

**Twelve Lessons**

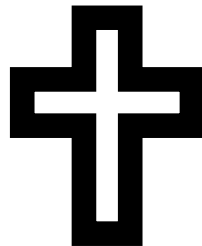
*on*

***Galatians***

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## SYNOPSIS THE BOOK OF GALATIANS

**Introduction:** The book of Galatians stands as the “Christian’s Declaration of Independence.” Paul teaches us clearly that we are free from the curse and bondage of the Law. When Paul wrote this letter to the churches in Galatia, he was fighting a battle with legalism. Much like today, religious leaders were attempting to mix the Gospel of Grace with the Works of the Law. The theme of Galatians is the fact that justification is by faith alone. Any additions or subtractions from this message are doctrines of perversion. Certain Judaizers had journeyed from Jerusalem preaching “*another gospel*” to the churches in Galatia. There were two aspects to their corrupt doctrine.

1. Faith and works are both necessary to attain justification from sin.
2. After justification, one must sanctify himself by living free from sin.

Paul refutes these arguments with two key verses in Chapter 3.

1. Concerning Justification – Gal. 3:6 – “*Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.*”
2. Concerning Sanctification – Gal 3:3 – “*Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?*”

Below is an outline of Galatians taken from Nelson’s Bible Outlines.

### **I. THE GOSPEL OF GRACE DEFENDED** – 1:1-2:21

- A. Introduction – 1:1-9
- B. Gospel of Grace Is Given by Divine Revelation – 1:10-24
- C. Gospel of Grace Is Approved by Jerusalem Leadership – 2:1-10
- D. Gospel of Grace Is Vindicated by Rebuking Peter – 2:11-21

### **II. THE GOSPEL OF GRACE EXPLAINED** – 3:1-4:31

- A. Holy Spirit Is Given by Faith, Not by Work – 3:1-5
- B. Abraham Was Justified by Faith, Not by Works – 3:6-9
- C. Justification Is by Faith, Not by the Law – 3:10-4:11
- D. Galatians Receive Blessings by Faith, Not by the Law – 4:12-20
- E. Law and Grace Cannot Co-exist – 4:21-31

### **III. THE GOSPEL OF GRACE APPLIED** – 5:1-6:18

- A. Position of Liberty: Stand Fast – 5:1-12
- B. Practice of Liberty: Love One Another – 5:13-15
- C. Power for Liberty: Walk in the Spirit – 5:16-26
- D. Performance in Liberty: Do Good to All Men – 6:1-10
- E. Conclusion – 6:11-18

Galatians is the strongest argument which can be used against those who attempt to mingle law and grace. The Judaizers in Paul’s day had the same motivation as the legalists of our day. If a man says you can only be saved by living up to God’s standard of holiness, and then proclaims he has attained this “salvation”, his flesh will be lifted up in pride. This is the exact message of Eph. 2:8,9 – “*For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works lest any man should boast.*”

Remember, the motivation behind any attempt to include man’s works as vital to the process of salvation is selfish pride. This is why salvation requires child-like faith.

**The People of Galatians** – There has been a small controversy over who these people really were. When Paul wrote the letter, Galatia was considered one of two things. There was a small nation of Gauls, and a large Roman province which included this small nation. Both were called Galatia. Warren Weirsbe, in his book *New Testament Outlines*, suggests that it was like traveling to New York, NY. When telling people where you are going, you must specify if you are destined for the state or the city. In his letter, Paul did not specify to which Galatia he was writing. Two theories have been established which have divided Galatia into Northern Galatia and Southern Galatia. The theory that Paul wrote to the people of Northern Galatia is supported by the statements of many early church fathers. However, if Paul was writing to these people, we have no information on which they were. The book of Acts contains no record of Paul reaching so far north on any of his missionary journeys. When the term Galatia is used in Acts 16:6; 18:23, it refers to the southern part of Galatia. This area included such places as Antioch and Iconium. We know that Paul preached in these towns on his first missionary trip and churches were formed as a result. It stands to reason that Paul was writing back to these same churches. Another heavy weight of evidence is the fact that Paul mentions Barnabas in Gal. 2: 9,13 as if he should be well known to the recipients of the letter.

These facts lead us to believe that Gal. 4:13 refers to Paul's South Galatian Mission trip when Barnabas was with him.

**The Time Of The Writing** – Most students of church history date the writing of the epistle shortly after Paul's first missionary endeavor. According to Acts 13 and 14, Paul's first journey was to Antioch, Iconium, Lystra, and Derbe in 45 AD. If this is so, Galatians was the first epistle written by the Apostle Paul. Other scholars date the writing of the epistle as late as 60 AD, when Corinthians was completed.

## **SALVATION BY FAITH WITH FREEDOM – LESSON 1**

**Introduction:** This is the message of Paul. He begins the epistle with strong arguments for the doctrine of justification by faith. Our first study will involve two points from 1:4-6. Paul reveals the true Gospel and the error of leaving its principles.

### **Lesson Goals:**

1. Discover Paul's motivation for writing the letter to the Galatian church.
2. To show that salvation is by grace alone.
3. Review Paul's words of rebuke and exhortation concerning the departure of the church from grace to works.

### **Definitions of Important Terms/Phrases:**

1. Judaizers – Early converts to Christianity who tried to force believers from non-Jewish backgrounds to adopt Jewish customs as a condition of salvation.
2. Anathema – Accursed: the transliteration of a Greek word which means "accursed" or "separated" (Luke 21:5; Rom 9:3; Gal 1:8-9). In the Old Testament, the word is applied to the images, altars, and sacred objects of the Canaanites (Deut 7:23-26). The gold and silver images of their gods were "accursed" (Deut 7:26); they were not to be kept by the Israelites but were to be destroyed with fire.

## **I. THE REASON FOR THE GOSPEL – 1:4**

### **A. The Will Of Sovereignty** – *“the will of God and our Father”*

1. The Plan Of Salvation – Apart from the plan and authority of God the Father, salvation by grace is impossible. It is His divine will that set all things in motion concerning our salvation. God's sovereign grace is not something to be apprehensive about. Rather we should be appreciative of the mercy he bestowed by granting sinners such a wonderful gift. The plan involves the Trinity.
  - a. The Father: Designed the Plan in Eternity
  - b. The Son: Delivered the Plan in the Fullness of Time
  - c. The Spirit: Declares the Plan Daily
    - 1) Acts 2:23 – *“Him(Jesus), being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain:”*
    - 2) Eph. 1:11 – *“In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will.”*
2. The Purpose Of Salvation – God's purpose of salvation is for the glory of His name. We were created for the praise of God. Eph. 1:6 – *“To the praise of the glory of his grace...”* Eph. 1:12 – *“That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ.”*
3. The People Of Salvation – Whosoever will may come. Paul is a prime example of how God will save anyone. In verse four he states his authority and apostleship is by the *“will of God.”* The only reason Paul was saved is the will of Sovereignty. Acts 15:14 – *“Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name.”*

### **B. The Willingness Of The Saviour** – *“who gave himself for our sins”*

1. His Commitment – *“who gave”* – The word gave means “to bestow of one's own accord.” It was not a mandatory requirement. God did not demand that Christ die for our sins. Christ was willing to give whatever it took to redeem.
2. His Cost – *“himself”* – The greatest sacrifice a man can give is his life. The price of our salvation cannot be measured. II Cor. 9:15 – *“Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift.”*
3. His Compassion – *“for our sins”* – The hardest thing to understand about salvation is what appears to be a tremendous loss for Jesus. He gave himself... for our sins. We are so unworthy. Why did he do it? Gal. 2:20b – *“... who loved me, and gave himself for me.”* – I John 3:1 – *“Behold, what manner of love...”*

### **C. The Wonder Of Salvation** – *“that he might deliver us from this present evil world.”*

1. He Releases – *“might deliver us”* – The word deliver means to “tear out, to pluck out; to rescue with the idea to release.” Noah Webster defines it “to free, to set at liberty.”
2. He Removes – *“from this present evil world”* – God doesn't pick you up and then put you back in the same place. We live above the evils of this world *“in heavenly places.”* – Eph. 2:6.

## **II. THE REMOVAL FROM THE GOSPEL** – 1:6-9

### **A. The Disappointment Of Their Deviation** – *“I marvel that ye are so soon removed.”*

1. *“Marvel”* – “to wonder” – The term marvel suggests that Paul felt the Galatian error was extraordinary. His amazement was based on two things, the fact of their error and the swiftness of it.
2. *“So soon”* – “briefly; rapidly; quickly” – How could they forsake the gospel of grace so soon? These people were instructed by Paul personally. Their background was one of gross sin. The Galatians were Gauls who were known in ancient times to be barbaric and cruel. They of all people should know the worth of salvation by grace.

### **B. The Difference In Their Doctrine** – *“another gospel: Which is not another;”*

1. Vs. 6 – Another – “heteros” – “another of a different kind”
2. Vs. 7 – Another – “allos” – “another of the same kind”, in other words more of the same
3. To the modernists, this verse might seem to be a contradiction. Paul is simply stating that this false doctrine is another trick to deceive the church, but it is from the same source, Satan. The Galatians were turning to a different Gospel which was not an alternative one. There is only one way.

### **C. The Description Of Their Deceivers** – *“some that trouble you... and would pervert the gospel.”*

1. *“Trouble”* – “tarasso” – “to stir or agitate” – These churches had been saved and were settled upon the fact that God’s grace was sufficient to take them to heaven. Suddenly, a few Judaizers had “stirred” doubt in their minds concerning the doctrine of grace.
2. *“Pervert”* – “metastrepho” – “to turn across; to twist into a different direction.” It is derived from the idea of modifying. The message of the Judaizers did not completely destroy the doctrine of grace. It simply changed the doctrine slightly.

### **D. The Demand For Their Denunciation** – *“let him be accursed”*

1. Paul gives a solemn warning to any one who perverts the gospel. He tells the churches that no other message is acceptable than that of grace alone.
2. *“Accursed”* – “anathema” and means to be “banned or excommunicated.” Some scholars have stated that this meant the church was to cast them out. Certainly, there is no place for that message in the church. However, there is a deeper and more severe meaning to the use of this term.
3. The term has also been used to describe those who have been ordained or dedicated for the judgment of God. God has “dedicated to destruction” any messenger who changes the gospel of grace into an abomination. We know it means more than simple excommunication because angels are not part of the church. We must conclude that the curse is outside the realm of the church.
4. It indicates one who is alienated from God because of sin.