

The Letter to the Galatians, what is it about? Why should I know it? How can it help me?

Who wrote this letter, and to whom did He write? **1** Paul, an apostle (not from men nor through man, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father who raised Him from the dead), ² and all the brethren who are with me, To the churches of Galatia: ³ Grace to you and peace from God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ, ⁴ who **gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father, ⁵ to **whom be glory forever and ever.** Amen.**

What was happening? ⁶ I marvel that you are turning away so soon from Him who called you in the grace of Christ, to a different gospel, ⁷ which is not another; but there are some who trouble you and want to pervert the gospel of Christ. ⁸ But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed.

How could this have happened? **2:** ⁴ And *this occurred* because of false brethren secretly brought in (who came in by stealth to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage), ⁵ to whom we did not yield submission even for an hour, that the truth of the gospel might continue with you.

Paul used to be very legalistic---he was a Pharisee. What has changed for him? ²⁰ I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the *life* which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.

What line helps us remember the theme of Galatians? Chapter 3 O foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you that you should not obey the truth?... ³ Are you so foolish? Having begun in the Spirit, are you now being made perfect by the flesh?"

No matter what we do, we can't make ourselves righteous. What does? ⁶ just as Abraham "believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness." ⁷ Therefore know that *only* those who are of faith are sons of Abraham.

¹⁰ For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse; for it is written, "Cursed *is* everyone who does not continue in all things which are written in the book of the law, to do them.

¹⁹ **What purpose then does the law serve?** It was added because of transgressions... ²⁴ Therefore the law was our tutor *to bring us* to Christ, that we might be justified by faith. ²⁵ But after faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor.

God does not want us to have a slave mentality or slave relationship with God. He wants more than just that. **4** ⁶ And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, "Abba, Father!" ⁷ Therefore you are no longer a slave but a son, and if a son, then an heir of^d God through Christ.

Paul asks a question ^{4:16} Have I therefore become your enemy because I tell you the truth?

The legalists have an ulterior motive ¹⁷ They zealously court you, *but* for no good; yes, they want to exclude you, that you may be zealous for them.

Chapter 5 Stand fast therefore in the liberty by which Christ has made us free,^[u] and do not be entangled again with a yoke of bondage.

Be Aware! A terrible danger awaits those who trust in legalism. ⁴ You have become estranged from Christ, you who *attempt* to be justified by law; you have fallen from grace.

⁹ A little leaven leavens the whole lump.

Warning---Warning! ¹³ For you, brethren, have been called to liberty; only do not *use* liberty as an opportunity for the flesh,

but through love serve one another. ¹⁴ For all the law is fulfilled in one word, *even* in this: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.”

Walking in the Spirit is the great and wonderful answer to all of this. ¹⁶ I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. ¹⁷ For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish. ¹⁸ But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.

When the Flesh wins the war—everyone loses. ¹⁹ Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, ^[w] fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, ²⁰ idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, ²¹ envy, murders, ^[k] drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told *you* in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

Trying to be good and perfecting our own selves just makes us hard on ourselves and hard on others.

²² But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³ gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law. ²⁴ And those *who are* Christ’s have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. ²⁵ If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.

Bear and Share the Burdens

So, what happens when we fail, we sin? What happens when someone else sins? **Chapter 6** Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who *are* spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted. ² Bear one another’s burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.

Here’s the formula: ⁷ Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. ⁸ For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life.

There is a big difference between trying to “be good” and living a “godly life”. Good works should just flow from a life that loves the Lord. ⁹ And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart. ¹⁰ Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith.

The Cross! It’s the cross that is our hope. ¹³ not even those who are circumcised keep the law, but they desire to have you circumcised that they may boast in your flesh. ¹⁴ But God forbid that I should boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ,

^{6:18} Brethren, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with your spirit. Amen.