

I. Introduction to Galatians. v. 1-2

A. Why study Galatians?

1. We can never take the gospel for granted.
2. Galatians also teaches us how the Holy Spirit transforms the believer to live in this new age of gospel grace. 3:2 5:16ff

B. Why was the book of Galatians written?

1. The gospel of God's grace is under attack. 2 Cor. 11:3
 - a. Paul had established these churches in Galatia (part of modern Turkey) during his first missionary journey (46-48 AD). Acts 13-14
 - b. False teachers then came saying that Gentiles must come under the law of Moses if they are to be saved. 1:6-7 3:1 4:10-11,17 5:4 6:12-13 Acts 15:1-2,5
 - c. These false teachers were also attacking Paul's apostleship.
2. The Apostle Paul defends the gospel of justification by God's grace alone through faith alone in the work of Christ alone. 2:16 1:10

C. The author – Paul, an Apostle. v. 1-2a Acts 9:1ff

1. Paul was well known to the Galatians. 4:11,13-15,11,19 Acts 13-14
2. Why does Paul begin by declaring his authority? 1:11
3. Paul teaches doctrine even when identifying himself. 2 Co. 13:14
 - a. Paul honors Jesus alongside the Father, as co-equal and divine. 1:3,12
 - b. He also proclaims the resurrection. Rom. 1:4 2 Co. 13:4
4. Application -- Who has authority over you?
 - a. We no longer have divinely appointed apostles like Paul. Eph. 2:20 2 Co. 12:12
 - b. We possess the complete apostolic witness to Christ in the Scriptures. Acts 2:42 2 Ti. 3:16-17 1 Jo. 1:1ff Luke 1:1ff John 20:30f
 - c. We, like the churches in Galatia, have elders to lead and teach us under the authority of Scripture. Acts 14:23 20:28 Heb. 13:17 2 Tim. 4:1ff Eph. 4:11ff
 - d. We need to watch out for false apostles. Acts 20:28ff Cor. 11:13 2 Pet. 2:1
5. Application – People today still challenge Paul's authority.

D. The recipients – the churches of Galatia. v. 2b But which part of Galatia?

1. Some believe that this was written to churches in Northern Galatia, where the ethnic Galatians lived.
2. It is more likely that Paul is writing to the churches which he established in the southern part of the Roman province of Galatia (modern Turkey) during his first missionary journey – Pisidian Antioch, Iconium, Lystra, and Derbe. Acts 13-14
3. It is striking that Paul offers the Galatians no commendation in his greeting. 1 Cor. 1:2,4ff 1 Th. 1:2ff Application – How would Paul address our churches?

E. The approximate date of this epistle – 48 AD.

1. Galatians was probably written after the first missionary journey but before the council at Jerusalem, which would make this Paul's earliest letter. Act 15:1ff
2. Some believe Paul wrote Galatians after the Jerusalem council (early 50s).

F. A broad overview of Galatians.

1. Paul defends his apostleship. 1-2
2. Paul defends the gospel. 3-4
3. Paul declares the practical implications of the gospel. 5-6

II. Paul's salutation is packed with gospel significance. v. 3-5

- A. Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. v. 3 Ro. 1:7
1 Cor. 1:3 2 Cor. 1:2 Eph. 1:2 Col. 1:2 1 Th. 1:1 2 Th. 1:2 1 Tim. 1:2 2 Tim. 1
1. "Grace is God's unconditioned goodwill towards mankind which is decisively expressed in the saving work of Christ." 1:15 2:21 Eph. 2:8-9 Ex. 34:6-7 Ps. 103:8
 2. Peace is the result of God's grace. 5:22 6:22 3:28 Ro. 5:1 Jo. 14:27 Eze. 37:26
Isa. 54:10 9:6-7 53:5 Phil. 4:7 Col. 3:15 Eph. 4:1ff 2:11ff
- B. Jesus gave Himself for our sins – the cross. v. 4a 3:13 4:4-5 2:20 5:11
1. Jesus' death on the cross is the means by which we receive God's grace and peace.
 2. Jesus' death was voluntary. 2:20 John 10:17-18
 3. He died as our substitute to pay the penalty for our sins. 3:13 1 Co. 15:3 1 Pe. 3:18 2 Co. 5:21 Mt. 1:21 John 1:29 Ro. 6:23 5:10
 4. Jesus' death is fully sufficient to save. 2:21 3:1
 5. Jesus' sacrifice effectually rescues all those whom He came to save.
John 10:11,26-27 6:37 Mark 10:45 Isa. 53:11 Eph. 5:25
 6. Application – Are you trusting solely in the atoning death of Jesus Christ on the cross as the basis of your right standing before God? Phil. 3:8-9
 7. Application – Are you ready for the Lord's Table? Mt. 26:26-28 Mk. 14:24 10:45
 8. Application – We who have received grace should show grace to others. Eph. 4:32
- C. So that He might rescue us from this present evil age unto His new realm. v. 4b
1. In what way is this age (the world) evil? 1 Jo. 5:19 Eph. 5:16 2 Co. 4:4 Eph. 2:2
 2. The new age has burst into time by Jesus' death and resurrection. Ezek. 34:27
1 Cor. 10:11 Eph. 1:21 Col. 1:21,13
 3. So now we walk, not in the flesh of this present evil age which is passing away, but by the Spirit of the age to come. 5:16ff Titus 2:11-14 2 Co. 5:17
 4. Application – Live as one who has been rescued out of the ungodly world system into the new world order of Jesus' kingdom. 6:14-15 1 Th. 5:22 4:7 Ro. 12:2
- D. According to the will of our God and Father. v. 4c
1. The work of Jesus Christ was according to the eternal plan and purpose of the Father. Eph. 1:3ff Acts 2:23 1 Jo. 4:10 John 3:16 Ro. 16:25-26
 2. Through Christ, He is our Father and we are His adopted sons. 3:26 4:6-7
- E. To Whom be the glory forevermore. Amen! v. 5 Mt. 6:13 Eph. 3:21 Rom. 11:36
1 Tim. 1:17 Heb. 13:21 1 Co. 1:30-31

III. Concluding applications.

Discussion questions

1. Why is Galatians such an important book for us to study?
2. What is the main purpose of the book of Galatians?
3. What problem is Paul addressing in this book?
4. What similar problems does the church face in our day?
In what ways is Paul's authority being challenged?
5. What do the first five verses of Galatians teach about the Trinity, the Person of Christ, the nature of the Atonement, the sovereignty of God, and the way of salvation?
6. How does the authority of our church leaders differ from that of Paul?
7. Define grace and peace. How does Jesus obtain grace and peace for us?
8. If the goal of Jesus' sacrifice was to rescue us from this present age, how should we live?
9. How does this passage prepare us for the Lord's Supper?