

Outline of  
Galatians



# Introduction

## Authorship

Virtually all scholars recognize Galatians to be from Paul.

## Type of Letter

Formal divisions of letters by type occurred later and categories overlapped, but some consideration is helpful. Although Galatians has apologetic elements (i.e., points where Paul seems to defend himself), Paul is not concentrating on the kind of rhetoric used in law courts. Rather, the argumentation in Galatians is more like “deliberative rhetoric,” the kind of argumentation ancient speakers and writers used to persuade people to change their behavior. The argument itself is very rational, and the emotional language of the letter was standard rhetoric characteristic of stern letters (Galatians includes elements of what later Greco-Roman composition handbooks called “letters of rebuke”).

## Date

Some scholars have argued for a very early date (making this one of Paul’s earliest letters), because Paul does not explicitly appeal to the Jerusalem Council of Acts 15; but that Paul can refer to taking Titus to Jerusalem with him (Gal 2:1) probably suggests that he had already completed his first missionary journey (Acts 13–14) and thus that the Council may have taken place (Acts 15). Galatians may thus date to the latter half of the fifties, probably some time before Romans.

## Situation

Paul is clearly battling opponents who have settled in Galatia (for the location, see comment on 1:2; given the likely South Galatian theory for the location of Paul’s readers, accepted also by archaeologists of Asia Minor, Acts 13–15 provides especially helpful background for the letter). These are Jewish Christians who would rather circumcise the Galatians—thus alienating them from their own Gentile culture—than allow Judean Jews back home to think that Christian missionaries were lax (4:29; 5:11; 6:12–13). Unlike Paul, a more seasoned missionary, these missionaries want to impose their own culture on the Galatians.

## The Issue

At an earlier time, some Judean Christians had insisted that Phrygian (maybe Galatian; see comment on 1:2) believers be circumcised to be saved (Acts 15:1). Although the Jerusalem Council had apparently settled this issue, side effects lingered: could Gentiles be part of God’s people without circumcision? Some of the strictest Pharisees may have required circumcision for salvation, but many Pharisees believed that any Gentiles who kept the few laws given Noah, or followed the levitical requirements for strangers in the land, would be saved. But even for this more lenient class of Pharisees (cf. Acts 15:5), one could not become part of the people of God without circumcision; very few Jews were so lenient as to accept Gentiles on such terms. Indeed, circumcision had become a or even the major cultural symbol of fidelity to Judaism: attempts to restrict the practice led to revolts both before and after Paul’s time.

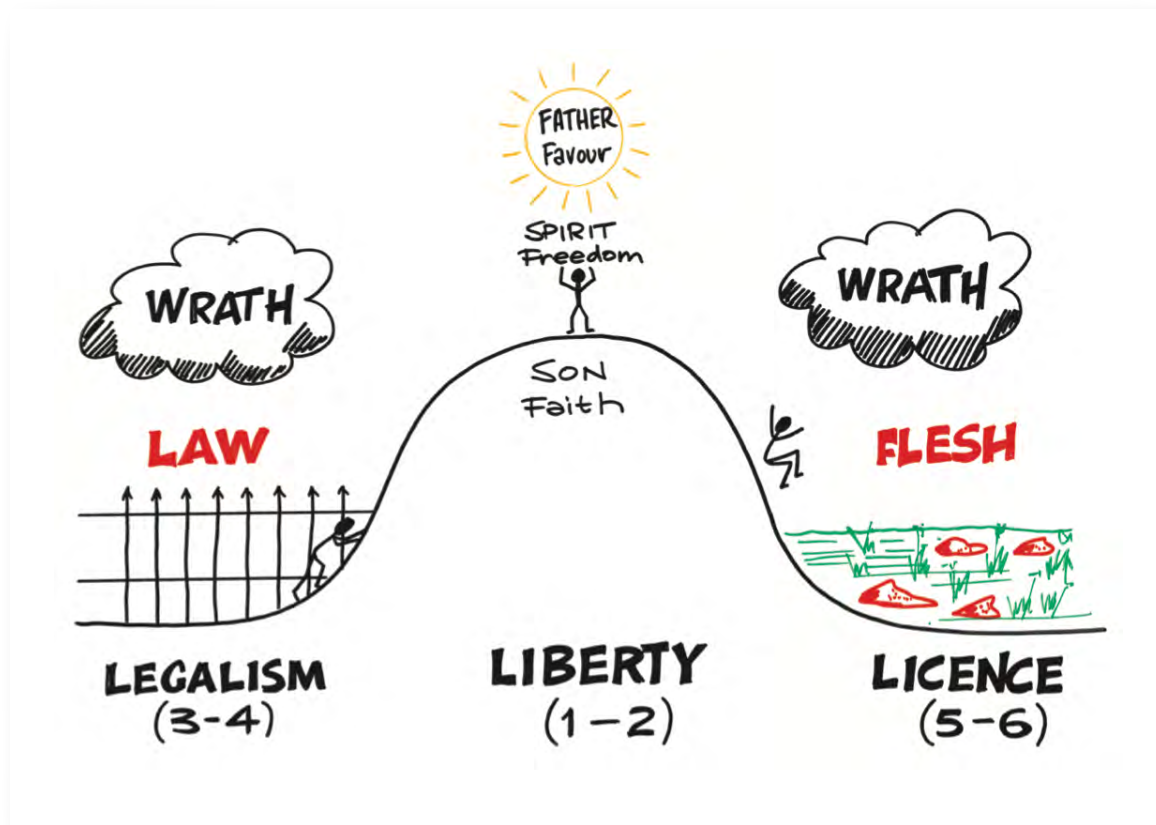
Some Judean Christians were now arguing that one must become culturally Jewish to become a full Jesus-follower, fully righteous; after all, the Bible itself made this requirement for one who wished to belong to God's people (Gen 17:10-14). Further, they may have reasoned, if Paul argued for baptism (a post-Old Testament Jewish addition to circumcision), why could Judean Christians not require circumcision, even though it drove away potential converts? Paul argues forcefully against this view: those who submit to Israel's Messiah and receive the Spirit belong to the covenant and already have what circumcision merely symbolized.

**Source:** Keener, Craig S. (2014). The IVP Bible Background Commentary: New Testament, Second Edition. InterVarsity Press.

## Part I & II

- WRITER:** *PAUL (the apostle)*
- READERS:** *CHURCHES in GALATIA (north or south?)*
- OCCASION:** *1. ADDITIONS to the MESSAGE  
2. ATTACKS on the MESSENGER*
- ISSUE:**
- a. CIRCUMCISION?*
  - b. JUDAISM?*
  - c. SALVATION!*
    - i. WORKS ALONE.*
    - ii. WORKS PLUS FAITH.*
    - iii. FAITH PLUS WORKS.*
    - iv. FAITH ALONE.*

Part I & II



Part II



Chapter  
1

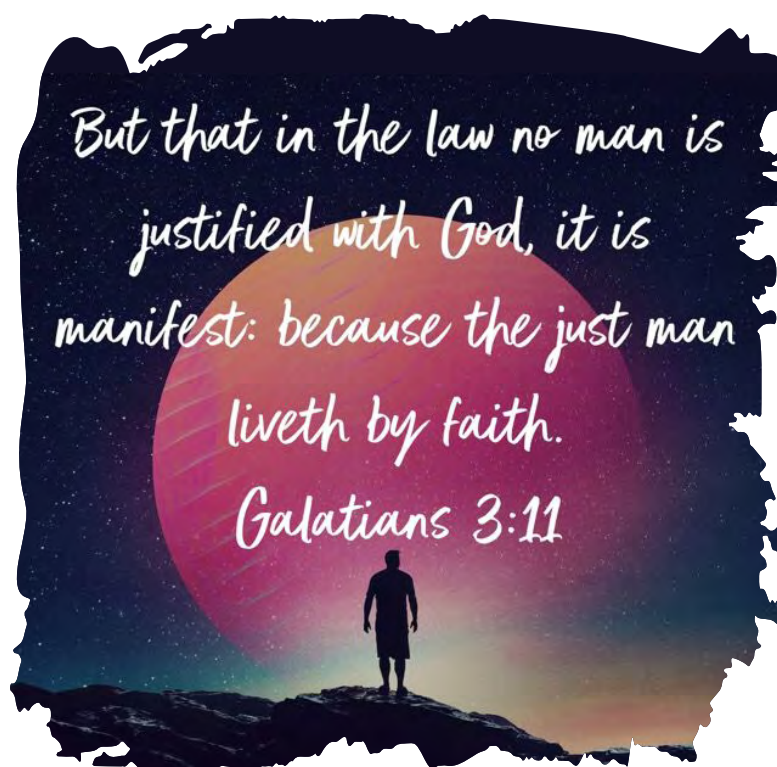
**Ga 1:1-7** He wonders that they have so soon left him and the gospel;  
**Ga 1:8-10** and accurses those that preach any other gospel than he did.  
**Ga 1:11-13** He learned the gospel not of men, but of God;  
**Ga 1:14-16** and shows what he was before his calling;  
**Ga 1:17-24** and what he did immediately after it.

Chapter  
2

**Ga 2:1-2** He shows when he went up again to Jerusalem, and for what purpose;  
**Ga 2:3-10** and that Titus was not circumcised;  
**Ga 2:11-13** and that he resisted Peter, and told him the reason;  
**Ga 2:14-19** why he and others, being Jews, do believe in Christ to be justified by faith, and not by works;  
**Ga 2:20-21** and that they live not in sin, who are so justified.

Chapter  
3

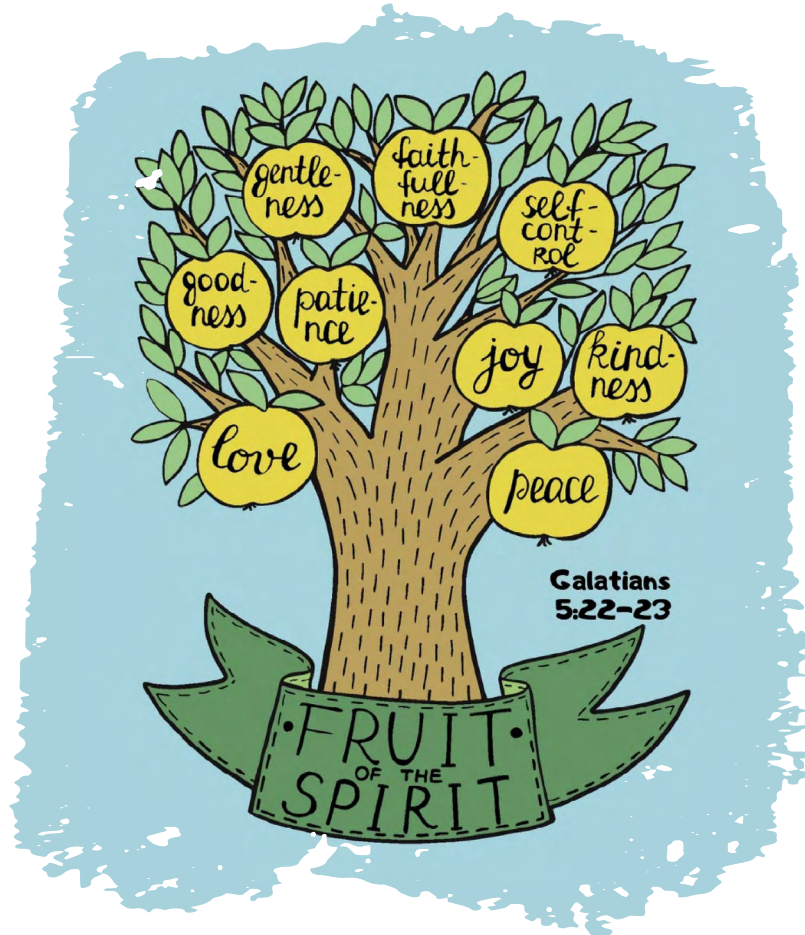
**Ga 3:1-5** He asks what moved them to leave the faith, and hang upon the law.  
**Ga 3:6-8** They that believe are justified,  
**Ga 3:9** and blessed with Abraham.  
**Ga 3:10-29** And this he shows by many reasons.



Chapter  
4

**Ga 4:1-4** We were under the law till Christ came, as the heir is under the guardian till he be of age.  
**Ga 4:5-6** But Christ freed us from the law;  
**Ga 4:7-13** therefore we are servants no longer to it.  
**Ga 4:14-21** He remembers their good will to him, and his to them;  
**Ga 4:22-31** and shows that we are the sons of Abraham by the freewoman.

- Ga 5:1-2** He wills them to stand in their liberty,  
**Ga 5:3-12** and not to observe circumcision;  
**Ga 5:13-18** but rather love, which is the sum of the law.  
**Ga 5:19-21** He reckons up the works of the flesh,  
**Ga 5:22-24** and the fruits of the Spirit,  
**Ga 5:25-26** and exhorts to walk in the Spirit.



- Ga 6:1** He moves them to deal mildly with a brother that has slipped,  
**Ga 6:2-5** and to bear one another's burden;  
**Ga 6:6-8** to be liberal to their teachers,  
**Ga 6:9-11** and not weary of well-doing.  
**Ga 6:12-13** He shows what they intend that preach circumcision.  
**Ga 6:14-18** He glories in nothing, save in the cross of Christ.

# Quiz on Galatians

1. In Chapter 3, Paul said that the just shall live by what?

2. How many fruits of the Spirit did Paul mention in Galatians Chapter 5?

3. According to Chapter 2, who went with Paul and Barnabas to Jerusalem?

4. Which Apostle was the Lord's brother?

5. How are we justified, according to Galatians Chapter 2?

6. According to Chapter 3, who believed in God and it was accounted to him for righteousness?

7. In Chapter 6, whose marks did Paul say he bore in his body?

8. Paul received the Gospel he preached by revelation from whom?

9. According to Chapter 6, in what should we not grow weary to do?

10. According to Chapter 3, the law came how many years after Abraham?

GENEVA  
BIBLE SCHOOL

