

Rm 14:12 People under instruction should always contribute something to the support 6
 of the man who is instructing them.

Rm 15:27 Don't delude yourself into thinking God can be cheated: where a man sows, 7
 Jb 13:9 there he reaps: •if he sows in the field of self-indulgence he will get a harvest of 8
 Ho 8:7 corruption out of it; if he sows in the field of the Spirit he will get from it a
 Dr 30:15-25 harvest of eternal life. •We must never get tired of doing good because if we 9
 Jb 15:35 don't give up the struggle we shall get our harvest at the proper time. •While 10
 Pr 11:18 we have the chance,^b we must do good^c to all,^d and especially to our brothers
 Jn 3:6 in the faith.
 Rm 6:21-22
 Col 3:5
 1 Co 15:35-49
 1 Th 5:15

Rm 16:17 Epilogue

1 Co 16:21 Take good note of what I am adding in my own handwriting and in large 11
 Col 4:18 letters.^e •It is only self-interest that makes them want^f to force circumcision on 12
 Col 2:18 you—they want to escape persecution for the cross of Christ—they accept 13
 Rm 3:27+ circumcision but do not keep the Law themselves; they only want you to be
 5:6+ circumcised so that they can boast of the fact. •As for me, the only thing I can 14
 1 Co 7:19 boast about is the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom the world is
 2 Co 5:17+ crucified to me, and I to the world.^g •It does not matter if a person is circumcised 15
 Ps 125:5 or not; what matters is for him to become an altogether new creature. •Peace 16
 and mercy to all who follow this rule, who form the Israel of God.^h

I want no more trouble from anybody after this; the marks on my body are 17
 those of Jesus.ⁱ •The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, my 18
 brothers. Amen.

- g. Add. (Vulg.) 'murders'. Cf. Rm 1:29.
 h. Add. 'chastity'.
 6 a. 'fulfil'; var. 'you will fulfil'.
 b. Possibly alluding to the time that still remains before the *parousia*, cf. 2 Co 6:2+.
 c. 'we must do good'; var. 'we do good'.
 d. The good act of a Christian is done out of love, and so is concerned with others, 5:14; in this way he gives witness in public, cf. Rm 12:17-18, and as he is specially noticed by Christians, Rm 14:15, he helps to 'build up' the Church, Rm 14:18-19.
 e. As usual, Paul adds a few words in his own hand, cf. 2 Th 3:17; 1 Co 16:21-24; Col 4:18 and

possibly Rm 16:17-20. Large letters were used for emphasis.

- f. Lit. 'It is those who want to make a fair show in the flesh who want...'
 g. This present sinful world, cf. 1:4; 4:5; 1 Co 1:20; 2 Co 4:4; Ep 2:2, etc.; Jn 1:10+.
 h. Add. 'In Christ Jesus'.
 i. The Christian community, the true Israel, cf. 3:29; Rm 9:6-8, as opposed to the Israel 'according to the flesh', 1 Co 10:18
 j. The marks of ill-treatment suffered for Christ, cf. 2 Co 6:4-5; 11:23f.

EPHESIANS

THE LETTER OF PAUL TO THE CHURCH AT EPHESUS

Address and Greetings

1 From Paul, appointed by God to be an apostle of Christ Jesus, to the saints^a 1
who are faithful to Christ Jesus: •Grace and peace to you from God our 2
Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ.

I. THE MYSTERY OF SALVATION AND OF THE CHURCH

God's plan of salvation

Tb 13:1	Blessed be God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,	3
Ga 3:14	who has blessed us with all the spiritual blessings of heaven in Christ. ^b	
Ex 15:16	Before the world was made, he chose us, chose us in Christ,	4
Jn 17:24	to be holy and spotless, and to live through love ^c in his prseence,	
1 P 1:20	determining that we should become his adopted sons, ^d through 5	
5:27	Jesus Christ	
1 Co 1:8+	for his own kind purposes,	
1 Jn 3:1	to make us praise the glory of his grace, ^e	6
Jn 1:12	his free gift to us in the Beloved, ^f	
Rm 8:29	in whom, through his blood, we gain our freedom, the forgiveness 7	
	of our sins. ^g	
Rm 3:24+	Such is the richness of the grace	
Col 1:13-14	which he ^h has showered on us	8
Heb 1:3	in all wisdom and insight.	
2:7	He has let us know the mystery of his purpose, ⁱ	9
Rm 16:25+	the hidden plan he so kindly made in Christ from the beginning	
Mk 1:15	to act upon when the times had run their course to the end: ^j	10
Ga 4:4+	that he would bring everything together under Christ, as head,	
Col 1:16,20	everything in the heavens and everything on earth. ^k	
Dt 7:6+	And it is in him ^l that we were claimed as God's own, ^m	11
Col 1:12	chosen from the beginning,	
Is 46:10	under the predetermined plan of the one who guides all things	
Rv 4:11	as he decides by his own will;	
	chosen to be,	12
Ps 66:2	for his greater glory,	
	the people who would put their hopes in Christ before he came.	
	Now you too, ⁿ in him,	13
Ac 1:4	have heard the message of the truth and the good news of your	
Col 1:5;	salvation,	
2:9	and have believed it;	
Heb 6:12	and you too have been stamped with the seal of the Holy Spirit	
	of the Promise, ^o	
4:30		
2 Co 1:22		
Ac 2:33+		
Rm 5:5+		