

**Subject: *Know Your Bible – Part 20***

**Scripture: *Galatians 1:1-10***

### **Time, Place, and Purpose of Galatians**

1. Paul wrote this epistle to the churches in Galatia, a region of Asia Minor (Turkey). This is Paul's only letter written to a group of churches rather than to a single church or individual. These churches were established in Antioch, Iconium, Lystra, and Derbe on Paul's first missionary journey. Paul was born in Tarsus, a city in the province of Cilicia, near to Galatia.
2. This epistle was written around 49 A.D., the time of the Jerusalem Council (Acts 15). There is no mention of the council in this letter, so it may have been sent just before that pivotal meeting. The content of the letter addresses the same issue as that of the council. Paul typically used a secretary (amanuensis) in writing his letters, but he wrote at least part of this epistle and perhaps all of it himself (Gal. 6:11).
3. Paul wrote this letter to counter false teachers who claimed that Gentiles must also submit to Jewish law in order to become Christians.
4. Paul wrote this epistle to defend the key doctrine of justification by faith. This book was pivotal in the life of Martin Luther and the Reformation.
5. Unlike Paul's other epistles this letter has no commendation for the readers. Paul was deeply concerned by their defection from the truth and was intent on correcting them.
6. This letter addresses the subject of Christian liberty. It is often called "The Charter of Christian Liberty." Believers in Christ are not under the law, but under grace.
7. Paul refuted the false teaching of legalism, the belief that salvation is by grace plus obeying the Old Testament moral law (Ten Commandments). It has been said that Judaism was the cradle of Christianity and it was almost its grave.
8. Paul also refuted the false teaching of license (antinomianism), the belief that grace allows a person to sin freely and without consequences. Paul stated that Christians must never use their spiritual liberty to sin, but only to serve God by the power of the Holy Spirit.
9. Paul strongly defended the one true gospel of Christ (Gal. 1:6-10). The false teaching of the Judaizers was not a gospel at all, but a distortion of the true gospel. Paul used two Greek words to make his point. The false teachers preached another (*heteros*, another of a different kind) gospel which was not really another (*allos*, another of the same kind). The difference between the one true gospel and their perverted gospel was not in the presentation, but in the essence. Paul pronounced a solemn curse on anyone who preached a different gospel.

### **Outline of Galatians**

- I. The Gospel of Grace Defended (1:1—2:21)
  - A. Warning against perverting the gospel (1:6-10)
  - B. Gospel of grace is given by divine revelation (1:10-24)
  - C. Paul's apostleship was recognized by other apostles (2:1-10)
  - D. Paul's message was vindicated by rebuking Peter (2:11-21)

## II. The Gospel of Grace Explained (3:1—4:31)

- A. The Holy Spirit is received by faith, not by works (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 are contrasted (4:21-31)

## III. The Gospel of Grace Applied (5:1—6:18)

- A. Stand fast in grace and liberty (5:1-12)
- B. Love one another (5:13-15)
- C. Walk in the Spirit (5:16-26)
  - 1) Conflict between the Spirit and the flesh (5:16-18)
  - 2) Works of the flesh (5:19-21)
  - 3) Fruit of the Spirit (5:22-26)
- D. Marks of spiritual maturity (6:1-10)
- E. Warning against the false teachers (6:11-16)
- F. Conclusion (6:17-18)

### **Book of Galatians compared to Romans**

1. Both letters have many common themes, but the tone is different. Galatians has a sharp, severe tone compared to Romans with a more measured, matter-of-fact style.
2. Both letters had a profound impact on church history. Both letters emphasize the doctrine of justification by faith, using Abraham as a prime example (Gal. 3:6; Rom. 4:3).
3. Both letters prove that the Law cannot justify (Gal. 2:16, 21; Rom. 3:20).
4. Both letters contain similar doctrinal themes:
  - A. The believer's crucifixion with Christ (Gal. 2:20; Rom. 6:6)
  - B. Believers are Abraham's spiritual children (Gal. 3:7; Rom. 4:10-11)
  - C. The Law does not bring salvation but God's wrath (Gal. 3:10; Rom. 4:15)
  - D. The just shall live by faith (Gal. 3:11; Rom. 1:17)
  - E. The universal reality of sin (Gal. 3:22; Rom. 11:32)
  - F. Believers are spiritually baptized into Christ (Gal. 3:27; Rom. 6:3)
  - G. Believers are adopted as God's children (Gal. 4:5-7; Rom. 8:14-17)
  - H. Love fulfills the Law (Gal. 5:14; Rom. 13:8-10)
  - I. Importance of walking in the Spirit (Gal. 5:16; Rom. 8:4)
  - J. Conflict of the flesh against the Spirit (Gal. 5:17; Rom. 7:23, 25)
  - K. Believers should bear one another's burdens (Gal. 6:2; Rom. 15:1)

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