

The Epistle to the

GALATIANS

–Introduction–

About the Letter

- One of the most hard hitting, impactful books in the bible. So much so that it changed the course of history and specifically, church history.
- Only epistle to address a group of churches.
- The only letter from Paul that he draws attention to his handwriting (ch. 6).
- Galatians contains some 47 references to Christ.
- Only epistle that doesn't begin with a word of thanksgiving and praise, makes no request for prayer from these believers, and is considered Paul's most severe letter.
- Only in Galatians do we find out about Paul after his conversion spending three years in the deserts of Arabia.
- It has been characterized as a "short Romans," essentially Romans can be viewed as an expansion of Galatians.

This Issue (What)

- **Confusion concerning the Believer and the Law of Moses (Faith vs. Works). Do we continue in the Law or live in freedom from the Law?**
 1. **What must a Gentile do to be saved?**
...which leaves the underlying question...
 2. **What is to become of Israel?**

To get a better understanding, see Acts 15:1-29

Timeline (When)

- 33 AD - Death & Resurrection of Christ (Mt. 27-28; Mk. 15-16; Lk. 23-24; Jn. 19-20)
- 33/34 AD - Paul's Conversion (Acts 9)
- 36/37 AD - Paul's 1st visit to Jerusalem (Acts 9)
- 44/47 AD - Paul's 2nd visit to Jerusalem— famine relief (Acts 11)
- 46/47 AD - Paul's 1st missionary journey (Acts 13)
- 48 AD - Paul writes letter to the Galatians (Possibly written from Antioch in Acts 13)
- 48/49 AD - Paul's 3rd visit to Jerusalem— Apostolic Council (Acts 15)
- 48/49-51 AD - Paul's 2nd missionary journey (Acts 15-16)

The Setting (Where)

The Region of Galatia... North or South?







PAUL'S FIRST AND SECOND MISSIONARY JOURNEYS

- City
- ← 1st missionary journey: outbound
- 1st missionary journey: inbound
- ← 2nd missionary journey: outbound
- 2nd missionary journey: inbound

The “Who” of the Epistle

- The People of Galatia
- The Judaizers
- The Apostle Paul

The People of Galatia

- Deeply passionate and subject to persuasion
- Celtic in origin
- Migrated and settled in Galatia (300-400 BC)

CELTIC WORLD

c. 400 BCE



The Judaizers

- **Believers in Jesus as the Promised Messiah of the OT.**
- **Believers in keeping the Law and OT traditions (Circumcision, Sabbath, etc.)**
- **Their mission was to get Gentiles practicing the Mosaic Law**

The Apostle Paul

- The “Un-Apostlelike” Apostle
- Also known as Saul (Acts 7-13)
 - After Acts 13, only time “Saul” is mentioned again is in Ch. 22 when recounting his conversion.
- Constantly defending his Jewish qualifications

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The Apostle Paul

“I am indeed a Jew, born in Tarsus of Cilicia, but brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel, taught according to the strictness of our fathers’ law, and was zealous toward God as you all are today.” - Acts 22:3

The Apostle Paul

“And I advanced in Judaism beyond many of my contemporaries in my own nation, being more exceedingly zealous for the traditions of my fathers.” - Galatians 1:14

The Apostle Paul

“If anyone else thinks he may have confidence in the flesh, I more so: circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrews; concerning the law, a Pharisee; concerning zeal, persecuting the church; concerning the righteousness which is in the law, blameless.”

- Philippians 3:4b-6



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- 2nd missionary journey: inbound

The Apostle Paul

- **Raised in Greek culture:**
 - “...born in Tarsus of Cilicia” (Acts 22:3)
- **Roman citizen**
 - “...born a citizen” (Acts 22:8)
- **Therefore, called by God to be set apart to be the Apostle to the world...**
 - “...to bear My name before Gentiles...” (Acts 9:15)

The Purpose (Why)

- To make clear of the One True Gospel
- To prevent Christianity from being another branch of Judaism.
- To keep all of us from entering into the bondage of the Law... whether the Law of Moses or the law of our own minds.
- To remind us that the “just shall live by faith.”

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