

Outline to the Galatians Sermons  
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**GALATIANS - SERMON 1**  
**ROMANS 8:13 - INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND**  
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INTRODUCTION:

There are several reasons why we should study Paul's epistle to the Galatians.

- 1 The book emphasizes the purity of the gospel (chapters 1 and 2).  
Galatians 1:7

*. . . but there are some who trouble you and want to pervert the gospel of Christ.*

In this epistle Paul sets upon the purpose of setting straight that which constitutes the gospel, the basis and grounds upon which we may approach God. Even in our day there is much confusion as to how one might be right with God. The world is filled with deceivers. This epistle will remedy many of the present deceptions. The nature and purity of the gospel is a life and death matter.

- 2 The epistle masterfully sets forth the development and progression of God's unfolding covenants (chapters 3 and 4). The covenants are the skeleton or framework upon which all of biblical revelation hangs. A failure to understand the makeup and progression of the covenants and their final expression can lead to a number of errors such as; paedobaptism, antinomianism, and Dispensationalism.
- 3 This epistle will safely steer us between the two errors of legalism and libertinism (chapters 5 and 6). This epistle destroys the idea that we can be accepted with God upon the basis of the law, our works. This epistle also destroys the idea that it does not matter how we live and still enjoy eternal life. Neither legalism nor libertinism are acceptable in the presence of the Lord.

Hence the broad outline of this epistle is:

Galatians 1 & 2    understanding the gospel  
Galatians 3 & 4    understanding the covenants  
Galatians 5 & 6    understanding how we should live

OUTLINE:

I    WHO WERE THE GALATIANS AND WHERE DID THEY LIVE?

II    WHY DID PAUL WRITE THIS LETTER TO THE GALATIANS?

CONCLUSION: APPLICATIONS

- I    WHO WERE THE GALATIANS AND WHERE DID THEY LIVE?

The simple answer to the question is that the Galatians were those people who lived in south-central Turkey (modern day). This was the region of Paul's first missionary journeys. This would include the cities of Antioch, Iconium, Lystra, and Derbe. Paul had evangelized the people of this region during his first missionary journey. The record of this journey is contained in Acts 13 and 14.

Acts 13:14

*But when they departed from Perga, they came to Antioch in Pisidia, and went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day and sat down.*

Pisidia is sub-region of Galatia similar to Bryan county's relation to Oklahoma. Having preached to those in Antioch they were persecuted and driven out of that city they moved on to Iconium where, as the result of their preaching some Gentiles believed.

Acts 14:1

*Now it happened in Iconium that they went together to the synagogue of the Jews, and so spoke that a great multitude both of the Jews and of the Greeks believed.*

Once again, because of persecution, Paul and his companions moved on into the region of southern Galatia to Derbe and Lystra and continued to preach.

Acts 14:5-7

*And when a violent attempt was made by both the Gentiles and Jews, with their rulers, to abuse and stone them, they became aware of it and fled to Lystra and Derbe, cities of Lycaonia, and to the surrounding region. And they were preaching the gospel there.*

On this missionary journey there was a good measure of success resulting from a good measure of persecution. The balance of chapter 14 in Acts relates the rest of their travels and the retracing of their steps in Galatia in order to establish the churches with elders (14:23). After this the apostle returned to Antioch in Syria (there is also an Antioch in Turkey- Pisidia-Antioch).

This answers the question - Who were the Galatians and where did they live?

It is good to note that Paul in writing this epistle is not writing to an individual church, but to churches of a region.

Galatians 1:1-2

*Paul, an apostle (not from men nor through man, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father who raised Him from the dead), and all the brethren who are with me, to the churches of Galatia:*

There is no such thing as a church of Galatia but rather churches in the region of Galatia. Four of the churches in this region are mentioned; Pisidian-Antioch, Derbe, Lystra, and Iconium.

## II WHY DID PAUL WRITE THIS LETTER TO THE GALATIANS?

Acts 14:24-28

*And after they had passed through Pisidia, they came to Pamphylia. Now when they had preached the word in Perga, they went down to Attalia. From there they sailed to Antioch, where they had been commended to the grace of God for the work which they had completed. Now when they had come and gathered the church together, they reported all that God had done with them, and that He had*

*opened the door of faith to the Gentiles.* *So they stayed there a long time with the disciples.*

We have here recounted the end of this missionary journey and its result. The highlighted effect of this journey was the opening up of the gospel of grace unto the Gentiles by God, *He had opened the door of faith to the Gentiles.* Following the success of this journey and God's work among Gentiles the disciples come together for a long time, verse 28.

Following such success, as is the custom of our adversary, the devil would have his hand in the work completed.

Acts 15:1

*And certain men came down from Judea and taught the brethren, "Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved."*

Soon after the successful and fruitful preaching of the gospel of grace to the people of the region of southern Galatia false teachers come in and distort that gospel.

In this case the perverters of the gospel were Jews who professed to be Christians, though they were not. They objected to the reality of Gentiles coming into the faith without having first become Jews. Paul and Barnabas resisted this false teaching with vigor. Hence, it was necessary for them to travel to Jerusalem to bring this matter before the apostles collectively.

Acts 15:2-5

*Therefore, when Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and dispute with them, they determined that Paul and Barnabas and certain others of them should go up to Jerusalem, to the apostles and elders, about this question.*

Read Acts 15:2-31

Verse 9 in a reference to Paul's encounter with the household of Cornelius (Acts 10) where God receives and approves of the faith of this Gentile without requiring his conversion to Judaism first.

In the controversy at hand the intruding Judaizers were insisting upon the conversion of Gentiles to Judaism first before they could be admitted into the Christian faith. The apostles unanimously conclude that such is not warranted by the Scriptures and prepare a letter of explanation to be distributed among the churches which recognizes the work of God in the conversion of Gentiles into the faith apart from conformity to the Mosaic regulations.

Acts 16 records the delivery of these decrees to the churches of Galatia (Acts 16:1) by Paul and Silas.

The outcome of this event was not a complete success. Even though the apostles had clearly declared God's mind on this subject, the Judaizers did not desist in their false

teaching. Apparently they themselves continued to travel through the same area Paul had evangelized in Galatia.

In the region of Galatia the Judaizers did two things:

- 1 They attacked Paul's credibility and credentials as an apostle (the argument *ad hominem* - Oxford Dictionary . . . of an argument etc.: directed to the individual, personal; appealing to feeling not reason.) These false teachers sought to slander Paul's character and their main attack was upon the validity of his apostleship. They based their assault upon Paul's apostleship on the fact that he was not of the original twelve. Hence, the first two chapters of Galatians Paul deals, not only with the purity of the gospel, but also he must defend his appointment to apostleship.

Galatians 1:1, 10-12

*Paul, an apostle (not from men nor through man, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father who raised Him from the dead). . . . . For do I now persuade men, or God? Or do I seek to please men? For if I still pleased men, I would not be a bondservant of Christ. But I make known to you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached by me is not according to man. For I neither received it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came through the revelation of Jesus Christ.*

Paul defends his apostleship by recounting the fact that he was not appointed by men to the office, but by God.

Galatians 2:6f Paul refers to the Jerusalem counsel of Acts 15 to demonstrate that he had the same message as the other apostles and authority among them without dissent. Paul's apostleship was accepted by the other apostles.

Note: The false teachers revealed in Acts 14 and 15 which Paul addresses in the epistle to the Galatians are called "Judaizers" because they were requiring Gentiles to become Jews first before they could be considered Christians.

Paul was confronted by this accusation of secondary apostleship at other times in his ministry. He also had to defend himself against this charge in 2 Corinthians 11:20-28.

- 2 The second attack from these Judaizers was their continuing assertion of false doctrine. That doctrine required the Gentiles to undergo circumcision in order to be saved (Acts 15:1). Even after the apostles had declared their conclusion on the matter, these false teachers rebelliously continued to spread their false doctrine among the believers in the churches of Galatia. They either concealed from the people the decision of the Jerusalem council or overtly contradicted it.

Hence, Paul's interrogation of the believing Galatians.

Galatians 3:1-3

*O foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you that you should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ was clearly portrayed among you as*

*crucified? This only I want to learn from you: Did you receive the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? Are you so foolish? Having begun in the Spirit, are you now being made perfect by the flesh?*

Galatians 5:2-3

*Indeed I, Paul, say to you that if you become circumcised, Christ will profit you nothing. And I testify again to every man who becomes circumcised that he is a debtor to keep the whole law.*

Galatians 6:12

*As many as desire to make a good showing in the flesh, these would compel you to be circumcised, only that they may not suffer persecution for the cross of Christ.*

Paul is combating the false teachers, the Judaizers in this epistle written to the churches of Galatia where the Judaizers were promoting their heretical teaching. Paul marveled that the Galatians so readily entertained the teaching of these false teachers.

It is with this background that we are now aware of the reasons why Paul wrote to the churches of Galatia.

### Turn tape

Paul in the epistle to the Galatians disputes the false doctrine of the Judaizers by setting forth the true and pure gospel of grace and his authority as an apostle in chapters 1 & 2. He shows how and why, from a covenantal perspective, the teachings of the Judaizers are wrong in chapters 3 & 4. The Abrahamic covenant was NOT disannulled by the old covenant which has passed away. The Abrahamic covenant has found its fulfillment in the new covenant. This is the reason why circumcision is no longer necessary. In chapters 5 & 6 Paul attacks the inconsistent teaching of the Judaizers. He attacks their legalism on the one hand and their libertinism on the other hand. The Judaizers were teaching a partial and inappropriate obedience. Paul's point is that true conversion involves a change in the nature rather than a mere outward physical change, such as circumcision.

Galatians 6:15-16

*For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything, but a new creation. And as many as walk according to this rule, peace and mercy be upon them, and upon the Israel of God.*

### CONCLUSION : APPLICATIONS

- 1 The first to be gleaned from this introduction and background study is that there is always going to be a struggle for the truth. It was true in Paul's day and is in ours as well. As soon as the church achieves success and progress evil false teachers move in and begin to attack that success. Paul had to defend the truth.

Galatians 5:7-12

*You ran well. Who hindered you from obeying the truth? This persuasion does not come from Him who calls you. A little leaven leavens the whole lump. I have confidence in you, in the Lord, that you will have no other mind; but he who troubles you shall bear his judgment, whoever he is. And I, brethren, if I still preach circumcision, why do I still suffer persecution? Then the offense of the cross has ceased. I could wish that those who trouble you would even cut themselves off!*

Paul is struggling on behalf and for the good of these believers in the Galatian churches.

Jude 3

*Beloved, while I was very diligent to write to you concerning our common salvation, I found it necessary to write to you exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints.*

The gospel was and is always under the attack of the evil one and must continually be defended with earnest. We must constantly battle against false gospels. Satan does not rest and nor should we. The rise of cults and heresies is the common thread of church history and it is not going to cease until the Lord's return. We must be prepared to contend earnestly for the faith without weariness for as long as we live here.

- 2 The second application is that we must constantly be at work to stabilize people in the faith. It is our duty to work and labor in effort to bring the young believers to maturity and soundness in the faith of the Lord Jesus Christ. Paul calls the Galatian believers *little children* and he does so because they are such in the faith and have been turned aside by false teachers. Little children are easily turned aside and need constant guidance and correction in order to put and keep them on the right path.

Galatians 4:19

*My little children, for whom I labor in birth again until Christ is formed in you,*

Paul longs for these believers to grow and become stable in the faith. This, of course, is one of the purposes of the local church.

Ephesians 4:14

*. . .that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting. . .*

2 Peter 3:1

*Beloved, I now write to you this second epistle (in both of which I stir up your pure minds by way of reminder). . .*

Repetition is part and parcel of a biblical ministry.