

Introduction: Galatians 1:1-5

Galatians 1:1-5 Paul, an apostle, (not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised him from the dead;) 2 And all the brethren which are with me, unto the churches of Galatia: 3 Grace be to you and peace from God the Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ, 4 Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father: 5 To whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Exposition of Text:

Galatians has been called the "Magna Charta" of the church. The "Emancipation from bondage" for the Christian. It is a book that presents the thing that is in the heart of the Apostle Paul, to keep the gospel pure. We see Paul defending his apostleship and the gospel from legalism and the Judaizers in this book. (NOTE: I will define these two terms later in the next session.)

Allow me now however to define two words, "Gospel" and "Pure Gospel." for initial clarity in our study. "Gospel" simply means "Good News" in the biblical sense it is the good news of the death, burial and resurrection of Christ for our sins.

In the context of this study I wish to define "Pure Gospel" as the gospel plus or minus nothing. Pure in the sense that no works, no ritual or ceremonial keeping of certain things or days are necessary for salvation. Salvation based purely on grace and faith.

Allow me to offer the overview of Galatians with the following outline for your consideration during this study.

Galatians: The Pure Gospel
Introduction: Galatians 1:1-5

I- The Pure Gospel We Preach: Galatians 1:6-24 Galatians 1:2-16

A- Departure from the Pure Gospel Galatians 1:6-10
B- Development of the Pure Gospel Galatians 1:11-24
C- Defense of the Pure Gospel Galatians 2:1-16

II- The Pure Gospel We Were Promised: Galatians 3:1-28 Galatians 3:1-8 ; Galatians 5:1

A- Dependence on the Pure Gospel Galatians 3:1-22
B- Deliverance of the Pure Gospel Galatians 3:23-28
C- Disembarkment of the Pure Gospel Galatians 4:1-7
D- Dependability of the Pure Gospel Galatians 4:8 - Galatians 5:1

III- The Pure Gospel We Practice: Galatians 5:2-26 ; Galatians 6:1-17

A- Defamation of the Pure Gospel Galatians 5:2-15
B- Deportment of the Pure Gospel Galatians 5:16-26
C- Demands of the Pure Gospel Galatians 6:1-17

Conclusion: Galatians 6:18

Now we will attempt to lay a ground work for understanding this epistle in this introduction by looking at, the time of the writing, by whom Galatians is written. We need to attempt to understand who this letter is addressed to as well as the purpose of this letter. Finally we will see its relationship to other books in the scripture.

Outline: Introduction Galatians 1:1-5

A- Time of the Writing:

B- Writer:

C- Galatia:

1- The People

2- The Churches

D- Purpose:

E- Relationship to Other Books:

1- Galatians and Romans:

2- Galatians and 2 Corinthians:

3- Galatians and James:

A- Time of the Writing:

There are two thoughts on the date of the writing of the Epistle to the Churches of Galatia. One dates it very early about 48 A.D. and if this is true would make it the second book of the New Testament written. Others date the epistle from 55-60 A.D. and some date it's writing as late as 62 A.D. The date is a much debated topic.

B- Writer: Galatians 1:1

As much as the date of the writing is a point of debate the human author of this epistle has no serious critic. The Apostle Paul (see Galatians 1:1 ; Galatians 5:2) is the human instrument that the Holy Spirit used to write this book. "He devoted the first two chapters describing his experience as the missionary to the Gentiles" 1

We will discuss Paul in greater detail later in this study.

C- Galatia:

Paul writes his epistle to the, "Churches in Galatia." Where is Galatia? Who are these people? What about the churches? There are many question that need to be attempted to answered. The exact meaning of this term is hard to understand. It is complicated because the term Galatia has two meanings. It is both a province of Rome and a nation. Robert Lee Hamblin writes concerning this:

"The term Galatia originated when a group of Gauls migrated to Asia from Europe. In the third century B.C., a boundary was fixed for them and the province became know as Galatia. This became a Roman province late in the first century B.C. Soon other territories were added to the original province. This leads to a dilemma for us as we try to determine where the Galatians were located. Geographically, Galatia would have been the original territory where the Gauls lived. Politically, Galatia could have meant the expanded Roman territory." 2

This is know as the southern and northern Galatia debate. The recipient and the date of the writing is difficult and depends on if you believe if Paul wrote to the Southern Churches or the Northern Churches. I will offer my thoughts in a moment but first lets look at the people and the churches of Galatia.

1- The People

In Galatians 3:1 Paul's refers to the people of the churches as, "Galatians." What does this mean? Who are these people?

"Ancient Gaul (known as France now) was peopled by war-like tribes which migrated across Europe into Asia Minor several centuries before the Christian era. They found a nation called 'Galatia' which means 'the country of the Gauls.' " 3

During the expansion of the Roman empire, when this territory was captured, the Romans, as we have seen before, expanded and included many other cities to the south toward the Mediterranean Sea in the province. So the fullest extent of the Galatian people were both Gaul descent as well as Jewish and others.

2- The Churches

Paul states in Galatians 1:2 that he is writing to the, "Churches in Galatia." Paul, on his three missionary journeys, planted and then visited these churches. (See Acts 13:4-52; 14:1-28 for his first journey; Act_16:6 for his second; Act_18:23 for the third.)

We know by tracing the steps of Paul that he visited both the northern and southern parts of Galatia and planted churches there. Therefore, I submit that Paul wrote to the broadest area including all of Galatia. However, the Holy Spirit intended this letter for not only this region but for the entire world.

D- Purpose:

Next we turn our attention to the why of the writing. Paul, after establishing and nurturing these churches, was followed by a group known as the Judaizers that sought to discredit Paul's authority and to teach a false gospel. They sought to bring the churches back under the works of the law. Paul writes this letter to vindicate his apostleship and insure that the gospel would remain pure. "Galatians is God's strongest word against legalism." 4 The urgency of the purpose is seen in, "The usual expression of thanksgiving and praise for believers is totally absent. Further, there is an abruptness about the opening words which plunges the reader immediately into one of Paul's major concerns, namely, that his apostolic credentials had been challenged." 5

Paul's purpose I submit was to insure that the Gospel of Christ was not tainted and corrupted by these who followed after him.

E- Relationship to Other Books:

For us to rightly divide the word of God we must set every thought, every doctrine against the whole Bible to insure that we do not take one verse or one chapter or even one book out of context and pervert the truth. The relationships of Galatians to the other books of the bible are interesting.

1- Galatians and Romans:

Galatians has been called the, "rough block" from which Romans was carved. What Paul begins in Galatians, most notable the justification by faith doctrine, he finished in Romans.

2- Galatians and 2 Corinthians:

In 2_Cor 10-13 Paul defends his apostleship from challengers. The Judaizers followed Paul and attempted to corrupt his followers. Paul defends himself again in Galatians 1-2.

3- Galatians and James:

"Galatians teaches liberation by the Gospel;
James teaches compulsion on the Gospel." 6

Galatians shows we are saved by faith and James teaches us that there will be fruit to follow.