

The Book of Galatians

“Grace versus Legalism”

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Syllabus

The Book of Galatians

BIB602

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Required Textbook:

Galatians by Bob Yandian (available at www.amazon.com--click on used books. The price range is between \$4.59-5.99 plus 3.99 shipping).

Recommended book:

The Letter to the Galatians and Ephesians (New Daily Study Bible). William Barclay.
(Available from www.amazon.com. New books are \$12.20 plus \$3.99; used books \$6.53 plus \$3.99 shipping)

Class Requirements:

- 1) Attendance (video students, view all DVDs)
- 2) Read assigned lessons.
- 3) Final Exam

LESSON ONE

Introduction to the Book of Galatians

General Introduction Concerning Paul's Letters

- 1) Ancient letters fall into certain sections.
 - a) There is a greeting.
 - b) There is a prayer for the health of the recipients.
 - c) There is a thanksgiving to the gods.
 - d) There are the special contents.
 - e) Finally, there are the special salutations and the personal greetings.
- 2) Practically every one of Paul's letters shows exactly the same sections.
 - a) The greeting: Romans 1:1, 1 Corinthians 1:1, 2 Corinthians 1:1. Galatians 1:1, Ephesians 1:1, Philippians 1:1, Colossians 1:1-2, 1 Thessalonians 1:1, 2 Thessalonians 1:1
 - b) The prayer. In every case Paul prays for the grace of God on the people to whom he writes. Romans 1:7, 1 Corinthians 1:3, 2 Corinthians 1:2, Galatians 1:3, Ephesians 1:2
 - c) The thanksgiving. Romans 1:8, 1 Corinthians 1:4, 2 Corinthians 1:3, Ephesians 1:3, Philippians 1:3
 - d) The special contents: the main body of the letters.
 - i) The special salutations and personal greetings. Romans 16:1, 1 Corinthians 16:19, 2 Corinthians 13:13, Philippians 4:21-22, Colossians 4:12-15
- 3) When we read Paul's letters, we are reading things which were meant to be not academic exercises and theological treatises, but human documents written by a friend to his friends.
- 4) The immediate situation.
 - a) With very few exceptions, Paul's letters were written to meet an immediate situation.
 - b) He had no idea that one day they would become Holy Scripture.
- 5) Paul did what most people did in his day; he did not normally pen his own letters, but dictated them to a secretary and then added his own authenticating signature.
- 6) Sometimes Paul is hard to understand, because his sentences begin and never finish; his grammar breaks down and the construction becomes complicated.

Introduction to the Letter to the Galatians

- 1) Paul and his gospel were under attack.
- 2) Paul's apostleship attacked.
- 3) Paul stated that his apostleship was not of man, but directly from God.
- 4) The Judaizers.
- 5) The Law

- 6) To whom were the greatest of God's promises given? Abraham.
- 7) The Law and Grace.
 - a) What is the place of the law?
 - b) The law is an essential stage on the way to that grace.
- 8) In this epistle, Paul's great theme is the glory of the grace of God and the necessity of realizing that we can never save ourselves.

Bob Yandian's Intro to Galatians

- 1) Paul lays down a foundation which every Christian needs in his life to guard against the most subtle trap believers can fall into—the trap of legalism. (p. 7).
- 2) Most Christians associate legalism with the Ten Commandments.
- 3) Legalism exerts an influence upon everything in our church life from water baptism to personal witnessing.
- 4) The Book of Galatians is a declaration of faith—and faith alone.
 - a) Faith that is based not upon any effort or action or observance on our part but which is founded solely and entirely upon the grace of God.
 - b) Galatians could be called the Manifesto of Grace.

Who Were the Galatians?

- 1) Galatia was an area northwest of Israel which had been settled by the Gauls in the third century BC, and which became a Roman province in 25 BC.
- 2) Paul directs his remarks to the *churches* of Galatia.
- 3) Several themes in the book of Galatians.
 - a) The Abrahamic Covenant
 - b) The blessing of Abraham.
 - c) Redemption from the curse of the law.
 - d) The fruit of the Spirit versus works of the flesh.

Synopsis of Each Chapter

- 1) Chapter 1.
 - a) Paul's testimony of his call to the ministry.
 - b) It was the Lord Himself who called, commissioned and ordained him to carry the Good News of salvation by grace to the Gentiles.
 - c) Knowledge of this truth came not from man but directly from God through personal revelation.
- 2) Chapter 2.

- a) Paul met some of his enemies among the religious people defeating them with the message of faith.
- b) Paul recounts two stories.
- 3) Chapter 3. Paul uses these two incidents to set up the Galatians for the rebuke he levels against them for falling into legalism because of their lack of understanding of grace.
- 4) Chapter 4. The example of Abraham and his offspring to illustrate this faith principle.
- 5) Chapter 5. He further develops the faith principle using Abraham's two "wives" and "sons" to contrast works of the flesh with the fruit of the Spirit.
- 6) Chapter 6. Paul concludes his remarks by examining the question of how a person can become spiritual again after having been carnally minded for so long.

Conclusion

- 1) The Book of Galatians is parallel with the book of Ephesians—both address the subject of grace versus legalism.
 - a) Ephesians emphasizes the positive side—lays more emphasis on how wonderful it is to understand grace.
 - b) Galatians stresses the negative aspect of this conflict—the stupidity of falling for legalism.
- 2) The primary problem of the Galatians is that they had entered their spiritual walk by faith and were now attempting to complete that walk by adhering to Jewish law.
- 3) Galatians did not have a proper understanding of the Old and New Testaments.
- 4) The Book of Galatians was delivered to Galatia where it was to be passed around among the four churches in Antioch, Iconium, Derbe and Lystra.

LESSON TWO

Paul Addresses Issues Related to the Galatian Church

Introduction

- 1) Paul opens chapter 1 with wishes and prayers for his friends in two tremendous words (Barclay, p. 11).
 - a) He wishes them *grace*.
 - b) He wishes them *peace*.
- 2) The heart and work of Jesus Christ.
 - a) He gave himself... to rescue us.
 - b) The love of Christ is a love which gave and suffered.
 - c) The love of Christ is a love which conquered and achieved.

Paul an Apostle

- 1) Paul declared that he was an apostle of God, not of man.
- 2) What is an apostle?
 - a) The English word *apostle* is a transliteration of the Greek word *apostolos*.
 - b) officially a commissioner of Christ with miraculous powers; messenger; he that is sent.
- 3) Seven Points About Apostleship (Yandian, p. 14).
 - a) Apostleship is the highest office in the Church of Jesus Christ.
 - b) Apostleship is a spiritual ministry gift given by Jesus Christ and God the Father.
 - c) Apostleship under the earthly ministry of Jesus is not the same as apostleship to the Church.
 - d) Apostleship still exists today.
 - e) Apostleship is always accompanied by spiritual gifts.
 - f) Apostleship is conferred by God, not man.
 - g) Apostleship can be conferred upon others besides the original twelve disciples.
- 4) Nowhere else in his writings does Paul make a stronger declaration of his apostleship than in the book of Galatians.

Grace vs. Legalism

- 1) Most books of the New Testament have one central theme.
 - a) Ephesians deals with the Church.

- b) Philippians has to do with joy.
 - c) Galatians deals with grace versus legalism.
- 2) Legalism “The idea that something must be added to the grace of God either to obtain salvation or to attain spirituality. This usually implies some kind of works.” (Yandian, p. 31).
 - 3) It is easy for us to accept salvation by grace:
 - 4) We have a hard time convincing ourselves that we haven’t now got to go to work to keep in God’s “good graces.”
 - 5) We are legalistic in our thinking even if legalism just involves doing good works, attending church services faithfully, paying tithes, teaching a Sunday school class, praising God, praying or even reading our Bible.
 - 6) The thing that is wrong with legalism is that it takes our eyes off of others and centers them on ourselves.
 - 7) The whole range of rules and regulations where great emphasis is placed upon “holiness.”
 - 8) Christianity is what God has done for man in Christ, while religion is what man tries to do for God in his own strength.

What About Works?

- 1) We are supposed to work, just as our Lord worked: “But I have greater witness than that of John: for the WORKS which the Father hath given me to finish, the same WORKS that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me.” (John 5:36).
- 2) “Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? The words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the FATHER that dwelleth in me, HE DOETH THE WORKS.” (John 14:10).
- 3) “He who believes in me shall do the SAME works and even greater works than these. (John 14:12).
- 4) “I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for IWITHOUT ME ye can do nothing.” (John 15:5).
- 5) We work, not to please God; we work because He has blessed us so much in grace we just WANT to work for HIM.
- 6) Witnessing is not supposed to be a chore or a contest.

Christ Has Delivered Us from This Present Evil World

Galatians 1:4. “Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father.”

- 1) Who gave Himself for our sins.

- 2) Delivered from present evil world.
- 3) Faith does not move God, God has already moved.
- 4) In Galatians 1:3-5, Paul gives the entire plan of salvation.

Another Gospel

“I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.” (Galatians 1:6-9)

- 1) Following another Gospel which is not another.
 - a) In the Greek there are two words for *another*.
 - b) Paul is saying, “I am shocked that you have so soon deserted Him Who called you into the grace of Christ to follow after another gospel of a different kind which is not another of the same kind.
- 2) There is such a thing as an *allos*—
 - a) Another Gospel of the same kind.
 - b) They all refer to the same Gospel, they just emphasize different aspects of it.
- 3) When something other than grace is mixed in with that Gospel message, it ceases to be a different form of the same Gospel and becomes a different “gospel” altogether.

Religion versus the Gospel

(verses 11-14)

“But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ. For ye have heard of my conversation in time past in the Jews’ religion, how that beyond measure I persecuted the church of God, and wasted it: And profited in the Jews’ religion above many my equals in mine own nation, being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of my fathers.

- 1) Paul contrasts between the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the religion of the Jews.
- 2) Religion has caused more people to miss salvation than all the other sins and evil combined.
- 3) Religion blinds people to the Gospel.
- 4) Paul was steeped in religion, gaining more recognition as more Christians were persecuted and killed.

- 5) Saul of Tarsus became Paul, an apostle, (not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father).
- 6) Paul says two things about God's intervention in his life:
 - a) It was not unpremeditated; it was in God's eternal plan.
 - b) Paul knew himself to be chosen for a task.

LESSON THREE

Paul's Revelation

(Galatians 1:15-2:10)

Revelation Precedes Proclamation

But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace, To reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood.

- 1) Paul was set apart for the service of God before he was born.
- 2) If Paul was called before he was even born, that has to be grace; how could Paul have worked for something that was bestowed upon him in his mother's womb?
- 3) If you are a Christian, you are a minister of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.
- 4) "Heathen" and "Gentile" are one and the same.
- 5) "Immediately, I conferred not with flesh and blood."
- 6) Into the wilderness
 - a) Neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me; but I went into Arabia, and returned again unto Damascus. (verse 17).
 - b) But I went into Arabia.
 - c) "And returned again unto Damascus.
- 7) Paul in Jerusalem.
 - a) After three years, Paul went up to Jerusalem.
 - b) He then came into the regions of Syria and Cilicia.
 - c) Before God gives you a great ministry, He will give you a small one.
- 8) Once you have proven yourself in the small things, then you will be prepared for the larger.
 - a) There is always a proving time before promotion time.
 - b) David tended sheep for years before he ever went out and slew Goliath.
 - c) Elijah just seemed to "pop up" on the scene when he was thirty years old.
 - d) Moses didn't become a deliverer until he was 80 years old.
 - e) Joseph proved himself time and time again.
 - f) The Lord Jesus.
- 9) "Exalt her (wisdom), and she shall promote thee: she shall bring thee to honor, when thou dost embrace her." (Prov. 4:8)

The Jerusalem Incident (Salvation by Grace)

(Galatians 2:1-10)

- 1) Paul had visited Jerusalem with Peter three years after Arabia.
 - a) He visits again after 14 years.
 - b) He went there purposely to explain to them the Gospel message he had been preaching to the Gentiles.
 - c) Paul perceived a growing menace to the Gospel of grace which he had been preaching.
- 2) With the passage of time the church in Jerusalem had begun to become very legalistic.
- 3) Paul was in a dilemma.
 - a) He is concerned to prove that his independence is not anarchy and that his gospel is not something divisive and sectarian, but nothing less than the faith delivered to the Church.
 - b) Paul could not say too little, or he might seem to be abandoning his principles.
 - c) He could not say too much, or it might seem that he was openly at variance with the leaders of the Church.
- 4) Paul spoke privately with Peter, James, and John before he took his message before the entire church body.
- 5) So Paul was fully recognized and accepted as an apostle by the church in Jerusalem which also endorsed his message of salvation by grace.
- 6) Conclusion of Jerusalem meeting.
 - a) Not a question of two different gospels being preached; it is a question of the same gospel being brought to two different spheres by different people specially qualified to do so.
 - b) Paul's work lay in the non-Jewish world, and the work of Peter and James among the Jews.
- 7) Certain characteristics of Paul emerge clearly (Barclay, p. 21-22)
 - a) He was a man who gave authority its due respect.
 - b) He was a man who refused to be intimidated.
 - c) He was a man conscious of a special task.

LESSON FOUR

The Law

(Galatians 2:11-13)

Introduction

- 1) Some time after the Day of Pentecost, the church in Jerusalem had begun to go downhill—because of legalism.
- 2) The Spirit of the Lord found another place, Antioch, where He could minister freely.
 - a) Most of the members of this church were Gentiles and knew nothing of the Jewish law.
 - b) When word was received in Jerusalem of the happenings at Antioch, they sent Peter to check it out.
 - c) It was the arrival of this group of Jewish believers from Jerusalem which sparked the incident in Antioch which Paul describes in this passage.

The Love Feast

- 1) Part of the life of the early Church was a common meal which they called the *Agape* or Love Feast. (Barclay)
 - a) The whole congregational came together to enjoy a common meal provided by pooling their resources.
 - b) The rigid exclusiveness of the narrow-minded Jews believed that God could only bless the Jews.
 - c) Peter came to Antioch disregarding the old taboos in the glory of the new faith.
- 2) A church ceases to be Christian if it contains class distinctions.
 - a) In the presence of God, people are neither Jews nor Gentiles.
 - b) If we are all children of God, we must be one family.
- 3) Peter knew he was not longer under the law.
 - a) Call to house of Cornelius.
 - b) Peter answers to the church at Jerusalem.
 - c) Why did Peter withdraw himself from the Love Feast?
- 4) “But when I saw that they walked not uprightly according to the truth of the gospel, I said unto Peter before them all, If thou, being a Jew, livest after the manner of Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews” (Galatians 2:14).
- 5) Paul saw that forceful action was necessary to counteract a drift which had occurred.

The End of the Law

(Galatians 2:11-17)

- 1) It seemed that Paul's continual problem that he had to contend with throughout his ministry was dealing with the legalistic Judaizers who had come into their midst to try to get them bound up in a system of law to which they as Gentiles had never been subject.
- 2) Five basic aspects of the Mosaic Law.
 - a) The content of the Mosaic law is found in the first five books of the Bible.
 - b) The law was given to Israel only.
 - c) Christians are not under the Mosaic Law.
 - d) Today the law applies only to the unbeliever.
 - e) The law has limitations.
- 3) In Pentecostal circles, for years meetings were marked by numerous and tremendous miracles.

A Life That Is Crucified and Risen

(Barclay)

Galatians 2:18-21

- 1) For Paul to have put himself back in place the whole fabric of the law would have been spiritual suicide.
- 2) He says that through the law he died to the law that he might live to God.
- 3) Martin Luther.
- 4) The phrase *I am crucified* should read "I have been crucified."
- 5) Our salvation was a free gift from God.
 - a) We didn't deserve it, we couldn't earn it.
 - b) We accept righteousness, not by our own efforts, but by responding to what God has already done for us in Jesus Christ.

LESSON FIVE

Grace versus Works

Gal 3:1-9

- 1) O foolish Galatians, who has bewitched you?
- 2) If you were saved by grace, then why are you now trying to be sanctified by works?
- 3) Have you suffered so many things in vain?
 - a) Have you suffered all these trials and tribulations for nothing?
 - b) It was your faith in Jesus Christ that both made you the target of the Evil One and gave you victory over him.
 - c) “In this world you will have tribulation.” (John 16:33).
 - d) It is not the persecution that makes us strong; it is the faith we use in that persecution that strengthens us.
- 4) He therefore that ministereth to you the Spirit (the New Birth) and worketh miracles among you, doeth he it by the works of the law or by the hearing of faith?

Abraham’s Righteousness

Galatians 3:6-10

- 1) Abraham was born, lived, and died before the Law ever came into existence.
- 2) If Abraham was justified by works, he could glory, but not in God.
- 3) How were those of the Old Testament saved?
- 4) Abraham was referred to as “the father of faith,” the father of all them that BELIEVE.
- 5) Faith comes from hearing.
- 6) The Sons of Abraham (verse 7). “Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham.
 - a) Two words in Greek which are translated either as “children” or “sons” in the KJV.
 - i) One is *huios*, which would more correctly be translated as “sons.”
 - ii) The other is *teknon*.
 - b) Abraham had two sons by two different women.
 - i) Ishmael with Hagar.
 - ii) Isaac with Sarah.
- 7) The True Israel.
 - a) Difference between children and sons.
 - b) The Jews declared to Jesus that they were the “seed of Abraham.”

- c) Becoming a seed (a son) of Abraham does not depend upon a person's nationality or race, but upon his faith.
- 8) The natural Jews (Rom 9:1-8).
 - a) Paul's brethren according to the flesh.
 - b) Not that the word of God is of none effect.
- 9) God's promise of a son.
 - a) "For this is the word of promise, At this time will I come, and Sarah shall have a son..." (Rom 9:9-13)
 - b) Isaac was the chosen son.
- 10) The genealogy of the Lord Jesus Christ in the Gospel of Matthew mentions four women; three were Gentiles: Rahab, Ruth and Bathsheba.
- 11) In Abraham all nations shall be blessed (Gen 12:3).
- 12) The promise... was not given to Abraham, or to his seed through the law, but through the righteousness of faith.
- 13) Abraham was not yet a physical Jew when he was justified.
 - a) He was saved by faith, just as any other person.
 - b) Abraham was not born a Jew, nor did he become one by circumcision of the flesh.
- 14) Abraham received the Word of the Lord while still a heathen.
 - a) His belief in God's Word changed him from a heathen into a believer.
 - b) Circumcision was only the corresponding action of faith in God's promise of salvation by grace.
 - c) Circumcision did not save Abraham; it was only an outward sign that he had truly been set aside by God and had received salvation.

Abraham Believes the Gospel

- 1) Who preached the Gospel to Abraham so he could believe and be saved?
 - a) The Lord appeared to Abraham while he was still living in Ur of the Chaldees.
 - b) What was the Gospel preached to Abraham?
 - c) In order for Abraham to be saved, he had to hear the Gospel.
 - d) Abraham was saved by the grace of God through faith in His Son.
- 2) For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse; for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them (v. 10).

LESSON SIX

The Abrahamic Covenant

Galatians 3:11, 12

Freed from the Curse of the Law

- 1) Under the curse of the law.
- 2) Why then do we work?
 - a) Not to gain God's favor; it was by His favor we were saved in the first place.
 - b) We don't work to please God, rather our works are evidence that He is already pleased with us.
 - c) Works do not justify us before God by before men.
- 3) "The just shall live by faith." (Verse 11b, quoted from Habakkuk 2:4, "the just shall live by his faith.")
 - a) We who are just live by our faith.
 - b) If we try to attain righteousness by our own self-effort, then we are obliged to live our whole life by the Law.
 - c) It is impossible to keep every jot and tittle of the Law.
- 4) Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the Law (vv. 13,14)
 - a) In order to become what Christ is, He had to become what we were.
 - b) Jesus took our sin, sickness, and poverty and gave us His righteousness, health, and riches.
 - c) Jesus became sin upon the cross.
- 5) Jesus was stripped at the cross.

The Blessing of Abraham

- 1) The Law was added 430 years after Abraham lived on this earth.
- 2) The Abrahamic Covenant and Us
- 3) "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ; According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved. In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace, Wherein he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence; Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good

pleasure which he hath purposed in himself: That in the fullness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him: In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will: That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ.

- 4) The Abrahamic Covenant was actually drawn up between God and us.
- 5) So the Abrahamic Covenant could read like this: “Now to Abraham and _____ (your name) were the promises made.”
- 6) “Seeds” are the Jews. “Seed” is the Lord Jesus Christ and all those who believe in Him.

The Law and the Covenant

Galatians 3:17-20

- 1) Once the Covenantal agreement between Abraham and the Lord was confirmed, it could not be changed by one of those two parties without the consent of the other.
- 2) “For if the inheritance be of the law, it is no more of promise: but God gave it to Abraham by promise (v. 18).
- 3) “Wherefore then serveth the law?” (v. 19a).

The Law—Our Schoolmaster

Galatians 3:21-29

The Law and the Promise

- 1) The Law is not in opposition to the promises; it complements them.
- 2) The Law could only point us to righteousness; it could not provide it of itself.
- 3) God gives us a new nature when we are born again.
- 4) There is a conflict between the flesh and the spirit.
- 5) The Law was our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ.

Complete in Christ

Gal 3:26-29

- 1) We are complete in Christ Jesus.
- 2) If we fix our eyes and set our affection on things which are above, we will see that anything we are striving to become in this life, you have ALREADY attained.

- 3) The key to spiritual maturity is positional truth—seeing yourself having already become that which you aspire to be.
- 4) “There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.” (Gal 3:24).
- 5) “And if ye be Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.” (Gal 3:29).

LESSON SEVEN

Our Redemption from the Law

Galatians 4:1-5

The Adoption

- 1) We are heirs who must serve under tutors and governors until the appointed time of the Father.
- 2) Jesus was made of woman under the Law.
- 3) Though complete in Christ, we continue to grow and mature.
- 4) Jesus came to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.
- 5) The Adoption.
 - a) We are not sinners adopted into the family of God.
 - b) Adoption is not a total stranger being adopted into a family.
- 6) Adoption in three different cultures.
 - a) The Jewish
 - b) Roman.
 - c) Greek.
- 7) Paul says that when the Galatians—and indeed all men and women—were mere children, they were under the tyranny of the law.
- 8) When we accepted Christ into our lives, when we “put on” Christ (our cloak of manhood), our pedagogue—the Law—was dismissed.

No More Servants, but Sons

Gal 4:6-7

- 1) Sons are not limited just to the male gender.
- 2) God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.
- 3) No more a servant, but a Son.
- 4) That New Birth brought with it a new relationship to God.
- 5) “Lord, thank you for saving me; now I can call You Father.”
- 6) We are the heirs of God—heirs of all things.
- 7) It would be foolish if we, after having been granted the freedom and fullness of sonship, should suddenly decide to go back, take upon ourselves the cloak of childhood and deliberately place ourselves under the authority and dominion of our old pedagogue, the Law.

Why Turn Back to Bondage?

Gal 4:8-9

- 1) When you knew not God, you did service to them who in essence are no gods.
- 2) But now that you have known God—or rather are known of Him—how do you turn again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto you desire again to be in bondage?
- 3) “Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years.
 - a) Paul is rebuking the Galatians for allowing the legalistic Judaizers to influence them into
 - b) Christians misunderstand the observance of one day as “the Lord’s Day.”
 - c) If the Church of Jesus Christ worked as hard to fulfill the Great Commission as it has to stamp out sin, by now the whole world would be saved and sin wouldn’t be a problem any more.
 - d) Time for the Church to quit judging and condemning each other, regardless of our differences of doctrine and practice and belief.
- 4) ...Observe Months and Times.
 - a) Months refers to the fast which was initiated by the Jews during their Babylonian captivity.
 - b) Times refers to the seven regularly established Jewish feast days.
 - c) Today Christians are bound by traditions, taboos, and “thou shalt not’s.”
- 5) ...and Years.
 - a) This is a reference to the seven seven-year periods of the ancient Jewish calendar, culminating in the fiftieth year, the year of Jubilee.
 - b) Christians don’t need to observe the year of Jubilee; we’re living in it.
- 6) Jesus didn’t say “I am come that they may have religion.” He said, “I am come that they may have life, and have it abundantly.

Paul’s Infirmary

Gal 4:12-16

- 1) This is not evidence that Paul was a sick man.
- 2) Through infirmity of the flesh Paul preached the gospel to the Galatians.
- 3) So, what could have been the infirmity that he speaks of?
- 4) “They zealously affect you, but not will.” (Gal 4:17).
- 5) “My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you” (Gal 4:19)

LESSON EIGHT

An Allegory—Abraham's Two Sons

- 1) You who desire to be under the law, do you not hear the law?
 - a) Don't you understand the Law?
 - b) Do they not realize that if they knew and understood the scripture that they would see that every ritual and ceremony and requirement of it, points to Jesus Christ?
 - c) "You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life: but the Scriptures point to Me!" (John 5:39).
- 2) The Law could not save them; it only pointed to the Savior.

Sarah and Hagar

Gal 4:22-23

- 1) To explain the Law and its purpose, Paul goes all the way back to the time of Abraham, who live 430 before the Law.
 - a) The two sons of Abraham are examples of Law and grace.
 - b) The works of the flesh and the fruit of the Spirit.

Gal 4:23-27.

- 2) Which things are an allegory.
- 3) Hagar's position in the family.
- 4) God made Abraham a promise, but Abraham became impatient and tried to bring it about through the flesh.
- 5) The two covenants.
 - a) One is from mount Sinai, which genders to bondage.\
 - b) The other is from Mt. Zion.
- 6) Just as Mount Sinai corresponds to the Old Jerusalem, the earthly Jerusalem, Mount Zion corresponds to the New Jerusalem, the heavenly Jerusalem

The Heavenly Jerusalem

Heb 12:18-24

All who say they're Israel are no—the spiritual believer is the true Israel. (Rom 9:6-9)

The Seed of Abraham by Promise

Gal 4:28-31

- 1) The children of promise include all nations around the world.
- 2) He who was born after the flesh persecutes those who are born of the Spirit.
- 3) The Son of the bondwoman is to be cast out.
- 4) We are the product of the faith of Abraham.

Interpreting Scripture

- 1) When we attempt to interpret a passage such as the allegory of Abraham's two sons, we must remember that for devout and scholarly Jews, and especially for the Rabbis, Scripture had more than one meaning; the literal meaning was often regarded as the least important.
- 2) For the Jewish Rabbis, a passage of Scripture had four meanings.
- 3) The first letters of these four words—PRDS—are the consonants of the word *Paradise*.
- 4) Paul was a trained Rabbi; and that is what he is doing here. He takes the story involving Abraham, Sarah, Hagar, Ishmael and Isaac, which in the Old Testament is a straightforward narrative, and he turns it into an allegory to illustrate his point. (Barclay, p. 49).
- 5) Those who make law the principle of their lives are in the position of slaves; whereas those who make grace the principle of their lives are free.
- 6) The essence is not law but a personal relationship to Jesus Christ.

LESSON NINE

Stand Fast in the Liberty

Introduction

- 1) Both Ishmael and Isaac were offspring of Abraham, yet each represents a totally different approach to God.
- 2) The two lived in the same household, growing up together in their father's home.
- 3) Isaac was promised to Abraham and Sarah before the birth of Ishmael by the flesh.
- 4) By this allegory, Paul tried to show the Galatians that they were not the offspring of the illegitimate son, the Law, but were the offspring of the legitimate son, the one given by the grace of God and received by faith.
- 5) In Christ Jesus they had been set free from the Law of sin and death that they might freely live unto righteousness and peace.

Stand Fast

Gal 5:1

- 1) Paul is telling these people that once they have gained ground in their spiritual life, they are to hold fast to it and not allow the enemy to wrest it from them.
- 2) Liberty is freedom, but freedom is not free.
- 3) Paul is saying that now that you are free, be careful to stand firm in that freedom lest it be taken away from you.
- 4) Stand fast in the liberty wherewith *Christ* had made them free.
- 5) Paul was warning against religion, the man-made system of rules and regulations which gives an appearance of godliness and devotion by its imposed restraints but which has no real power to bless and heal and set free.
- 6) "Be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.
- 7) The message of liberty in Christ is not "giving people a license to sin."

Circumcision or Christ?

Gal 5:2-6

- 1) The big issue in Galatia at this time was circumcision, which was part of the Mosaic Law, part of the Old Covenant.
- 2) OT circumcision is equivalent to the NT practice of water baptism.
- 3) Circumcision has natural or medical benefits, but no real spiritual benefits.
- 4) “For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law.” (Ga. 5:4)
 - a) Paul is speaking of circumcision for religious purposes.
 - b) Once he begins in the Law, even the smallest of parts, he is obligated, a debtor, to keep the whole Law.
- 5) If a person legalistically believes in keeping the Sabbath (Saturday), he is obligated to keep the whole law.
- 6) “Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace.” (Gal. 5:4).
- 7) “For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love.”
- 8) “Ye did run; who did hinder you that ye should not obey the truth?”
- 9) “A little leaven leavens the whole lump.
- 10) “I have confidence in you through the Lord, that ye will be none otherwise minded: but he that troubleth you shall bear his judgment, whosoever he be.”
- 11) “And I, brethren, if I yet preach circumcision, why do I yet suffer persecution?”
- 12) “...then is the offence of the cross ceased.”

Religion and Heathenism

Gal 5:12. I could wish that those who trouble you would even cut themselves off! NKJV

- 1) In the KJV, this verse sounds reasonable.
- 2) What Paul really meant to express was this idea: If those Jewish troublemakers think cutting off a little foreskin pleases God, then in order to fully please Him they ought to go all the way and cut off the whole male organ!” (Yandian, p. 213).
- 3) In one region of Galatia, there flourished a heathen cult, the worship of Cybele.
- 4) Paul warns against the heathenistic practice of self-mutilation because it is an abomination before the Lord.
- 5) This theme of attempting to reach God or to please Him through asceticism (Self denial or self-inflicted punishment) is one which Paul deals with strongly here in the book of Galatians.

Called Unto Liberty

Gal. 5:13-15

- 1) With this scripture, Paul's letter changes its emphasis from theological to ethical.
- 2) "For brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another." (v. 13).
- 3) "...only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh..."

Fulfilling the Law

"For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."
(Gal. 5:14).

- 1) "The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts." (Rom 5:5).
- 2) "The Holy Spirit bears witness with our spirit that we are the children of God. " (Rom 8:16)
- 3) God gave the Mosaic law because the people under the Old Covenant did not have the Holy Spirit to lead them from within.
- 4) To follow the Spirit is to fulfill the Law because the Spirit of love will always lead us in conformity to the Law.

LESSON ELEVEN

Walking in the Spirit

Biting and Devouring One Another

Gal 5:15-16. 15 But if you bite and devour one another, beware lest you be consumed by one another! 16 I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. NKJV

- 1) What does a person bite with?
 - a) The mouth.
 - b) Biting and devouring always ends in someone's being consumed.
- 2) Godly people don't speak evil of anyone—even if it is true.
- 3) Love serves one another, but biting and devouring consumes one another.
- 4) If we are to win the world for Christ, let's learn to walk in love, especially with those who are of the household of faith (Gal. 6:10).
- 5) "Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh." (Gal. 5:16).
- 6) "For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other; so that ye cannot do the things that ye would." (Gal. 5:17)
- 7) "But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law." (Gal. 5:18).

The Works of the Flesh

Galatians 5:19-21

- 1) Adultery. Unfaithfulness to one's spouse.
- 2) Fornication.
 - a) Commonly taught that fornication is illegitimate sex between single persons, but probably more accurately,
 - b) Fornication covers the total field of sexual immoralities including sexual perversions.
- 3) Uncleaness (impurity).
 - a) Most significant word in the original refers to ceremonial cleanness which entitles people to approach their gods.
 - b) Impurity, then, is that which makes people unfit to come before God, the contamination of life with the things which separate us from him.
- 4) Lewdness (wantonness).
 - a) Translated as licentiousness in the Revised Standard Version.
 - b) It has been defined as "readiness for any pleasure."

- 5) Idolatry.
 - a) Means the worship of gods which human hands have made.
 - b) It is the sin in which material things have taken the place of God. (materialism).
 - c) (Yandian): Includes giving pre-eminence to anything other than God.
- 6) Sorcery (witchcraft).
 - a) In the Greek it is *pharmakeia*, from which we derive our English word pharmacy.
 - b) Literally means the use of drugs.
- 7) Enmity (hatred).
 - a) The idea is that of the individual who is characteristically hostile to other people.
 - b) It is the precise opposite of the virtue of the love of Christians for one another and for all people.

“I have found that the moment I start hating a man, I become his slave. I can’t enjoy my work anymore because he even controls my thoughts. My resentments release excessive stress hormones and I become fatigued after only a few hours of work. The work I formerly enjoyed is now drudgery, and by brightly papered office seems like a dreary dungeon. Even vacations lose their pleasure. It may be a luxurious car that I drive along a lake fringed with the multicolored autumnal beauty of maple, oak, and birch; but moping in my resentment, I might as well be driving a hearse in the mud and rain.

The man I hate hounds me wherever I go. I can’t escape his tyrannical grasp on my mind. When the waiter serves me steamed lobster and clams, with asparagus, crisp salad and strawberry shortcake smothered with ice cream, it might as well be stale bread and water. My teeth chew the food and I swallow it, but the man I hate will not allow me to enjoy it. King Solomon must have had a similar experience, for he wrote, “Better a dish of vegetables with love, than the best beef served with hatred.” (Proverbs 15:17, Moffatt). ” (S.I. McMillan, *None of These Diseases*, p. 116)

- 8) Strife (contentions).
 - a) Originally, this word had mainly to do with the rivalry for prizes.
 - b) Much more commonly it means the rivalry which has resulted in quarrelling and wrangling.
- 9) Jealousy.
 - a) From which our word zeal comes; was originally a good word. It meant *emulation*, the desire to attain to nobility when we see it.
 - b) It degenerated and came to mean the desire to have what someone else has; wrong desire for what is not ours.
- 10) Uncontrolled temper (outburst of wrath).
 - a) Bursts of temper.

- b) Describes not an anger which lasts but anger which flares up and then dies.
- 11) Self-seeking (selfish ambitions).
- a) Originally meant the *work of a hired laborer*.
 - b) Came to mean work done for pay.
 - c) Went on to mean *canvassing for political or public office*, and it describes the person who wants office, not from any motives of service, but for what can be gotten out of it.
- 12) (Yandian): Strife (is the same as self-seeking above?)
- 13) Dissension.
- a) Literally means a *standing apart*.
 - b) Describes a society where the members fly apart instead of coming together.
- 14) Heretical division (heresies).
- a) Might be described as clearly focused disagreement.
 - b) Referred to any group of people who hold different views , ending up disliking, not just other's view, but each other.
- 15) Envy.
- a) Does not describe the spirit which desires, nobly or ignobly, to have what someone else has.
 - b) It describes the spirit which grudges the fact that the other person has these things at all.
 - c) Does not so much want the things for itself; it merely wants to take them from the other.
- 16) Murder. (Yandian)
- a) Murder is always condemned in the Word of God.
 - b) The shedding of innocent blood.
- 17) Drunkenness.
- a) Excessive use of alcohol.
 - b) Not common in ancient world.
 - c) Both Greeks and Christians would have condemned drunkenness as a thing which turned people into animals.
- 18) Carousing (revelries).
- a) Historically, began as a celebration of a victor and his friends. They danced and laughed and sang his praises.
 - b) Also described the devotees of Bacchus, god of wine.
- 19) ...and such like.
- a) Paul's list of works of the flesh is not inclusive.
 - b) It is just a partial list.

Works vs. Fruit

- 1) Several differences between works and fruit.
 - a) Flesh produces works; the Spirit produces fruit.

- b) Works are recompensed by a reward which comes at a definite stated moment, like a paycheck at the end of the week; fruit does not have a predetermined moment to appear.
- c) Rewards for work come as soon as the work is completed; fruit, since it is the product of a seed which must grow and develop through a long process, takes long to materialize.
- 2) Although sowing to the flesh and sowing to the Spirit both eventually produce results, the rewards of spiritual seed will many times manifest themselves later than those of the carnal seed.
- 3) Spiritual fruit is much longer-lived than that of a carnal nature and has the ability to reproduce itself indefinitely.
- 4) Fleshly works prosper for a season, but the fruit of the Spirit flourishes forever and ever.
- 5) This is not the fruit of the Holy Spirit but of the human spirit.
 - a) Jesus is the vine; we are the branches.
 - i) Fruit does not grow on the vine; it grows on the branches.
 - ii) Jesus wants us to bear fruit.
 - b) The Holy Spirit does not need love; He is love. We need love.
 - c) The power to display all of the attributes of our heavenly Father, but the fruit is manifested in our reborn human spirit because we are the ones who need these qualities, not God.
- 6) Works is plural; fruit is singular—Love.
 - a) The other eight are manifestations of love.
 - b) Love fulfills the Law.
 - c) If we are filled with the Spirit of God, we have within us the power to display all of these attributes of our heavenly Father, who is Love.

The Fruit of the Spirit

Gal 5:22-26

- 1) Love.
 - a) The NT word for love is agape.
 - b) In Greek, there are four words for love.
 - i) *Eros*, means the love between the sexes (erotic love)
 - ii) *Philia* is the warm love which we feel for our nearest and dearest (friendship); is love from the heart.
 - iii) *Storge* rather means affection and is especially used of the love of parents and children.
 - iv) *Agape*, means unconquerable benevolence.
 - (1) It means no matter what people may do to us by way of insult or injury or humiliation, we will never seek anything else but their highest good.

- (2) It is a feeling of the mind as much as of the heart.
 - (3) never to seek anything but the best even for those who seek the worst for us.
- 2) Joy.
- a) Most often describes that joy which has a basis in religion.
 - i) (Yandian): This is not happiness, which is an outward expression of pleasure, a superficial emotion dependent upon our current situation or circumstances.
 - (1) Joy is that deep-seated sense of well-being which no outside circumstance can alter.
 - (2) It is the joy of the Lord which is our strength (Neh. 8:10).
- 3) Peace.
- a) Used of the serenity which a country enjoyed under the just and generous government of a good emperor; was used of the good order of a town or village.
 - b) The Hebrew word *shalom* and means not just freedom from trouble but everything that makes for a person's highest good.
- 4) Patience (longsuffering)
- a) Has to do with relation to people.
 - b) Those who are slow to anger.
- 5) Kindness and goodness are closely connected words.
- i) Kindness—*chrestotes*. Commonly translated as goodness.
 - b) Paul uses the word *agathosune* for goodness
- 6) Fidelity (faithfulness).
- a) This word is common in secular Greek for *trustworthiness*.
 - b) It is the characteristic of people who are reliable.
- 7) Meekness
- a) Most untranslatable of words.
 - b) In the NT, it has three main meanings.
 - i) It means being submissive to the will of God.
 - ii) It means being teachable, being not too proud to learn.
 - iii) Most often of all, it means being considerate.
 - c) Aristotle defined it as the mid-point between excessive anger and excessive angerlessness, the quality of the person who is always angry at the right time and never at the wrong time.
 - d) Speaks of self-control which Christ alone can give.
- 8) Self-control (temperance, KJV).
- a) It is the spirit which has overcome and controlled its desires and its love of pleasure.
 - b) It is used of the athlete's discipline of the body and of the Christian's control of sex.
 - c) (Yandian):
 - i) Moderation in all things that is the legitimate needs or pleasures.
 - ii) Food and drink are fine, but overindulgence becomes a sin.

- 9) Against such, there is no law.
 - a) When we walk in the Spirit and produce its fruit, the Law has no power over us.
 - b) We fulfill it—not by keeping it, but by following the Spirit of God.

Life in the Spirit

- 1) “If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.’ (v. 25).
- 2) “Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another (v. 26).

LESSON TWELVE

“The Ministry of Restoration”

Gal 6:1. Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted. NKJV

- 1) Paul begins this last chapter by addressing the Galatians as brethren.
- 2) “If a man be overtaken in a fault...”
- 3) “...ye who are spiritual, restore such an one...”
- 4) “But let every man prove his own work, and then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another (v.4).
- 5) Verse 2: “bear on another’s burdens; vVerse 5: “every man shall bear his own burden.”
 - a) Verse 2: Burden is *baros*, speaking about a large and burdensome weight.
 - b) Verse 5: Each is to carry his own *phortion*; we must carry out our own individually assigned task or service.
 - c) In one, we are to help shoulder a weight too heavy for one individual to bear by himself, while the other is that we individually are not to shirk our own individual responsibility or duty.
 - d) We help others to come to the place of strength to carry their own *phortion* again.

Sharing All Good Things

- 1) “Let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that eacheth all good things.” (v. 6).
- 2) The word translated *communicate* here is the Greek word *koinonia* which indicate fellowship or community.

Law or Principle?

Gal 6:7-8. 7 Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. 8 For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life. NKJV

- 1) Being deceived might refer to the legalistic Judaizers who came in and drained the Galatians of their material goods, using them to finance the spread of their religion of the Law.
- 2) The *principle* of tithing is far different from the *law* of tithing.
 - a) Giving is a part of the overall plan of God, but that it was not intended to be an obligation or duty.

- b) It was to be the normal way of life for those whose spirit had been born anew by the Spirit of God.
- 3) The principle of tithing came way before the Law.
 - a) We tithe under grace not because of obligation but because we are moved to do so by love.
 - b) The Law demands, but grace gives.
- 4) “God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.” (v. 7b)
- 5) The principle of sowing and reaping runs throughout the Bible.
- 6) “For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting” (Gal 6:8).

If We Faint Not

Gal 6:9. And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart. NKJV

- 1) When good seed is sown in spiritual ground, it must be cultivated, watered, weeded.
- 2) Living by the principle of sowing and reaping requires diligence to wait for the harvest.
- 3) The time to rejoice is when the seed is in the ground; that’s faith in action.

Be Good Unto All Men

Gal 6:10. Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith. NKJV

- 1) Oftentimes Christians are harder on other Christians than they are to the world.
- 2) We need to treat each other as the Lord treats us.
- 3) We love the world, but there is not the intimacy and fellowship with the world as there is in the Body of Christ.

Conclusion

- 1) Dead to the world. “...by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.” (Gal. 6:14b).
- 2) A New Rule. “For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature.
- 3) “And as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy...” (v. 16a).
- 4) “Peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God (v. 16b).

- 5) “From henceforth let no man trouble me: for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus.” (v. 17).
- 6) To live like this will bring upon us persecution.
- 7) It’s also the attitude of James and John, who wanted to call down fire and brimstone on those Samaritans who did not receive them as they thought they ought to be received.
- 8) Benediction. “Brethren, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen.”

LESSON TWELVE

Review