

Overview of Galatians

Author: The Apostle Paul

Time: 48 AD (approximately)

Audience: Young Christians within the churches of Galatia

Purpose and Background: Galatians was written by Paul to counter legalism and address the central nature of grace within the church. False teachers called the *Judaizers* began to infiltrate the young churches in Galatia. These teachers claimed people had to believe in Christ *and* become followers of the Jewish ceremonial law. Paul writes to these churches to warn them of the dangers of this false gospel and to call them to preserve the purity of the true gospel, centered on the grace of God in Jesus Christ.

Main Idea: God has freed us from the curse of the law so that we can be free to love God and our neighbor. And he has done this through the perfect work of his son Jesus Christ.

Why study Galatians?

- 1) We are all born with a nature that insists that we can make our own way to God. There is a part of all of us that believes we can earn God's favor by what we do (performance-based faith). This book is a needed reminder to all of us that the unmerited favor of God saves us through Jesus Christ.
- 2) To be equipped to protect the purity of the gospel and to be able to discern false gospels.
- 3) Galatians was Martin Luther's favorite book. Martin Luther lived during a time when the church was adding all kinds of rules and regulations to the gospel. Luther stood up to the false teachers of his time because he believed that they were distorting the gospel. Luther writes, "To be convinced in our hearts that we have forgiveness of sins and peace with God by grace alone is the hardest thing."

NOTE: Most taken from *No Other Gospel: The Book of Galatians Study Guide* by Citadel Square.