


THE LETTER TO THE

GALATIANS


WILLIAM MACDONALD



Developed as a study course by Emmaus Correspondence School, founded in 1942.



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The Letter to the Galatians

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STUDENT INSTRUCTIONS

Both the Mosaic law and the gospel came from God and are therefore good—right? Can't we mingle them to obtain something better than either is on its own? *The Letter to the Galatians* supplies the answer to this interesting and important question—it is a resounding *No!* The Law condemns us, but the gospel is God's one remedy for how to get right with Him and gain the power to please Him. It is a fearful thing to poison the well of salvation; anything besides the gospel is really contrary to it.

Just as in the first century, many today are being led into legalism, making *The Letter to the Galatians* particularly relevant. Study it! Grasp the foundational truth on which your liberty in Christ is based. Make it your own. Refuse to give it up. This course will help you do this.

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Course Components

This course has two parts: this study course and the exam booklet.

How To Study

This study has twelve chapters, and each chapter has its own exam. Begin by asking God to help you understand the material. Read the chapter through at least twice, once to get a general idea of its contents and then again, slowly, looking up any Bible references given.

Begin studying immediately, or if you are in a group, as soon as the group begins. We suggest that you keep a regular schedule by trying to complete at least one chapter per week.

Exams

In the exam booklet there is one exam for each chapter (exam 1 covers chapter 1 of the course). Do not answer the questions by what you think or have always believed. The questions are designed to find out if you understand the material given in the course.

After you have completed each chapter, review the related exam and see how well you know the answers. If you find that you are having difficulty answering the questions, review the material until you think you can answer the questions. It is important that you read the Bible passages referenced as some questions may be based on the Bible text.

How Your Exams Are Graded

Your instructor will mark any incorrectly answered questions. You will be referred back to the place in the course where the correct answer is to be found. After finishing this course with a passing average, you will be awarded a certificate.

If you enrolled in a class, submit your exam papers to the leader or secretary of the class who will send them for the entire group to the Correspondence School.

See the back of the exam booklet for more information on returning the exams for grading.

1

PAUL'S PURPOSE IN WRITING

GALATIANS 1:1-10

Introduction

During his early missionary journeys, the apostle Paul visited Asia Minor preaching the glorious message that salvation is by faith in Christ alone. Many of his hearers were saved, and some churches were formed.

Several of these churches were in Galatia, a district in the center of Asia Minor. The inhabitants of Galatia were descendants of the Gauls, people who originally lived in what we now know as Western Europe, including Turkey. They were known to be restless, warlike, and unstable.

After Paul left this area, false teachers entered the churches and introduced wrong doctrine. They taught that salvation was by faith in Christ *plus* keeping the Mosaic law. Their message was a mixture of Christianity and Judaism, of grace and law, of Christ and Moses. They also tried to turn the Galatians away from Paul by saying he was not a genuine servant of the Lord, and therefore his message was not reliable. They sought to undermine confidence in the message by undermining confidence in the messenger. Many of the Galatian Christians were affected by their evil suggestions.

What sorrow and disappointment filled Paul's heart when such news from Galatia reached him! Had his labors among these people been in vain? Could the Christians still be rescued from these Judaistic, legalistic teachings? Paul was stirred to swift and decisive action. He took his pen

————— ❧ —————
**Salvation is by faith
in Christ alone.**
————— ❧ —————

and wrote this indignant letter to his beloved children in the faith. In it, he set forth the true character of salvation as being given by grace from beginning to end, not earned by law-keeping either in whole or in part. Good works are not a condition of salvation; rather, they are a fruit of it. The Christian has died to law; he leads a life of holiness not by his own efforts, but by the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit of God.

————— ❧ —————
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not a condition
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————— ❧ —————

Outline

1. Paul's greeting (1:1-5)
2. Paul's purpose in writing (1:6-10)
3. Paul's defense of his message and ministry (1:11–2:21)
4. The great truth of the gospel (3:1-18)
5. The purpose of the Law (3:19–4:7)
6. The folly of Christians desiring to be under law (4:8–5:1)
7. The peril of legalism (5:2-12)
8. The true meaning of Christian liberty (5:13-15)
9. The true power for practical holiness—the Holy Spirit (5:16-25)
10. Practical exhortations on godly living (5:26–6:10)
11. Conclusion (6:11-18)

Paul's Greeting (1:1-5)

At the outset, Paul insists that his call as an apostle was divine. It did not originate with men, neither was it communicated from God through some man. It came directly from Jesus Christ and from God the Father, who raised Christ from the dead. A man who is thus called by God alone and is responsible to God alone has freedom to preach God's message without fear of man. So the apostle was independent of the twelve apostles and of everybody else, both as to his message and his ministry.

In this verse the deity of Christ is both stated and implied. It is stated in the expression “nor through man, but through Jesus Christ.” It is implied by the way in which Paul links together “Jesus Christ and God the Father,” putting them on equality with one another. Then God the Father is mentioned as the One who raised Jesus from the dead. Paul had good reason to remind the Galatians of this. The resurrection was proof of God’s complete satisfaction with the work of Christ for our salvation.

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**The resurrection
was proof of
God’s complete
satisfaction with the
work of Christ for
our salvation.**

————— ❧ —————

Apparently, the Galatians were not wholly satisfied with the Savior’s work—they were trying to improve on it by adding their own efforts at law-keeping.

Paul was called by the *risen* Christ in contrast to the twelve apostles, who were called by the Lord Jesus during His earthly ministry. Ever afterward, the resurrection formed an important part of the apostle’s message.

The apostle associates himself with the brethren who were with him. These brethren joined in appealing to the Galatians to hold on to the truth of the gospel.

This letter to “the churches of Galatia” shows a deliberate lack of warmth. Ordinarily, Paul addressed believers as “the church of God,” “saints,” or “the faithful in Christ Jesus.” He often expressed thanks for the Christians, or praise for their virtues. Frequently he mentioned individuals by name. But there is none of that here. The seriousness of the error in the Galatian churches caused him to be stern and cool toward them.

Some believe that “the churches of Galatia” were in the northern part of that Roman province. They contend that Paul planted churches here on his second missionary journey after he left the southern territory and before moving on to Troas (Acts 16:6-8). A second visit to North Galatia may be inferred from Acts 18:23.

Another view (the South Galatian theory) is that the churches referred to in verse 2 were Pisidian Antioch, Iconium, Lystra, and Derbe. These are the only cities specifically named as places where Paul planted churches in Galatia.

Grace and peace are two of the great words of the gospel. Grace is God's undeserved kindness toward ungodly sinners. Instead of asking man to *do*, it tells what God has *done* and invites men to receive salvation as a free gift. Scofield says, "Instead of looking for good men whom it may approve, grace is looking for condemned, guilty, speechless and helpless men whom it may save, sanctify and glorify."

————— ❧ —————
**Grace is God's
undeserved kindness
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————— ❧ —————

Peace is the result of grace. When a sinner receives the Savior, he has peace with God. He rests in the knowledge that the penalty of his sins has been paid, that all his sins have been forgiven, and that he will never be condemned. But grace not only *saves*; it *keeps* as well. And we need not only the blessing of *peace with God* but *the peace of God* also. These are the blessings which

————— ❧ —————
**The Law brought
a curse on all who
broke its precepts.**
————— ❧ —————

Paul wishes for the Galatians as he opens his letter. Surely the Galatians realized that these blessings could never come by the Law. The Law brought a curse on all who broke its precepts. It never brought peace to a single soul.

Christ died to "deliver us from this present evil age" (v. 4). This includes not only the moral and political corruption of this age, but also the religious world which mixes rituals and ceremonies with faith in Christ. It was especially timely, therefore, for the Galatians to be reminded that they were going back into the very system from which Christ had died to rescue them.

Christ's redemption was "according to the will of our God and Father." This places the credit where it belongs—not in man's puny efforts, but rather in the sovereign will of God. It emphasizes that Christ is God's way of salvation and that there is no other.

Verse 4 should be a reminder to us that God is not interested in improving the world, or making people comfortable in it, but in delivering them from it. Our priorities should coincide with His.

According to the gospel of grace, all the glory for man's salvation goes to God the Father and to the Lord Jesus Christ. Man cannot share this glory as a co-savior by keeping the Law.

Each phrase in these first five verses is meaningful, much truth being expressed in a few words. Paul has stated in embryo the two main subjects which will occupy the rest of the epistle—his own authority as an apostle and his gospel of the grace of God. He is now ready to speak directly to the Galatians concerning the problem at hand.

Paul's Purpose in Writing (1:6-10)

Paul confronts the Galatians at once on their readiness to accept error. He is amazed that they should so suddenly surrender the truth of the gospel, and solemnly labels their action as deserting God for a false gospel. They had been called into the grace of Christ; now they were putting themselves under the curse of the Law. They had accepted the true gospel; now they were abandoning it for a different “gospel,” which was not good news at all (v. 7). It was just a perverted message, a mixture of grace and law.

There are two words in the Greek for “another.” One means “another of the same kind.” The other means “another of a different kind.” The Galatians were turning to a different kind of gospel, which was not another like the one Paul preached.

————— ❧ —————
**Paul did not tolerate
 false teachers, and
 neither should we.**
 ————— ❧ —————

Paul twice pronounces the solemn curse of God on anyone who preaches a different gospel. (Anathema means “accursed.”) God has only one message for doomed sinners; He offers salvation by grace through faith, entirely apart from law-keeping. Those who proclaim any other way of salvation must necessarily be doomed. How very serious it is to preach a message that results in the eternal destruction of souls. Paul did not tolerate such false teachers, and neither should we.

Notice that the apostle says “an angel from heaven,” not “an angel from God.” An angel from heaven could conceivably bring a false message, but an angel from God could not.

Language could not express more clearly the uniqueness of the gospel. It is the *only* way of salvation. Self-effort or human merit have no part. The gospel alone offers salvation without money or price.

It has been well said that whereas the Law has a curse for those who fail to keep it, the gospel has a curse for those who seek to change it.

Paul is probably reminded at this point that his enemies accused him of changing his message to suit his audience, so he asks, in effect, “In insisting that there is only one gospel, am I trying to please people or God?” Obviously he is not trying to please people, because they hate the suggestion that there is only one way to heaven. If Paul changed his message to suit people, he would not be the servant of God; in fact, he would be inviting the wrath of God to fall upon himself.

THE LETTER TO THE

GALATIANS

EXAM BOOKLET
AK '15 (2 UNITS) GAL

STUDENT NAME (PLEASE PRINT)

ADDRESS

CITY, STATE, ZIP

COURSE GRADE: _____

INSTRUCTOR



Exam developed by Emmas Correspondence School, founded in 1942.

A NOTE ON THE EXAMS

The exams are designed to check your knowledge of the course material and the Scriptures. After you have studied a chapter, review the exam questions for that lesson. If you have difficulty in answering the questions, re-read the material. If questions contain a Scripture reference, you may use your Bible to help you answer them. If your instructor has provided a single page Answer Sheet, record your answer on that sheet. This exam contains the following types of questions:

MULTIPLE CHOICE

You will be asked to write in the letter of the correct answer at the space on the right. Here is an example:

The color of grass is

- A. blue C. yellow
B. green D. orange

 B

WHAT DO YOU SAY?

Questions headed this way are designed to help you express your ideas and feelings. You may freely state your own opinions in answer to such questions.

RETURNING THE EXAM

See the back of this exam booklet for instructions on returning your exam for grading.

DO NOT PHOTOCOPY THESE EXAM PAGES

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CHAPTER 1 EXAM

PAUL'S PURPOSE IN WRITING

EXAM GRADE

Before starting this exam, write your name and address on the front of this Exam Booklet.

Directions: Read each question carefully and write the letter of the correct answer in the blank space on the right. Use the separate answer sheet if provided.

1. The false teachers who came to Galatia were teaching that

- A. Jesus Christ was not really God.
- B. salvation was through faith in Christ plus keeping the Law.
- C. the Bible was a mixture of writings inspired by emotions and Hebrew religious folklore.
- D. only those who entered into "the mysteries" could be saved.

2. The false teachers in Galatia were

- A. hostile to Paul.
- B. friends of Paul.
- C. ignorant of Paul.
- D. indifferent to Paul.

3. Paul's position as an apostle was

- A. given to him by Peter.
- B. given to him by the laying on of the hands of the Jerusalem apostles.
- C. something he earned as a reward for his diligent labors in the gospel.
- D. given to him by God.

4. In his opening remarks, Paul reminded the Galatians of Christ's

- A. virgin birth.
- B. resurrection.
- C. high priestly work in heaven.
- D. second coming.

5. In contrast with the other apostles, Paul was called to the work by

- A. the risen Christ.
- B. Christ when He was still on earth.
- C. Gabriel, the herald angel.
- D. Michael, the archangel.

6. In his opening remarks, Paul
- A. went out of his way to be warm and friendly in order to ensure his letter was read.
 - B. appealed to James and Peter in the hope that their names would give weight to his words.
 - C. was purposely cool in order to impress on the Galatians the seriousness of their errors.
 - D. called upon God to witness that he was going to speak the truth in love. _____
7. Paul's traditional greeting of "grace and peace"
- A. is absent from his Galatian letter.
 - B. had a special significance for the Galatians in view of the errors they were embracing.
 - C. is repeated five times in the opening paragraph in order to emphasize the basic truth of the gospel.
 - D. was omitted by Paul from the opening paragraph of this letter but included at the very end. _____
8. Paul says that Christ died to "deliver us from this present evil age." He was talking about
- A. the moral corruption of this age.
 - B. the political corruption of this age.
 - C. the religious world with its mixture of ritual plus faith.
 - D. all the above. _____
9. Paul was surprised at
- A. the spiritual maturity of the Galatians.
 - B. the readiness of the Galatians to accept error.
 - C. the number of new churches which had sprung up in Galatia since his visit to that area.
 - D. the sizable financial gift the Galatians had sent to him. _____
10. Paul pronounced a solemn curse on
- A. anyone who preaches another gospel.
 - B. unsaved people in general.
 - C. backsliders.
 - D. those who did not agree with him. _____

WHAT DO YOU SAY?

There is only one true gospel. In your own words, state what it is.
