

# Unfolding the Truth

– ONE BOOK AT A TIME –

## Galatians

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Leader's Guide by Mona Selden



## Unfolding the Truth: Galatians Leader's Guide

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The Galatians study has been designed to take participants through the book of Galatians in an interactive and memorable way. Using various activities and thought provoking questions, participants will gain a deeper understanding of what Paul is teaching in Galatians. Participants will work through one week's lessons and then will meet together to discuss what they learned.

The Leader's Guide is designed to assist you as you plan for your time together as a group. Since the composition of every group is different and the amount of time available varies, this guide is a general guide. It does not cover every question, but gives helpful insights and suggestions on how you might cover the content in each lesson. Throughout the guide, you will see words in bold-faced type, followed by a page number, to help you to locate the question that is being referenced. As you prepare, ask the Holy Spirit to guide so that you are able to meet your group's needs.

Several times it is suggested that you make a list or chart of what you have learned. These visual aids add to the learning process and help as you reason through what is being taught. Most often this is done on the board as a large group, but you can decide to do it in small groups, or as a handout, if that is better for your group.

Throughout this guide you will be directed to discuss various questions. This discussion can be done as a large group or in small groups, depending on the size of your group and how your meeting space is set up.

Each week you will be directed to read a portion of the Scripture out loud together. It is your choice how you do this: as a large group, in small groups, taking turns, in unison, or with one reader. It would be best if this is done using the Scripture at the front of the study so that everyone is using the same text. Be sensitive to those who are uncomfortable reading out loud.

For each lesson, Lisa asks participants to write a verse on an index card. It is helpful if you provide the index cards.

When marking words, remember to mark pronouns referring to the words. Also, remind participants that what Lisa suggests are *suggestions*; they are free to create their own markings.

Leading a Bible Study takes much time and energy, as well as personal investment in the women who are in your group. Thank you for being a willing vessel whom God can use to cause women's roots to go DEEPER STILL.

## Introductory Lesson

- Welcome participants as they arrive.
- Begin with the “housekeeping” issues: registrations and books, location of restrooms, and announcements.
- Start with introductions and the suggested icebreaker below.
  - The suggested icebreaker is tied to the title of the study. Give the participants 90 seconds to brainstorm all the things that can be folded.
- Open in prayer.
- Ask participants to share why they chose to do this study, or what about this study appealed to them.
  - Discuss what participants hope to learn from this study.
- Share with the group the structure of the study and what to expect over the next six weeks.
- Have participants share what, if anything, is familiar to them about Galatians. Be aware that some might not have any background.
  - Do they have any verses from Galatians memorized that they would like to share?
  - Are they familiar with the message/content of Galatians?
  - What do they know about Paul? This will be discussed in greater detail in Lesson 1.
- Read Galatians 1-6 out loud together.

## Week 1: Conversion Then Commitment

- Welcome participants as they arrive.
- Start with the suggested icebreaker below.
  - Bring in four different mini candy bars, and have them in bowls for snacking. As participants introduce themselves, have them share which candy bar best represents them and why.
- Open in prayer.
- Read Galatians 1 out loud together.

### Lesson 1: Mirrors of Distortion – Galatians 1:1-9 (p. 19)

- When studying a letter, it is helpful to identify the author and recipients and get information about them.
  - Who is the author of this letter and how does he describe himself?
  - Who are the recipients?
- Discuss what your group already knows about **Paul** (p. 20). Use the information below as needed to supplement what students already know.
  - We first meet Paul when he is known as Saul in Acts 7:58-8:1 at the stoning of Stephen.
  - In Acts 8:3, we see that Saul begins to ravage the church.
  - In Acts 9:1-27
    - Saul is still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord.
    - He is going to Damascus looking for any belonging to the Way to bring them bound to Jerusalem.
    - Along the way, he is blinded by a great light and God speaks to him.
    - He is sent to Ananias, whom God has appointed to minister to Paul and to be used to give Saul his sight back.
    - Saul is then in the company of the disciples and they are amazed, saying, “Is this not he who in Jerusalem destroyed those who called on this name...”
    - In verse 26 we see that when he came to Jerusalem, the disciples were all afraid of him, but in verse 27, Barnabas takes him to the disciples and tells what has happened to him.
  - In Acts 11, we have the beginning of Paul’s ministry.
  - In Acts 13:9 Saul begins to be known as Paul.
- Discuss what participants learned about the word **apostle** (p. 20):

- apostolos (ap-os-tol-os) <sup>1</sup>
- Strong's Greek and Hebrew Dictionaries: specifically, an ambassador of the Gospel.
- Complete Word Study Dictionary: one sent.
- Dictionary.com: any of the early followers of Jesus who carried the Christian message into the world.
  - Look at verse 1 to see what Paul says about who sent him as an apostle.
- List on the board everything in verses 6-9 about the **gospel** (p. 21). Don't forget to note the reference so that you can quickly go back and find it within the text.
  - The distortion of the gospel, as mentioned here in verse 6, is what the whole of the letter of Galatians is about. Though they are not mentioned by name, a group called Judaizers has sprung up. They are Jews who have embraced Christianity, but are still holding to some of the old covenant rites, including circumcision. They are telling the Gentile Christians that these must be observed. This was mentioned in Acts 15 as well.

## Lesson 2: Proof is in the Pudding – Galatians 1:10-12 (p. 22)

- The **questions** Paul asks (p. 22) lead to some thought-provoking questions for us. Since this is only week 1 of the study, you may need to allow participants to choose *not* to answer. But, asking and letting them ponder these questions can be very effective.
  - Have you ever sought the favor of men over God?
  - Do you seek to please men or God with your actions?
  - When do you most often fall into the trap of seeking to please men or finding the favor of men?
- Discuss **bond-servant** (p. 23). Focus on the characteristics of a bond-servant and what extra information the definition of the word gives us.
  - Definition of a bond-servant:
    - doulos – (doo-los)
    - CWSD: a slave, one who is in a permanent relation of servitude to another – one serving, bound to serve, in bondage
  - Link these definitions to Philippians 2:5-8 (p. 23).
- Add to your list on the board about the **gospel** from verses 10-12 (p. 23).
- What extra information does Acts 9:1-9 give us about the “**revelation of Jesus Christ**” (p. 24) that Paul talks about in Galatians 1:12?

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<sup>1</sup> “Apostolos” is the English transliteration of the Greek word for apostle. Pronunciation is added in parenthesis. Each word definition in this guide follows this format.

### Lesson 3: The Past is Part of Ur Future – Galatians 1:13-17 (p. 25)

- Discuss **Paul's past** (p. 25).
- Discuss **God's involvement** in Paul's life (p. 25).
  - What does that involvement teach us?
  - What is the significance for us?
  - Do those truths transfer to us?
- As you discuss what Paul is saying when he says that he did not immediately **consult with flesh and blood** (p. 25), refer back to verse 1 where Paul states that he was not sent through the agency of man.
  - What is the significance of this?
  - Why did he feel the need to make sure the Galatians understood this?
- How does Paul serve as an example for us?

### Lesson 4: Because of Me or God? – Galatians 1:18-24 (p. 27)

- Look at the geographical locations that are mentioned in verse 17 (p. 25).
  - Where did Paul go three years later (verse 18, p. 27)) and whom did he see?
  - Where did he go after he had been in Jerusalem?
  - Does the text give any information on time spent in each of these places?
- Discuss **Cephas** (p. 28).
  - Who is Cephas?
  - Why would Paul spend 15 days with him?
  - Why were the apostles afraid of Paul?
- Why does Paul feel the need to assure the Galatians that **he is not lying** (p. 28)?
  - How does that fit in with all he has already said and what follows?
- He was still unknown to the **churches in Judea** (p. 30), but what are they learning about him and how are they responding to what they are learning?
- In closing, look at the chapter as a whole. What is Paul trying to establish as he writes this?
- Ask for some from your group to share what verse they wrote on their index card and why.

## Week 2: 2 B or Not 2 B

- Welcome participants as they arrive.
- Start with the suggested icebreaker below.
  - Ask participants to share about the last time they received a letter in their mailbox? When was it? Who was it from?
- Open in prayer.
- Read Galatians 1 & 2 out loud together.

### Lesson 1: The Man for the Job – Galatians 2:1-10 (p. 33)

- Start by looking back to chapter 1. Chapter 1 ended with Paul telling of going to the regions of Syria and Cilicia, and how he was unknown by sight to the churches of Judea. Now, he is saying that after an interval of 14 years, he went up again to Jerusalem.
- Many **people** (p. 34) are mentioned in this first section of chapter 2.
  - Why does Paul include these people?
  - What was he trying to establish?
- Add to the “Deeper Still” question (p. 34) by talking about what the participants have *not* done even though they knew God was asking.
- Discuss what Paul’s hope that he is not running in vain (verse 2), tying that into the questions in the study on p. 35.
  - InterVarsity Press New Testament Commentary: Paul recognized that his divine commission would not be effectively fulfilled if there was a division between his Gentile mission and the leaders of the church in Jerusalem. He did not need to be authorized by the leaders, but it would have been rendered fruitless (in vain) if it lacked their support.
  - Reformation Study Bible: While the Jerusalem leaders were not the source of Paul’s authority, his efforts to preach the gospel would have been hindered if these influential men had opposed him.
  - Paul uses the running metaphor many times. He also talks about not running in vain in Philippians 2:16.
- **Contrasts** (p. 35): Not every “but” is a term of contrast, it could also be a term of conclusion or a conjunction.
  - Reason through each occurrence of the word “but” – is it a term of contrast? If so, what is being contrasted?
- Discuss **who is doing what and to whom** (p. 36). Look at what this says about the focus of these verses in reference to circumcision. You will discuss circumcision in further detail in Week 5.
- **So that** (p. 36): It explains an action – it tells *why* something was done

## Lesson 2: Opposition at its Best – Galatians 2:11-14 (p. 38)

- Examine Paul's **tone** (p. 38), asking what your group can learn from Paul.
  - What example does Paul give to us about confrontation?
- What is Paul confronting Peter about?
  - Look at the *timeline*: Peter is eating with the Gentiles, then certain men from James came, after which Peter began to withdraw from the Gentiles and hold himself aloof. Why? Because he feared the party of the circumcision (remember, these are Jewish Christians, but they are holding to the works of the Law). Then what? The rest of the Jews (Jewish believers) joined him in hypocrisy, with the result that even Barnabas was carried away by their hypocrisy. Paul confronts Peter in regards to this hypocrisy.
  - IVP New Testament Commentary: The drama developed in four stages: (1) Peter's practice of eating with the Gentile Christians, (2) Peter's separation from Gentile Christians after the arrival of the delegation from James because of his fear of the circumcision group, (3) the separation of the other Jewish Christians from Gentile Christians because of Peter's influence, and (4) Paul's rebuke.
- Verse 13 talks about Peter's **hypocrisy** (p. 39). What was the hypocrisy?
  - Peter was fine with being with the Gentiles, and did not hold to living as a Jew – according to ceremonial law – UNTIL the party of the circumcision came in. Then, he was saying that yes, indeed, you Gentiles need to be in compliance with the works of the Law.
  - Bible Knowledge Commentary: While confessing and teaching that they were one in Christ with Gentiles, they were denying this truth by their conduct.
  - In Acts 10, we have the vision that Peter received where God revealed to him that He had abolished the dietary restrictions. So, we know that Peter truly believed that the work of the cross had eliminated the works of the Law.
  - When Peter began to withdraw from the Gentiles, he was affirming the very dietary restrictions that he knew God had abolished. And, by being in support of the Judaizers' doctrine (or appearing as if he supported it), he was nullifying Paul's divine teaching, especially the doctrine of salvation by grace alone and not by works.
- **2 Corinthians 6:14-18** (p. 39) talks about not being bound together with unbelievers. While that is not the situation here, the message about not being influenced by those around you is what is applicable.

### Lesson 3: Origin of Salvation – Galatians 2:15-21 (p. 40)

- Keep in mind that in this whole section, starting at the end of verse 14, Paul is telling the Galatians what he said to Peter.
- Make a list of where **Law** was marked in verses 15-21 (p. 41), and then discuss what is being taught.
  - The word Law is used 30 times in Galatians, so this is just the beginning of Paul's discussion of it.
  - How is Paul introducing the Law to us? What argument is he making? What is he contrasting?
- Discuss with your group what they **know about the Law** (p. 41).
  - Given by God, through Moses, to the Israelites after He led them out of Egypt.
  - Included the 10 commandments, but also had laws re: the temple, the sacrifices, everyday living, and relationships.
  - Covered everything that they needed in order to live as His people, being in stark contrast with the nations around them.
- What additional information about the Law do the **additional passages** give (p. 41)?
  - Matthew and Luke use the phrase “the Law and the Prophets.” This refers to all of the Old Testament.
- Look at the “**so that**” (p. 42) statements.
  - Verse 19 might cause some confusion.
    - Bible Knowledge Commentary: The Law demanded death for those who broke it, but Christ paid that death penalty for all sinners. Thus, the Law killed Him, and those joined to Him by faith, freeing them to be joined to another; to live for God.
- Stay with the text and talk about what gave Paul his **confidence** (p. 42).
- Paul talks about what **justifies** a man and what does not justify a man (p. 42). Discuss what the text says and then look at the definition of the word justified.
  - Justified:
    - dikaios (dik-ah-yo-o)
    - Strongs: to render just
    - Complete Word Study Dictionary: to bring out the fact that a person is righteous.
    - Dictionary.com: to show to be just or right – to declare innocent or guiltless.
    - Bible Knowledge Commentary: it is a legal term, borrowed from the law courts and means, “to declare righteous.” Its opposite is to condemn.
- Talk about being justified in Christ, and look at the question that Paul raises in verse 17, “...is Christ then a minister of sin?” This is an argument that the Judaizers would make, or the logic they would use.
  - WUEST's Word Studies from the Greek New Testament: The Judaizers argued that in view of the fact that violation of the law is sin, therefore,

abandonment of the law in an effort to be justified in Christ is also sin. Thus, they say, Christ is the promoter of sin.

- IVP New Testament Commentary: Their faith in Christ led them into the sin of breaking Jewish purity laws. If identification with Christ promoted unlawful identification with Gentiles, then, it was argued, Christ promotes sin. The conclusion that *Christ promotes sin* is wrong, because what was judged to be sinful (eating with Gentiles) according to the law is not really sinful according to the gospel.
- Make a list of all the **evidence** (p. 42) found in chapters 1 & 2 showing that Paul did indeed live to God.
- The “Deeper Still” question at the end of the section brings it back to us – what evidence is there in our lives that we live for God. Why should there be evidence of our faith?
- Ask some from your group to share what verse they wrote on their index card and why.

## Week 3: Bewitched

- Welcome participants as they arrive.
- Start with the suggested icebreaker below.
  - Bring in small kitchen items (i.e. peelers, meat thermometers, measuring cups). Ask participants to share a story about when they have used one of these items.
- Open in prayer.
- Read Galatians 1-3 out loud together.

Chapter 3 is a FULL chapter. There is so much to take in. Most likely, there is more than you will be able to cover, so prayerfully consider what is most important for your group to discuss and go over.

At the end of the guide for this week, there is a sheet looking at chapter 3 in light of the key words. This sheet can be used for your study, incorporated in your discussion, or used as a handout.

### Lesson 1 – The Spirit – Galatians 3:1-5 (p. 47)

- We noted that in the last section of chapter 2 Paul is relaying what he said to Peter; now he is turning his focus back to the Galatians.
- Make a chart comparing what is being said about **the Law and the Spirit** (p. 48). Refer back to this chart throughout the lesson.
- Talk about the significance of **the one thing** that Paul wants to know (p. 48).
  - Why is he making such a point in asking whether they have received the Spirit by the works of the Law or by hearing with faith?
- Discuss what the Galatians had become **enchanted** with (p. 49).
  - Share with each other what can so easily enchant, or bewitch, us in today's world. (p. 49).
  - Is it possible for us to fall into the trappings of the works of the Law? If so, what might those trappings be?
- Make the connection between **the flesh** and the Law (p. 49).
- Make a list of what is said about **faith** (p. 49) in Galatians 3:1-5.
- Look back and make a list of the **questions** (p. 50) that Paul asks. He asks 6, but some are related.
  - Bible Knowledge Commentary: ...The apostle asked four 4 questions: How did you receive the Holy Spirit? How will you be sanctified? Did you suffer in vain? On what basis did God perform miracles?

## Lesson 2 – U R Redeemed – Galatians 3:6-14 (p. 51)

- Abraham is a key figure in this section of chapter 3. Discuss Abraham and why Paul is bringing him into the discussion.
  - The Judaizers were taking their argument back to Moses, but Paul is taking it back even further – all the way to Abraham.
  - God first called Abraham in Genesis 12. God called Abraham to leave his country and his relatives and his father's house to go to the land that God would show him. God didn't tell him ahead of time *where* he was going. At this time God made promises to Abraham: He would make him a great nation, He would bless him and make his name great, he would be a blessing, He would bless those who bless him and curse those who curse him, and in him all the families of the earth would be blessed. God repeated those blessings several times over the course of Abraham's life.
  - When God called Abraham out, Abraham was 75 years old and without children, and yet God promised to make him a great nation. In Genesis 15, God promises that an heir would come from Abraham's own body. And, Abraham believed God and God reckoned it to him as righteousness.
- Discuss what new information is given in verse 6-14 on **Law and faith** (p. 52).
  - Add to the appropriate chart or list.
- **"Therefore"** (p. 52) is a term of conclusion. Make sure you go back and see what has come before. What conclusion is being made?
- **Justified by faith** (p. 52):
  - Review the definition of justified from Week 2, Lesson 3 (p. 42).
  - Faith:
    - pistis (pis-tis)
    - Complete Word Study Dictionary: firm persuasion, conviction, belief in the truth.
  - The gospel – the good news of salvation – was first preached to Abraham (verse 8). When God called Abraham out, He was not only thinking of Abraham and of the people who would become the Israelites, the Jewish people, but he was also thinking of the Gentiles – including us right here in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.
  - God has had a plan for us since the creation of the world, and we see this when He first called Abraham.
- Review the definitions of **reckon and righteousness** (p. 53) and then discuss the significance of what Paul is saying when he says that Abraham's faith was reckoned to him as righteousness. Include looking at the extra passages.
  - Reckon:
    - logizomai (log-id-zom-ahee)
    - Complete Word Study Dictionary: to reckon, impute, number; to put to someone's account.
  - Righteousness:
    - dikaiosune (dik-ah-yos-oo-nay)

- Complete Word Study Dictionary: justice, righteousness. Conformity to all that God commands or appoints; stands in opposition to lawlessness.
- So then (Galatians 3:9) is a term of conclusion: Based on all that was talked about in verses 6-8, those who are of faith are blessed with Abraham, the believer.
- Talk about the use of the word “**cursed**” (p. 54).
  - What is being said and how does it relate to the “**promise**” in verse 14?
- What contrast is being made in verse 12, as indicated by the word “**however**” (p. 54)?
- Read the **Old Testament phrases** (p. 54) that are used in this section of Galatians.
  - Verse 10: Deuteronomy 27:26
  - Verse 11: Habakkuk 2:4
  - Verse 12: Leviticus 18:5
  - Verse 13: Deuteronomy 21:23
- There are 2 others Old Testament phrases in Galatians 3:6-14 that were not included on p. 54:
  - Verse 6: Genesis 15:6
  - Verse 8: Genesis 18:18
- Galatians 3:13 says that Christ **redeemed** (p. 55) us from the curse of the Law. What does that mean? It was not in the homework to look up the definition of redeemed, but it bears much significance.
  - Redeemed:
    - exagorazo (ex-ag-or-ad-zo)
    - Complete Word Study Dictionary: Comes from two words: *ek* means out or from; *agorazo* means to buy. To buy out of, redeem from. Christ has bought us out of the curse and yoke of the Law.

### Lesson 3: True Promises – Galatians 3:15-23 (p. 55)

- Discuss Paul’s **purpose** (p. 56) for this section.
  - Why is he starting with human relations?
  - How does that add to what he is saying about God’s promises and covenant?
- Discuss **the covenant, the Law and the promises** (p. 56).
  - Add to the lists and charts that have already been started.
  - Start a new list for promise.
    - “Promise” is also used in verse 14. Add this to your list.
- Pay close attention to all that is being **contrasted** in this section (p. 56)
  - In verse 16, he is contrasting referring to many with referring to one.
    - The one Christ.

- This verse tells us that when God gave His promises to Abraham and to his seed, God was talking about Jesus – He was talking about the gospel.
    - In Genesis when God makes promises to Abraham regarding his seed, it is indeed a singular word, not plural.
  - In verse 18, inheritance based on law is contrasted with God granting it to Abraham by means of a promise
    - **Romans 4:13-17** (p. 56) ties in with this whole section of Galatians 3, but especially with verse 18. Look at Romans together and discuss what additional information is given regarding the promises.
  - In Galatians 3:22, the “but” is going back to verse 21 and contrasting the law and the promise.
    - The Scripture shows us that everyone sins. Why? “So that” the promise of faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe.
  - In verse 23, faith and the Law is being contrasted. Paul is telling us that faith frees us from being in custody under the law.
- Discuss Galatians 3:17 in light of the definitions for **Invalidate, Ratify, and Nullify** (p. 57).
  - 430 years after God made His covenant with Abraham, the Law came.
  - Just because the Law was given doesn’t mean the promise was nullified.
- Identify the two **questions** in Galatians 3:15-23 (p. 57) and discuss the answers that Paul gives.
  - With these two questions, and the answers to them, Paul is addressing the whole purpose for the Law. He is addressing all that took place in giving the Law and connecting back to the promises made to Abraham, as well as to the gospel.
    - The Law was added because of transgression.
    - It was given through a mediator, Moses.
    - It was given until the seed, Jesus, would come.
    - The Law is not contrary to the promises of God because it is not able to impart life.
    - That is why righteousness is not based on the law.
- In verse 20, we see that the promise was given directly without a mediator.
- In verse 21, Paul is defending according to what he knew the Judaizers would say. He was defending against how they would refute.

#### Lesson 4: \_\_\_\_\_ -- Galatians 3:24-29

- Continue to add to the lists for **faith and promise** (p. 59). Discuss what is being taught.
- Review the key words and phrases and what is being taught in this section of verses.

- In verse 24, we have a “**therefore**” and a “**so that**” (p. 59). Look at what is being said with those key phrases.
- In verse 25, we have a contrast as indicated by the “**but**” (p. 59).
  - The Law as our tutor is being contrasted with the fact that we are no longer under a tutor.
  - What changed? Why are we no longer under a tutor?
- Don’t miss the beautiful truth in verse 26.
  - What makes us sons of God?
- In verse 28, what is the purpose of Paul’s list using the word **nor** (p. 60)?
- In verse 29, look at what is being said with the “**if...then**” statement (p. 60).
  - Notice how verse 29 ends. We are heirs according to what?
- Ask some from your group to share what verse they wrote on their index card and why.

## **Law...Faith... Spirit...Promise in Galatians 3**

(Looking at Galatians 3 through the words that we marked)

### **3:1-5**

He is asking about the Spirit.

Did they receive it by the works of the Law or by faith?

Are they now being perfected by the flesh?

Does God provide the Spirit and work miracles by the works of the Law or by hearing with faith?

### **3:6-14**

Those who are of faith are the ones who are sons of Abraham.

The Scriptures knew that God would justify the Gentiles by faith.

Those who are of faith are blessed with Abraham the believer.

The righteous man shall live by faith.

We receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.

Those who are of the works of the Law are under a curse.

Cursed is everyone who does not abide by all things written in the book of the Law.

No one is justified by the Law.

The Law is not of faith.

Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law.

### **3:15-23**

The promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed.

The Law does not invalidate a covenant so as to nullify the promise.

If inheritance is based on law, it is no longer based on a promise.

Everyone was shut up under sin so that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe.

What about the Law?

It was added because of transgressions.

It was ordained through angels by the agency of a mediator.

It was for until the seed would come to whom the promise had been made.

It is not contrary to the promises of God.

If a law had been given that was able to impart life then righteousness would be based on law.

Before faith came, we were kept in custody under the law – being shut up to faith.

### **3:24-29**

The Law has become our tutor.

In order to lead us to Christ.

And, so that we may be justified by faith.

Now that faith has come...

...we are no longer under a tutor.

...we are sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus.

We are heirs according to promise.

## Week 4 – Freedom Wins Again and Again

- Welcome participants as they arrive.
- Start with the suggested icebreaker below.
  - Ask participants to share their preference for a family meal. Would they rather cook a meal, or take everyone out to eat?
- Open in prayer.
- Read Galatians 1-4 out loud together.

Begin by linking Galatians with your participants' lives today. What does Galatians teach us about our walk of faith?

### Lesson 1: All in the Family –Galatians 4:1-7 (p. 65)

- Chapter 3 ended with the statement that we are heirs according to promise. Now he is giving more information about what it means to be an heir.
- Reason through the questions that come from looking at the **key words and phrases** (p. 66).
  - What is being contrasted?
  - What is being explained?
  - What reason is being given?
  - What is the “therefore” there for?
- God **sent forth** His Son (p. 67):
  - Once again we see God initiating –long before we ever realized.
  - What do we receive as a result of God sending forth His Son?
- Review **Ephesians 1:13-14** (p. 68), discussing what these verses tell us about our adoption into God's family.
  - Talk about the role of the Holy Spirit.
  - Tie it into **Romans 8:11** (p. 69) and the power of the Holy Spirit in our lives.
- Make a chart on the board comparing **a son and a slave** (p. 69).
- Apply this to our present day lives by talking about what holds us as slaves.
  - What in today's world enslaves us?
  - What in our lives do we allow to enslave us?

### Lesson 2: All 4 Nothing? – Galatians 4:8-11 (p. 70)

- Discuss what these verses say about the word “**know**” (p. 70).
  - What does it mean that they have come to be known by God (p. 71)? Hasn't God known us before we were knitted in our mother's womb?
    - “Knowing God” is from our perspective.
    - “Known by God” is from His perspective.

- His knowing was the cause of their knowing Him.
- Matthew Henry: All of our acquaintance with God begins with Him. We know Him because we are known of Him.
- John MacArthur: We can know God only because He first knew us, just as we choose Him only because He first chose us, and we love Him only because He first loved us.
- Vincent's Word Studies: The phrase, "come to know God," might seem to attach too much to human agency in attaining the knowledge of God. The divine side of the process is thrown into the foreground with "known by God".
- Look at what Paul's **attitude** (p. 71) is here in chapter 4. Go back and recount what his tone has been in previous chapters.
- In Galatians 4:9, Paul asks a **question** (p. 71).
  - Talk about what the weak and worthless things are and how they can so easily enslave us.
- In verse 11, Paul again is expressing fear that all he was doing was in vain.
  - This time it is in regards to the Galatians, whereas in chapter 2 it was in regards to his ministry overall.
  - Discuss what **reason** (p. 72) Paul has for having this fear.
  - How does **1 Thessalonians 3:5** (p. 72) add to the picture of laboring in vain.

### Lesson 3: \_\_\_\_\_ -- Galatians 4:12-20 (p. 73)

- Connect all the **feeling words** and the **questions** (p. 73) that Paul is asking and remind your group of what emotions he has expressed already.
- Discuss what Paul is begging of the Galatians in verse 12.
  - Bible Knowledge Commentary: Become free from the Law as I am, for after my conversion I became like a Gentile, no longer living under the Law.
- In reference to **Galatians 4:17** (p. 74), remind your group of what was said in chapter 1 about those who are disturbing the Galatians and distorting the gospel – the Judaizers.
- Discuss what Paul is saying about being sought commendably.
  - **Commendable** (p. 74):
    - kalos (kal-os)
    - Complete Word Study Dictionary: Good. Constitutionally good without necessarily being benevolent.
    - Paul is appealing to them to continue to seek after him in a commendable manner, like they did when he was with them.
    - Matthew Henry: "Time was when you were zealously affected towards me; you once took me for a good man, and have now no reason to think otherwise of me; surely then it would become you to

show the same regard to me, now that I am absent of you, which you did when I was present with you.”

- In verse 16, Paul asks if he has become their enemy by telling them the truth. Connect this to your participants' lives.
  - Who have they become an enemy to because they **told the truth** (p. 76) as Paul has done?

#### **Lesson 4: All About Freedom – Galatians 4:21-31(p. 76)**

- Before digging into this section, look back at what was last said about Abraham.
- Look at the **contrasts** (p. 77) in this section and then summarize what is being contrasted.
  - Make special note of the word “free”.
- This whole section in Galatians 4 is an allegory based on Hagar and Sarah and their sons.
  - In verse 21-23, Paul introduces the facts of the story.
  - In verses 24-27, he develops the allegory.
    - allegory – a representation of an abstract or spiritual meaning through concrete or material forms
  - In verses 28-31, he applies the allegory to the Galatians and to all believers.
- Review with your group what happened with Hagar and Sarah in order to gain a better understanding of what is being said here.
  - In Genesis 12, God called Abraham out from his people and He promised Abraham that he would be given an heir. He was 75 when he left his family and followed God.
  - 10 years later (Genesis 16), Sarah has not yet borne Abraham any children and she is getting anxious to receive God's promises. She decides to take control of the situation, and gives her Egyptian maid, Hagar, to Abraham in the hopes of obtaining children through her.
  - Hagar does indeed conceive and gives birth to Ishmael.
  - When Abraham is 99 years old, God cuts a covenant with Abraham and tells Abraham that Sarah will give birth to a son, Isaac, next year (Genesis 17). It is through Isaac that God will establish His covenant, not Ishmael.
- Paul is contrasting being free vs. being in bondage, and we also have the word “promise” thrown in. He is reminding them of what he has been saying all along. It is through the promise that they are heirs.
- Discuss the **Deeper Still** question (p. 78) by having them share the hope that we have because we are children of the free woman.
  - In contrast, what does it feel like to live in bondage? What does it look like?
- Ask some from your group to share what verse they wrote on their index card and why.

## Week 5: U R Called...to What?

- Welcome participants as they arrive.
- Start with the suggested icebreaker below.
  - Ask participants to share about the last time they stayed in a hotel. Where was the hotel? What was the occasion?
- Open in prayer.
- Read Galatians 1-5 out loud together.

### Lesson 1: Firm – Galatians 5:1-6 (p. 83)

- Review what your group already knows about **circumcision (p. 83)**
  - Circumcision was first introduced when God told Abraham that he was to be circumcised as a sign of the covenant between them (Genesis 17).
  - God stated that every male among them, 8 days and older, was to be circumcised and that it was to be throughout their generations. It was to be a covenant in their flesh for an everlasting covenant.
  - God also stated that any uncircumcised male shall be cut off from his people because he has broken God's covenant.
  - In Exodus 4, God sought to kill Moses because he had not circumcised his son.
  - In the New Testament, the Gentiles are often referred to as the "uncircumcised" because circumcision was distinctively a Jewish practice.
- Discuss what Paul is saying about **circumcision (p. 84)** in Galatians 5:1-6.
  - In verse 2, Paul says, "...if you receive circumcision, Christ will be of no benefit to you." Don't miss what is being said here.
    - Bible Knowledge Commentary: Anyone who has had circumcision because the Judaizers insisted that it was necessary for salvation added works to faith and demonstrated that he had not exercised saving faith in Christ.
  - In verse 6, Paul is connecting **circumcision and the Law**. Reason through what he is saying (p. 85).
- Discuss why Christ set us **free (p. 84)**.
  - What should be the result of that freedom (look at the "therefore")?
  - Share with each other what it is that you **stand firm (p. 84)** on.
- Paul says that it is only faith working through love that means anything. Discuss the Deeper Still question and examine what **faith expressing itself through love (p. 84)** looks like in your day-to-day lives.
- Look at the Scriptures on page 85 and discuss what they teach about **faith and works**.
  - How do these passages connect back to Galatians 5:1-6?
  - Now connect those passages to the questions on the top of page 86.

## Lesson 2: \_\_\_\_\_ -- Galatians 5:7-15 (p. 86)

- Connect what Paul is saying here about running and what is being said in **Hebrews 12:1-2** (p. 87).
- Paul is again talking about **circumcision** (p. 87).
  - Discuss what he is saying about persecution.
  - Discuss what he means when he talks about the stumbling block, or the offense, of the cross in verse 11.
    - The offense of the cross lies in the teaching that believers in the Lord Jesus are free from the Mosaic Law.
- What does Paul mean when he is talking about **leaven** (p. 88) here?
  - Based on the context, he is talking about those who are persuading them not to obey the truth. And, he says that that persuasion does not come from God.
  - Bible Knowledge Commentary: False teaching, like yeast, spreads and permeates. One apparent small deviation from the truth could destroy the entire grace system. If circumcision were necessary for salvation, the whole grace system would fall.
  - Leaven is talked about throughout the Bible.
    - In the Old Testament, leaven was to be removed at certain times. When Moses led the Israelites out of Egypt, they were to eat unleavened bread on the night of the Passover. This then led to the Feast of Unleavened Bread, at which time all leaven must be removed from the house. It was also unleavened bread that is used for a grain offering.
    - Jesus talked about leaven. He used leaven in a parable about the kingdom of heaven. He warned his disciples to beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and the Sadducees.
    - Paul talked about leaven, not just with the Galatians, but with the Corinthians, where he is speaking to them about their boasting.
- Review what Paul says we should and should not be doing with our **freedom** (p. 88).
  - Look up Romans 6:1, 2, & 15. These verses are great cross-references for what is being said here about our freedom.
- Look at the verses on page 89 and talk about what they teach about being **called**.
  - Discuss how our calling ties into our freedom.
- In verse 14, Paul quotes from the Old Testament regarding loving your neighbor as yourself. He states that in this the whole Law is fulfilled.
  - The command comes from Leviticus 19:18.
  - Jesus tells the scribes that it is the second greatest commandment, only behind loving the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, and mind (Mark 12:28-31).

- Romans 13:8-10 and James 2:8 also tell us that loving our neighbor is a fulfillment of the Law.
- Discuss the Deeper Still question and examine how we should be loving our neighbor as ourselves.

### Lesson 3: Set in Motion – Galatians 5:16-26 (p. 91)

- This whole section is a contrast between the flesh and the Spirit.
  - Reason through why these are in such **opposition** (p. 91).
- Make a chart showing the **deeds of the flesh** (DOING) and **the fruit of the Spirit** (BEING) (p. 92).
  - Make note that it is not the fruits of the Spirit – it is singular which shows that all of the elements of character spoken of in these verses are a unity.
    - Bible Knowledge Commentary: The first three virtues are habits of mind which find their source in God. The second triad reaches out to others, fortified by love, joy, and peace. The final three graces guide the general conduct of a believer who is led by the Spirit.
      - *Love*: the foundation for all the others
      - *Joy*: a deep and abiding inner rejoicing
      - *Peace*: an inner repose and quietness
      - *Patience*: the quality of forbearance under provocation
      - *Kindness*: benevolence in action
      - *Goodness*: both an uprightness of soul and an action reaching out to others to do good
      - *Faithfulness*: the quality which renders a person trustworthy or reliable
      - *Gentleness*: marks a person who is submissive to God's word and who is considerate of others when discipline is needed
      - *Self-Control*: self-mastery – primarily relates to curbing the fleshly impulses just described
- Look at **Matthew 15:18-19** (p. 93) together and talk about how it relates to Galatians 5:16-26.
- Have participants share what the strongest **message** was for them (p. 94).
- Ask some from your group to share what verse they wrote on their index card and why.

## Week 6: Sow to the Spirit

- Welcome participants as they arrive.
- Start with the suggested icebreaker below.
  - Ask participants to share the story behind the Bible they use.
- Open in prayer.
- Read Galatians 1-6 out loud together.

### Lesson 1: Just Do It! – Galatians 6:1-6 (p. 97)

- This section is full of two things: “if...then” statements and instructions.
- List on the board the two “**if...then**” statements (p. 97).
- Review the definition of **trespass** (p. 98):
  - paraptoma (par-ap-to-mah)
  - Complete Word Study Dictionary: Fault, lapse, error, mistake, wrongdoing; from word meaning to fall by the wayside.
- The **spiritual** (p. 98) are called to restore those who are caught in a trespass.
  - Look in verse 1 and discuss how the spiritual are to do this. Why are they to do this?
- Share with your group the definition of restore:
  - katartizo (kat-ar-tid-zo)
  - Complete Word Study Dictionary: to put a thing in its appropriate condition.
  - Bible Knowledge Commentary: Used in secular Greek for setting broken bones and in the New Testament for mending fishing nets.
- Discuss whom we are to **restore** (p. 98).
  - Connect **Galatians 2:11-14** (p. 98) with Galatians 6:1.
    - Remind your group of what Paul’s tone was with Cephas.
  - Is there a **right way** (p. 99) to restore?
- List on the board all of the **instructions** in Galatians 6:1-6 (p. 99)
  - Use the Deeper Still question to share how we can follow those instructions today.
- In verse 2, Paul says that we are to bear one another’s burdens. But, in verse 5, he says that each one will bear his own load.
  - This could be confusing. Discuss how these two things can be true at the same time.
    - First look at the context of verse 2. It comes immediately after talking about restoring those who are caught in a trespass.
    - In verse 2, the word burdens means a heavy, crushing load; more than a man could carry without help.
    - In verse 5, the word for load is used to designate the pack usually carried by a marching soldier. Each believer must bear certain responsibilities or burdens which cannot be shared with others.

- John MacArthur: It refers to life's routine obligations and each believer's ministry calling.
- Discuss what Paul means by fulfilling the **law of Christ** (p. 99).
  - What is the law of Christ?
- Make a list on the board of the instruction verbs in Galatians 6:1-6.
  - Discuss what impact **2 Timothy 3:16-17** (p. 100) has on these verbs.

## Lesson 2: \_\_\_\_\_ : Galatians 6:7-10 (p. 101)

- Paul is giving instructions, but they are listed as “**Let us...**” statements (p. 101). List these on the board.
  - What is the first “let us” statement? What is the reason given?
  - What is the second “let us” statement? Is it qualified in any way?
    - Why did Paul add the qualifier, “especially those who are of the household of faith”?
      - Bible Knowledge Commentary: The benevolence of Christians should not be restricted, but believers are to have the priority.
- Discuss **sowing and reaping** (p. 101) and the **contrast** (p. 102) that is in verse 8.
- Read **Ephesians 2:8-10** (p. 102 -103) together. Discuss how this connects to Galatians 6:9-10.
  - How does this encourage us to not lose heart in doing good?

## Lesson 3: Walk by This Rule – Galatians 6:11-18 (p. 103)

- Look back at chapters 2, 3 and 5. Talk about what is said about **circumcision** (p. 104) in each of these places.
  - In chapter 2 we are shown what is happening to them as they are being pushed into circumcision.
  - In chapter 3, Paul is discussing the law.
  - In chapter 5, circumcision is linked to Christ.
  - Here, in chapter 6, he is talking about those who are trying to get them to be circumcised and their motives.
- Discuss **boasting in the cross of Christ** (p. 104).
- What did reading about Gideon (**Judges 7** p. 104) teach us about boasting?
- What does Paul say about boasting in Galatians 6:14 (p.104)?
- Reflect on what Paul means when he says the “**world has been crucified to me, and I to the world**” (p. 105).
  - He has no interest in the world anymore and the world has no influence on him.

- Matthew Henry: The higher esteem we have of Him the meaner opinion shall we have of the world, and the more we contemplate the sufferings our dear Redeemer met with from the world, the less likely shall we be to be in love with it.
- Expositor's: the world is stripped of its glory, robbed of its power to charm or govern him, and he has become a totally different person.
- This came as a result of something. It came as a result of the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.
  - Give participants a minute to think about their own lives: Has the world been crucified to them and they to the world?
- The **brand-marks** (p. 105) that Paul bears on his body (Galatians 6:17) are likely the scars from his persecutions or beatings.
  - Discuss the Deeper Still question regarding our brand-marks.

**To end your study of Galatians, go back for review and reflection.**

- Return to the Table of Contents and look at all that was talked about in Galatians. Remember that this was a letter, not broken up by chapter and verse, so it is good to look at it in its entirety.
- Share with each other what major lesson participants came away with from this study.

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