



# GALATIANS

VERSE-BY-VERSE



## Introduction to Galatians

- Galatians is fundamentally a dispensational book. It argues, from beginning to end, that-
  - Paul is an apostle.
  - Paul is *our* apostle.
  - The Law is not of our dispensation.
  - We are in a *new* dispensation that began with Paul.
  - To place ourselves or anyone else into the old dispensation is to pervert the Gospel of grace.
- A study of Galatians shows that it is impossible to argue that “by grace through faith, not of works” has always been the pathway to salvation, from Adam onward.
  - Such an argument is fundamentally covenant theology yet is spouted forth by many (non-thinking) dispensational teachers.
  - Such an argument is inconsistent with the very nature of dispensations.
- The opinion of Bullinger:
  - “The major portion, however, is devoted to refuting the teaching of such as would lead back the Galatians to bondage, for many of them desired to be under the Law. And Paul declared to them that this was a removing unto a different gospel altogether, although, there being in reality no other gospel, it was a perverting of the gospel of Christ.” Ethelbert W. Bullinger, *The Companion Bible*.
- The letter to the Galatians was written most likely in the late 50s AD (57-58), well after the Jerusalem council.
- Galatia was a region, not a town. It is located in Asia Minor, modern day Turkey. The area was originally inhabited by the Gauls (Celtic tribes) who attacked Greece but failed and moved west and settled in Asia Minor. It became a Roman province in the 50s BC, but many Gauls lived outside the province in modern-day Europe.

## Galatians 1:1-5 | Paul’s Introduction

- Verse 1 –
  - Paul, from the outset, introduces himself as **an apostle**.
    - This is going to be a key theme throughout the letter.
    - Paul’s parenthetical statement will also be of importance throughout the letter, chiefly that his apostleship was **not of men**, which he will argue in a slightly different manner in vv. 11, 12, and 17.
    - His apostleship is **by Jesus Christ** (whom he met on the road to Damascus) as well as by **God the Father**.
  - There were “apostles of men.” That is, those who were sent by men to represent man.
    - Barnabas could be such an example (see Acts 14:14), as would James the Lord’s brother (Gal. 1:19).
    - It makes no sense to argue that he is not an apostle of men if there was no such thing.
- Verse 2 –
  - Because there is a difference of opinion and no conclusive evidence as to Paul’s whereabouts when he wrote the letter, it is difficult to know with certainty the identity of **the brethren which are with me**.

- This is the only epistle written to **churches** rather than a single church. It is (along with other arguments), evidence against the “universal church” idea propagated by Catholicism and continued among Protestants and later, evangelicals. Paul is writing to local churches within a region.
- Verse 3 –
  - The message of grace and peace is one which is wholly Pauline.
    - John the Baptist’s message: *repent and be baptized*.
    - Peter’s pre-Paul message: *repent and be baptized*. (His post-Pauline message was grace and peace, [1 Pet. 1:2](#)).
    - James: joy in temptations ([James 1:2](#)).
  - Paul’s message is always Christ-focused, using the messianic title Χριστός [Christos].
    - Paul mention of the Lord:
      - “Jesus Christ” 131 times
      - “Christ” with no association to the name Jesus 206 times
      - “Jesus” alone, with no proximity to the title *Christ* only 34 times.
    - His focus is clearly on the completed Messianic work and future reign of Jesus.
    - By comparison, the Gospels’ mention of the Lord as follows:
      - “Jesus” without “Christ” 615 times
      - “Christ” without “Jesus” is used only 50 times
      - “Jesus Christ” is used only five times.
- Verses 4-5 –
  - Jesus Christ **gave himself for our sins**.
    - The word **for** is υπερ [hyper], which is not “for the purpose of,” but rather “for the benefit of.”
    - This is important because Calvinists have made the error of believing that Jesus died *for the purpose of* our sins, and thus needed to build the false-doctrine of Limited Atonement in order to save the Lord from doing something which did not accomplish His purpose.
    - Romans 14:9 speaks of the *purpose* of the death of Jesus Christ (which is fully accomplished).
  - By giving Himself **for our sins** there is the *potential that he might deliver us from this present evil world*.
    - Because the verb is in the subjunctive (a verb of possibility), the fact that Christ gave Himself for sins is no guarantee that *any* are actually saved.
    - The work of Christ only makes salvation by grace through faith *possible*.
  - It is the **will of God** that we be delivered, but not the *decree* of God.
    - Once again, the Calvinists make the error of requiring that God’s will always be accomplished (thus the error of their doctrine of Providence in which all things are decreed).
    - Scores of passages speak of God’s will *not* being accomplished. For a sample, see Numbers [14:27](#), Hosea 4:6, Matthew 15:6, 23:37, Mark 3:35, 7:13, Acts 7:51, etc.
  - Paul prays that God would be glorified **for ever and ever**. The Greek phrase "εις τους αιωνας των αιωνων" (for the ages of the ages) is used 20 times in the New Testament, most often in connection with Jesus Christ, but also in relation to the suffering of the Lake of Fire ([Rev. 20:10](#)), thus adding to the evidence of “eternal conscious torment.”