

STUDYING GALATIANS

BIBLE STUDY OUTREACH @ 1984, 1993

LESSON 1

INTRODUCTION

R.A. Cole made this astonishing statement, “The Epistle to the Galatians is spiritual dynamite, and it is almost impossible to handle it without explosions,” This is an intriguing comment. It does give us food for thought and challenges us as we begin this wonderful study.

For background we will give you a little information that will cover WHO, WHY, WHERE, WHEN, THE THEME and THE PURPOSE of the Epistle to the Galatians.

1. WHO was the AUTHOR of this dynamic book?

Paul, an Apostle of Jesus Christ. He was a man who lived a life filled with action and intrigue who gave his service to the high calling of God as he took the gospel of Christ to the Gentile world.

2. WHY was Galatians written? Because not long after Paul’s first visit to Galatia, other Jewish teachers came into the area and insisted that non-Jewish converts had to be circumcised and observe the Jewish law in order to be saved. The Gentiles in Galatia were being taken in by this false gospel. Paul, knowing this undermined his teaching that salvation was by faith in Christ’s finished work on the cross, wrote to set them straight. Salvation by grace has no strings attached, no do’s or don’ts; it is free to all who believe, Jew and Gentile alike. Paul taught that Jesus was God’s gift to all mankind.

3. WHERE IS Galatia located? Galatia was a large Roman province located in the center of what is now known as Asia Minor. It extended through mountains and across plains. It was bordered by Bithynia and Pontus on the north, Pamphylia and Cilicia on the south, Cappadocia on the east, and Asia on the west.

4. WHEN was it written? Probably between 47 and 55 A.D.

5. THE THEME is SALVATION by GRACE through FAITH in JESUS CHRIST.

6. THE PURPOSE in this Book is to enable you to know WHO JESUS CHRIST IS, WHAT HE IS TO YOU, to MATURE IN HIM and bear HOLY FRUIT FOR HIM.

The apostle Paul wrote thirteen Epistles to the various churches. The chronological order of his Epistles are uncertain but they are generally considered to be as follows: 1 and 2 Thessalonians, Galatians, 1 Corinthians, Romans, 2 Corinthians, Ephesians, Colossians, Philemon, Philippians, 1 Timothy, Titus, and 2 Timothy. Paul will be God’s ambassador to you as you do your studying, if you seek HIM in it.

THIS STUDY IS A PERSONAL study. It is for YOU. It will bring you into a new and deeper relationship with Jesus Christ, the Savior. You will know the freedom of the Holy Spirit’s teaching (Luke 12:12). You will know the freedom of asking God for answers to your questions and of getting answers from him. You will see that the Christian life is the living out of Christ’s living IN YOU. You will study your position in regard to the law. You will see your position as God’s child. This Book was WRITTEN FOR YOU. It will help you understand how the Spirit confirms your relationship to God. You will understand the importance of your life as a Christian who is justified by faith alone in what Christ has done on the cross. You will know the thrill of understanding the importance of being sanctified by the Spirit, NOT the law. The Holy Spirit will convict you of self-effort as He shows you that the life of Jesus Christ within you, not “doing it yourself,” is the key to the sanctification and developing of Christ’s character within you. Your sanctification means you are set apart for God’s divine use.

The following questions are for your PERSONAL EVALUATION as you begin the study of Galatians.

From time to time look back and see if you still have the same answers.

1. Without looking at the notes, give THE THEME and THE PURPOSE of Paul's Epistle to the Galatians.
2. "Sanctification" is used in the paragraph at the top of this page. What does it mean to you?
3. Think for a moment and then write down several questions you would like God to answer. Pray about them. From time to time check back; keep a record of your answers.
4. Tell what your thoughts are about studying a book that was written so long ago. How much value do you place on Paul's writing?
5. What does 2 Timothy 3:16 say that confirms or denies your present opinion of the accuracy of the Bible?
6. What do you want God to teach you from this study?
7. "Because Christ died on the cross in my place as my representative, I too have died. I have died to the law, died to sin, died to self, and died to the world that has no place for my Savior." Can you say this?
8. Are you willing to make a commitment to God to faithfully do your lessons each week? If you are, sign your name below.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

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SCRIPTURE TO MEDITATE UPON:

“But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all truth...” (John 16:13 NIV).

What an amazing truth! The Christian has a personal tutor. The Spirit of the Living God is always available. It is the blessed privilege of all who are new creations “in Christ” to seek Jesus in God’s Word and in prayer to find the rich truths to the answers to their questions. Jesus says, “I am the WAY, the TRUTH and the LIFE (John 14:6). ”Jesus said to the Father, “...sanctify them by Thy truth, Thy word is truth” (John 17:17). Here we have a two-fold blessing. It is sanctification with two parts:

- 1) Positional, we are in Christ, perfect forever in God’s eyes.
- 2) Practical, called to walk IN conformity IN our place in the world, IN CHRIST.

As you begin your study of Galatians, ask Jesus to continue to sanctify you by His Word, to conform you into His image. Sanctify means to be set apart; Jesus was set apart by God at the cross for our sins in order that we might be separated from the world to walk in His way. Think upon this as you do your questions. Thank the Lord Jesus for His Spirit in you, as He guides you into new and wonderful truths.

QUESTIONS; These questions are a personal approach to Galatians, as well as an overview of the book’s great truths.

1. a. For what questions, spiritual truths, do you need answers? Name one or two.

b. How will the answers help you with your problem?

c. Pray: “Lord, give me answers that will help me live a more Christ-like life.”
2. a. Write out John 16:23, 24 in your own words. Give the key thought from the passage.

b. What does it mean to you to know the Father gives to you out of love from His own heart?
3. a. Jesus has said, “I am the way, the truth, and the life....” This is all inclusive. Give what each of the following scriptures say:
 Way John 3:36.
 Truth John 3:21, 2 Cor. 4:6
 Life John 3:16, 14:19b

b. What does the last half of John 14:6 reveal about the indisputable truth in Christ?

4. How does Romans 1:16,17 show the importance of the truths Paul preached?
5. What does Acts 16:6 - 8 show you about Paul's obedience to the Holy Spirit?
6. From Acts 18:23 tell what Paul did and his purpose in doing it.
7. Give a key thought or phrase about Paul from the following verses:

1 Thess.	2:9b
“	2:10
“	2:11
“	2:12
“	2:13
8.
 - a. Tell what 1 Thess. 2:14 - 16 describes.
 - b. Why couldn't Paul and his companions come to the Thessalonian believers according to 1 Thess. 2:18?
 - c. Do you ever feel you have opposition to your Christian witness and walk in Christ? Tell how.
9.
 - a. Read 1 Thess. 2:19,20 and tell how Paul felt about his converts.
 - b. Do you have any spiritual children? Why do they bring you hope and joy?
10.
 - a. The main thrust of the letter to the Galatians was Paul's determination to impress on the believers their liberty (freedom) in Christ. What do the following verses tell you about this?
2 Cor. 3:17
Romans 8:2
Galatians 5:1
 - b. What warning does Paul give to believers in 1 Cor. 8:9?
 - c. Paul says he is free from all men in 1 Cor. 9:19. Read vv. 18 and 19 together and by his own words give his purpose for his freedom.
 - d. What must you do to be able to lead someone to receive Christ?
11.
 - a. Read the MEDITATION over again and give what the 2 parts of sanctification are.
 - b. How can knowing about sanctification help you in your spiritual growth?
12. When Paul went back to see his converts, do you think he was seeing if their lives demonstrated sanctification? How could he tell?