

# Galatians—Freed Up

## Set Free ~ Live Free

*Superiority of grace leads to liberty not legalism or license*

### Subject/Purpose Statement

Paul writes an emotional corrective letter to the churches in Galatia (that he started on his first missionary journey) to exhort and explain that justification by faith apart from the bondage of the Law (legalism) produces freedom from sin (license) and liberty to walk by the Spirit.

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**Understanding our freedom in Christ and how to live free for Christ.**

### Structure

#### Galatians 5:1

For freedom Christ has set us free;  
stand firm therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery. (ESV)

Note that the two parts of the verse are the two parts of the book...

The indicative (actuality or certainty) and the imperative (command) who we are and what we are to do

#### Basic Structure

Justification by faith

- Galatians 1-2 Personal defense
- Galatians 3-4 Theological defense

- Defend**—authenticity of the message
- Declare**—the gospel of grace through faith

Freedom in Christ

- Galatians 5-6 Practical application
- Describe**—the outcome of the message

## Galatians

Stephen C. Kilgore

	<i>Disappointment, Deserting Him, Distorting the Gospel</i>	<i>Source of the Gospel</i>	<i>Unity of belief</i>	<i>Challenge of practice</i>	<i>Justification by Faith</i>	<i>Purpose and role of the Law</i>	<i>Adopted as sons, no longer slaves</i>	<i>Remain free</i>	<i>Live Free—Don't cancel grace</i>	<i>Free to love</i>	<i>Walk by the Spirit</i>	<i>Restore sinners</i>	<i>Be generous: sow and reap</i>	<i>Christ is everything</i>	
	1:1-9	1:10-24	2:1-10	2:11-21	3:1-14	3:15-29	4:1-20	4:21-31	5:1-12	5:13-15	5:16-26	6:1-5	6:6-10	6:11-16	
Structure	<b>Paul's Message &amp; Authority</b> Personal Attacks Answered		<b>Paul's Message Confirmed by Church</b> Paul Challenges Peter		<b>Justification Defended</b> Justification Abraham's "Seed"		<b>Justification Clarified</b> Sanctification		<b>Not Lawlessness but Law of Christ</b> Walk by the Spirit Fruit of the Spirit			<b>Responsibility</b> Giving			
	<b>Personal Defense</b>				<b>Theological Declaration</b>				<b>Practical Application Described</b>						
Book Title	<i>Theological</i>								<i>Ethical</i>						
	<b>Justification by Faith</b>				<b>Freedom in Christ</b>										
	<b>Doctrine</b>	<b>Freedom!</b>						<b>Imperative</b>		<b>Practice</b>					
Purpose Statement	<b>Superiority of Grace Leads to Liberty not Legalism or License</b>														
	Justification by faith apart from the bondage of the Law (legalism) produces freedom from sin (license) and liberty to walk by the Spirit.														
	<b>Galatians 2:20</b> I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. (ESV)														

## Additional Key Passages

**Galatians 2:15-16** We ourselves are Jews by birth and not Gentile sinners; 16 yet we know that a person is not justified by works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ, so we also have believed in Christ Jesus, in order to be justified by faith in Christ and not by works of the law, because by works of the law no one will be justified. (ESV)

**Galatians 2:20** I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. (ESV)

**Galatians 5:24** And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. (ESV)

**Galatians 6:14** But far be it from me to boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world. (ESV)

**Galatians 5:16** But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. (ESV)

## Overview

### *Paul's exasperation*

Galatians 1:6 I am astonished  
 Galatians 3:1 O foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you?  
 Galatians 3:3 Are you so foolish?  
 Galatians 4:11 I am afraid I may have labored over you in vain  
 Galatians 4:20 I am perplexed about you  
 Galatians 5:7 You were running well. Who hindered you from obeying the truth?  
 5:10, 12

Paul experienced the emotion and hurt of having someone who he led to the Lord abandon the faith and be distorted by false teaching. Anyone who has invested in an individual only to see them abandon the faith, can understand some of Paul's exasperation.

## Preview / Review — Summary

### Justification by faith

#### Galatians 1-2 Personal defense

#### *Defend—authenticity of the message*

1:1-5 Paul introduces his God-given authority and his message—forgiveness of sins and deliverance from evil age.

1:6-10 Paul introduces the problem and warns the Galatians of the seriousness of their current situation (deserting and distorting the gospel, the grace of Christ)—anyone who proclaims (for the purpose of convincing others toward) a contrary gospel, is accursed.

1:11–2:10 Paul seeks to establish the credentials for himself and his message—reaffirming that his message was from God not men.

Paul proves it by having not needing to receive it from the Apostles, though they affirmed his message. And proving it by not requiring a Gentile co-worker to be baptized, which was also affirmed by the Apostles.

2:11-21

2:11-14 Paul provides additional proof (demonstrates that his authority and message come from God independent of men) by recounting his correction of Peter, who gave in to the pressure (in one specific situation) to make the gospel and Christianity too closely associated to Judaism (Jewish traditions and law-keeping).

2:15-21 Paul begins to answer the question of the relationship between Gentile and practices of the Law by focusing on the core of the gospel—being declared righteous

(justification) by faith in Christ not by works of the law (that which the Law required).

### **Galatians 3-4 Theological defense**

#### ***Declare—the gospel of grace through faith***

3:1-9 Paul continues to vindicate justification by faith. The Galatians having received the Spirit is proof that justification is by faith not the works of the Law. Which indicates that they are benefiting from the blessings of Abraham and therefore are children of Abraham by faith—not works of the Law.

3:10-29 Paul continues to vindicate justification by faith, by demonstrating that Abraham's justification was by faith not by the Law. Therefore works of the Law are not means of establish or maintaining a relationship with God. And the Abrahamic promises were not invalidated by the Mosaic covenant, which was temporary. This naturally leads to the question of the purpose of the Law, to which Paul provides two answers—to reveal sin and to serve as a guardian until Christ. It is through Christ that anyone (Jew or Gentile) by faith can be sons of God receiving the promised blessing of Abraham.

4:1-11 In God's perfect timing, He broke into the history of humanity (who were enslaved to the weak and worthless controlling principle of the world) to send His Son in full human form, under the weight of the Old Covenant for the purpose of redeeming those who were under the law, resulting in adopt as sons—the benefits: intimate relationship with the Father and intimate access as that of the first born heir.

Why go back to a lesser status? Nothing more is needed to relate to God. Nothing more to receive, nothing more can be earned by works of the Law. Already fully approved by God as evidence of being included in as part of His family.

4:12-31 Paul returns to delineate his personal relationship with the Galatians—reminding them of their acceptance of him and his message. He questions the motivation of his opponents while passionately declaring his desire for the Galatians to have Christ formed in them. He then uses an extended illustration to show that not all the biological children of Abraham are children of promise. Reinforcing his belief that the Galatians are children of promise.

### **Freedom in Christ**

#### **Galatians 5-6 Practical application**

#### ***Describe—the outcome of the message***

5:1-15 Paul encourage the Galatians to enjoy, preserve and protect their freedom.

5:1-12 Paul pivots to the demonstrate that justification by faith provides freedom so the Galatians should stand firm in that freedom and not allow anyone to force them back under yoke of slavery which is the Law. The must understand that they cannot pick and choose aspects of the Law—if they choose to accept the need for circumcision, they must keep the whole Law. But this would sever them from Christ and the hope of righteousness produced through the Spirit by faith.

5:13-15 But this freedom does not lead to antinomian recklessness, but enables them through love to serve others—thereby, carrying out the ultimate ethical aspect of the Law—to love ones neighbor, rather than opposite—destructive, antagonistic behavior.

5:16-26 Paul challenges the Galatians to continually depend on the Spirit for the power to obey God, even as they continue to battle the desires of the flesh. Paul provides a list of vices and virtues which provide the evidence of whether one is carrying out the works of the flesh or the fruit of the Spirit.

This section help support the fact that a faith relationship with God, through Christ is not antinomian, Paul describes the present battle and power source for Christians—the Spirit.

5:25–6:10 Since believers are still in a battle against the flesh which is often evident by an exaggerated self-conception, Paul provides instruction for how walking by the Spirit

should be evident within the household of faith. Walking by the Spirit results in personal and community responsibilities—including restoring one who sins and assisting the overburdened. And while this can be wearying, Paul exhorts them to not give up.

#### 6:11-18 Summary

Paul's concluding section, written in his own handwriting as the mark of authenticity, reviews the key issues address throughout the letter and makes it clear that the primary issues the Galatians were facing was pressure to be circumcised to have a proper relationship with God. But what should be their boast is the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ for through it the world no longer has influence of us.

## Summarization—Argument in light of Paul's opponents

**Galatians 1–2** the opponents sought to discredit Paul's authority and message implying or teaching that Paul's apostleship is not valid

Therefore,

- Paul **defends** himself against the accusation that what he taught was done so to please people (1:10)
- Paul **declares** his independence from the apostles (1:16-17) as one who received his message, just as they did, directly from Jesus (1:1, 11-12). And that he had limited contact with the apostles (1:18-24)
- Paul **demonstrates** that his message was affirmed by the apostles (2:6, 7-10), including the rejection of the pressure of the Judaizes in Jerusalem to require circumcision for Titus, a Gentile convert (2:3)
- Paul **displays** (validates) that he was not a man pleaser and had authority by challenging Peter who was hypocritically bending to the same issues the false teachers in Galatia were proposing (2:11-14)

**Galatians 3–4** the opponents' message or use of the Old Testament to support their teaching is challenged by Paul, though series of Old Testament expositions

- Appealing to Abraham as the key example of justification apart from works of the law and by faith (3:6, 7-9)
  - The false teachers may have used the "curse" of Genesis 12:3 as a threat to Gentiles—Paul used the "blessing" of Genesis 12:3 as the rebuttal, supported by Genesis 15:6.
  - Paul shows that those, Jew or Gentile, who respond to God in faith as Abraham did enter into the promises given to Abraham (3:9).
- Demonstrating that the Mosaic Covenant was inferior (and temporary) to the promise and covenant God made to Abraham (3:16-18)
  - The false teachers may have been putting the Abraham and Mosaic Covenant on pair with each other and missing the unconditional nature of the Abraham and the conditional nature of the Mosaic.
  - Paul particularly points out the promise was primarily to a singular offspring, the future Messiah (3:16)
- Reminding them of two reasons the Law was given
  - Because of transgression (3:19)—to increase at minimum the realization of sin, if not more so the need because sin increased
  - Because of its roles a guardian (3:24)—to be a disciplinarian until Christ came
- Freedom from enslavement was provided in God's timing through His son who was born under the Old Covenant to remove the barrier of the Law allow Jews and Gentiles to be adopted into God's family (4:4-7).
  - So why would the Galatians desire to be enslaved again to the law? (4:9)
  - The false teacher seeking to enslave the Galatians, not for their good, but to keep them in obligation to them.

- Paul on the other hand wants them to have Christ formed in them (4:19)
- Paul's final Old Testament support is not expositional but illustrative (4:23-31) seeking to demonstrate through analogy that the Galatians are already free.

**Galatians 5-6** the opponents' message requiring circumcision is rejected and show to be invalidate justification by faith

- Paul challenge the Galatians to stand firm in freedom not being forced back to the yoke of slavery—because adding to the gospel invalidates the gospel (5:1-6)
  - Freedom is lived out through the Spirit by faith in Christ Jesus resulting in certain anticipation of righteousness (5:6-7), and this faith is worked out through love
- Paul goes on to show the implications of his Gospel, as he had done when present with the Galatians (5:21) was Spirit produced (5:16, 18, 22, 25) godliness and unity (Negatively: 5:15, 20b-21a, 26; Positively: 5:13-14, 22)

Paul concludes his letter show that the only way to overcome the works of the flesh is through Spirit, which they received by faith not works of the law (3:1-6)

- Contrasting the evidence of works of the flesh and the fruit of the Spirit (5:16-26)
- Providing practical instructions to assist in the restoration of unity (6:1-5)
- Challenging them to take seriously what they are facing (6:7-10) and understand the real motivation of the opponents (6:12-15).