

Outline of Galatians

Summary of Book: Paul's God-given gospel of justification solely by faith in the atoning and epoch-changing death of Christ and its concomitant God-pleasing life in the Spirit condemns the Galatians' desire to undergo circumcision and thus to bind themselves, in accordance with the troublemakers' accursed, perverted "gospel," to the Mosaic Law as an added requirement for justification and sanctification.

Outline

I. 1:1-5 I, Paul, an apostle by God the Father's will, and those with me, wish grace and peace to you churches of Galatia from God the Father and our redeemer, the Lord Jesus Christ.

II. 1:6-5:12 Neither my experience, nor Scripture, nor your own experience of conversion justify your following the accursed Judaizers in seeking to be approved by God by keeping the Law – approval before God is obtained by faith.

A. *1:6-10* In faithfulness to my bond-service to God, I warn you not to leave the gracious God who called you by the gospel I preached to you for another, accursed gospel. (Thesis)

B. *1:11-5:12 [or end at 4:7? Or 5:6?]* Neither my own experience in conversion and with the apostles, nor the teaching of Scripture, nor your own experience of conversion justify seeking to be approved by God by keeping the Law, in fact, they demonstrate the exact opposite.

1. 1:11-2:21 [Biographical Argument] The gospel of justification and righteousness by faith that I preached to you, and that did not require circumcision, was taught me in a revelation from Christ and endorsed by the Jerusalem apostles, and I have never wavered in my defense of it, even though some of them have.

a. 1:11-17 I want you to know that the gospel I preached to you was not taught to me by men but in a revelation of Jesus Christ that came to me when I was out to destroy the church and in which God called me to preach to the Gentiles.

b. 1:18-24 Only three years after my conversion, did I make a visit to Jerusalem, where I met with Peter and James, the Lord's brother, and for only fifteen days, subsequently moving on to Syria and Cilicia. And though the Christians in Judea didn't meet me then, they glorified God that the persecutor had been converted and was preaching the faith.

c. 2:1-10 In a subsequent trip with Barnabas to Jerusalem fourteen years later, Peter and James agreed with my version of the gospel over-against some false brethren who sought to bind us [by the Law], so that they did not require circumcision of Titus and also entrusted to us the ministry of the gospel to the Gentiles.

d. 2:11-21 But I later opposed the hypocrisy of Peter, and even of Barnabas, when they were pressured in Antioch by men from James and held themselves aloof from the Gentiles, arguing that they were practically denying the gospel that they themselves affirmed, that justification and righteousness come through faith in Christ Jesus and his work on the cross, not by works of the Law.

i. 2:11-13 I opposed the hypocrisy of Peter, and even of Barnabas, when they were pressured in Antioch by men from James to separate themselves from the Gentile believers.

ii. 2:14-16 In order to preserve the truth of the gospel, I asked Peter before all present how he could compel the Gentiles to submit to the Law when he knows that all are justified by faith and not by works of the Law.

iii. 2:17-21 I died to the Law in Christ's death, so that if I live to the Law once again, acting as if righteousness comes through the Law, then I nullify God's grace in the cross and act as though Christ died needlessly.

2. 3:1-5 [Transition] And now your own present attempt to be perfected in the flesh by works of the Law rather than by the Spirit is likewise foolish and denies the work of the Spirit in justifying you via your faith.

3. 3:6-4:7 [Theological argument] The Bible teaches that the principle of justification by faith preceded the Law, the Law being given to guard the promise of a seed to Abraham by which God would bless the nations/Gentiles. But now that the promised seed has come in Christ Jesus, who in his death has also redeemed us from the curse of the Law, the Law has served its purpose and the Gentiles can receive the blessing, being justified and receiving the Spirit by faith.

a. 3:6-14 The Bible itself teaches in the story of Abraham that justification comes by faith (not by the Law, which the Bible says only curses those under it), so that, having been redeemed from the curse of the Law by Christ, Gentiles can receive by faith the blessing of Abraham promised them, especially the promise of the Spirit.

i. 3:6-9 Even the Bible teaches this when it says that "Abraham believed God and it was reckoned to him as righteousness" and that "the Gentiles would be blessed through him," so that those who have faith like his are sons of Abraham and are blessed with justification like his.

ii. 3:10-14 Furthermore, the Bible also teaches that the Law does not justify those who are under it, as does faith, but rather curses them. But Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law when he bore the curse for us, so that now the Gentiles can receive the blessing promised through Abraham, especially the promise of the Spirit, through faith in Christ.

b. 3:15-4:7 The Law was added to, and did not replace, the promise, in order to guard God's people till Christ, the promised seed, should come. But now that Christ has come, the Law's function has ended and we, who were once little more than slaves, can become, in association with Christ, full heirs in God's family of Abraham's promise, receiving God's Spirit.

i. 3:15-18 And in accordance with the principle that covenants are not set aside once validated, God's promise to Abraham and to Abraham's seed, namely Christ, was not invalidated or replaced by the Law, which came 430 years after the promise.

ii. 3:19-22 The Law was added on top of the promise to shut up all men under sin (not to impart [eternal?] life) until the seed should come, namely Jesus Christ, to whom the promise had been given (and to those who have faith in him).

iii. 3:23-29 The Law served as a tutor before Christ, but now that Christ has come we can assume full sonship in God's family by faith in Christ, no longer under the tutor, and thus become heirs of the promise with our father Abraham.

iv. 4:1-7 Since the coming of Christ, who redeemed people from the Law, we who were once little better than slaves [to the elemental principle?] have become adopted children and heirs of God's, receiving His Spirit.

C. 4:8-31 [Personal Argument?] However, now I am dismayed that after all my work among, which you received as from God, you're turning back to bondage to weak religious principles at the insistence of these nefarious Judaizers; you should rather do as the Law says (if you want to follow the Law) and "cast the bondwoman out!"

1. 4:8-20 However, I am dismayed that after all my work among you, which you received as from God, you're turning back to bondage to weak religious principles at insistence of these nefarious Judaizers.

a. 4:8-11 However, now I'm afraid my work among you has been worthless, as you turn back to be enslaved again by those weak things, like honoring specific days, to which you had been formerly enslaved.

b. 4:12-16 Why are you rejecting me and the truth of my teaching now, after initially receiving and caring for me as a messenger from God?

c. 4:17-20 I am perplexed about your change in allegiance; my opponents wish to make you beholden to them, but I desire to work for you to bring you to full maturity in Christ.

2. 4:21-31 The story of Sarah and Hagar, which is in the very Law to which you want to submit, is a picture of how the Judaizers, who are represented by the son of the bondwoman, bully you, the heirs and son of the freewoman, and it says to "cast

the bondwoman out.” [If you want to submit to the Law, submit to the Law’s picture of bondage and freedom in the story of Sarah and Hagar. For the heir, Isaac, is like you being bullied by the bondwoman’s son, who represents those desiring to bring you into bondage to the Law. The Scripture says, “Cast the bondwoman out, because her son is not an heir with the son of the free woman.”]

D. 5:1-6 [Summary and transitional] Since Christ set us free from the Law, to return to the Law as a means of justification, as you are doing by seeking circumcision, is to deny the work of Christ, to fall from grace, and to misunderstand the work of Christ in us, producing in us by the Spirit through faith the kind of loving acts that please God.

1. 5:1 It was for freedom that Christ set us free, therefore keep standing firm, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery.
2. 5:2-6 I warn you that if you want to be circumcised you will be falling from grace, severing yourselves from Christ, and placing yourselves under an obligation to keep the whole Law, since *in Christ* we wait by faith for the hope of righteousness through the Spirit, who produces love in us, not by depending on now meaningless outward things like circumcision.

E. 5:7-12 [Conclusion] I don’t know who’s troubling you, but they don’t preach what I preach and what God confirms, namely the epoch-making atoning work of Christ on the cross; I hope they botch their own circumcisions!

III. 5:13-6:10 Real spirituality focuses on Spirit-empowered love of others

A. 5:13-26 Therefore, seek spiritual maturity within the freedom of Spirit-empowered love of others, which fulfills the Law and realizes the death of the flesh.

1. 5:13-15 Your freedom in Christ is not freedom to indulge the flesh but to serve one another in love, since it is love of neighbor that fulfills the Law.
2. 5:16-18 Thus walk by the Spirit (not the Law), and you won’t carry out the deeds of the flesh.
3. 5:19-24 The deeds of the flesh include all sorts of immorality and disqualify one from the kingdom of God (things which were crucified with Christ for those who belong to him), but the fruit of the Spirit is “law-fulfilling” actions and attitudes.
4. 5:25-26 So, if the Spirit has given us life in Christ, let us also live out our lives in Christ by the Spirit and not worry about how we measure up to others.

B. 6:1-10 Real Spirit-empowered people don’t boast about their spirituality or focus on themselves at all but in love serve others, and especially those others most deserving of

deference, from those who are less in tune with the gospel than they to those who are leaders in the church.

1. 6:1-5 Spiritual people shouldn't boast about where they're at spiritually but should serve more "sinful" people in love, helping them to be less sinful.

2. 6:6-10 We should do things for the benefit of others (in deference to the work and aims of God's Spirit, and especially for other Christians and their leaders) rather for our own indulgence, since the one reaps eternal life while the other reaps destruction.

IV. 6:11-18 My personal blessing, and I am one who bears the brand of Christ in my body, goes to those who, like me, boast not in their own, and especially in your, circumcision but only in the cross of Christ and its redemptive effects.

A. *6:11-16* My personal blessing goes to those who, like me, boast not in their own, and especially in your, circumcision but only in the cross of Christ and its redemptive effects.

B. *6:17* Let no one cause me trouble, for I bear the brand of Christ on my body.

C. *6:18* Grace of the Lord Jesus be with you.