



CHRISTIANITY WITHOUT THE RELIGION

BIBLE SURVEY

THE UN-DEVOTIONAL

**GALATIAN &
EPHESIANS**

Week 1

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Before You Begin Your Journey...

Why did we choose to combine these two contrasting epistles from the apostle Paul? Not simply because they follow one another in most printed Bibles.

Both of these powerful epistles were written to Christians living in areas where Paul had proclaimed the gospel of Jesus Christ. The first book, Galatians, seems to have been intended for converts in southern Galatia from his first missionary journey. Although some believe it may have been written as late as A.D. 53, Paul probably wrote the letter in A.D. 49 just prior to the Jerusalem Council (Ac 15).

Galatians is one of Paul's earliest preserved epistles. He dictated this forceful letter to refute teachers who had come after he had left. These men were telling the Galatian Christians that they not only had to accept Jesus Christ, but that they must also be circumcised and keep the law of Moses. Paul and Jesus dictate otherwise.

The second letter, Ephesians, was written to Christ-followers to whom Paul had first preached (in the synagogue of that city) as he returned home on his second missionary journey. He had also lived with and grown to love these spiritual brothers and sisters for two and a half years during his third journey. Now, living in Rome, chained to a guard while he awaited trial, Paul wrote to encourage them.

So, while Galatians was a corrective letter to protect the integrity of the gospel of Jesus Christ, Ephesians was a letter to encourage Christ-followers to remain loyal to Jesus and his calling.

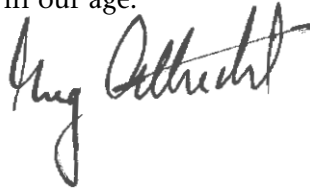
Both of these epistles center on the meaning and significance of salvation. They pose and answer many questions. How and upon what basis is a person saved?

What role does the law play in salvation? What is the nature of the tension between grace and works? How is racial prejudice overcome? How should gender and social bias be resolved? How should a Christian respond to the grace of God? What spiritual fruit will God produce in those in whom the risen Lord Jesus lives?

Galatians helps us to understand how Christians live in the light of the new covenant. Cultural conflicts started almost immediately in the New Testament church—with a clash between the culture of Judaism, formed by the law of the old covenant, and the gentile believers who did not have this background or “baggage.” Galatians has been called the Magna Carta of Christianity, for it helps us focus on the essentials of the gospel, rather than external issues that can so often obscure our focus.

Ephesians provides in-depth and profound teaching about the nature of this “new life in Christ” and the nature of the new community of faith—the church—the body of Christ. Ephesians provides more direction about the plan of salvation, the broad and diverse nature of the universal body of Christ, visible and invisible, as well as a continuation of the theme Paul discussed in Galatians—the riches of God’s grace.

These issues remain vital for us in our age.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Greg Albrecht". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent "G" and "A".

Greg Albrecht
President, Plain Truth Ministries

How to Use the CWR Bible Survey...

1—Read and study at your own pace. This is a devotional. It is designed to help you consider and ponder the great truths of God's written revelation. It is designed to help you worship and come to know God. We plan to cover the entire Bible in 43 volumes, and while that sounds like a long time, don't be in a hurry. Take your time! Even though each volume is divided into bite-size daily lessons, you may want to take two days on each "daily" lesson.

2—We suggest you set aside a special time for the *CWR Bible Survey* every day. We recommend allowing 30-45 minutes, but even if you can only spare 15 minutes, try to make it part of your regular schedule. You will find that the *CWR Bible Survey* will be an invaluable resource for facing your daily challenges.

3—You will need a good Bible. This might be an excellent time for you to consider purchasing a study Bible. Plain Truth Ministries has reviewed many of the study Bibles that are available, and in cooperation with Thomas Nelson and Zondervan, we are pleased to be able to offer two superb study Bibles that will be an excellent resource and help to you. Please see the back pages of this book for more details.

4—Always read the assigned passage of the daily lesson in your Bible first. Each daily lesson builds upon the portion of the Bible being covered that day. You may want to begin by praying about what God has in store for you as you read, and then look at the questions and background information.

5—Consider the format of each daily lesson. Almost every daily lesson will include:

- **Opening Up to the Word** —a section designed to help you open your mind to the teaching God has inspired.
- **Digging Into the Word**—this section will encourage you to get your nose into the Bible and think deeply about what it says.
- **Living Out the Word**—here you will be challenged to consider the practical implications for your life. How does this passage help you live?

•**Window On the Word**—will offer key insights to help you more clearly understand the daily Bible passage.

6—After you finish the daily lesson, take some quiet time. You may simply think, look out the window, take a walk, or even get down on your knees. But use this time to let this daily lesson sink in. Ask God to show you what he wants you to understand from your reading and study.

7—Consider the *CWR Bible Survey* for small groups in which you may be involved. Tell your friends about it. If you are involved in a small group that meets for prayer and Bible study, introduce your group to it. Many are seeking an easy-to-read guide to help them understand the Bible and to help them know God. The *CWR Bible Survey* can do that!

•**Abbreviations Used in the *CWR Bible Survey***—

Genesis	Ge	Nahum	Na
Exodus	Ex	Habakkuk	Hab
Leviticus	Lev	Zephaniah	Zep
Numbers	Nu	Haggai	Hag
Deuteronomy	Dt	Zechariah	Zec
Joshua	Jos	Malachi	Mal
Judges	Jdg	Matthew	Mt
Ruth	Ru	Mark	Mk
1 Samuel	1Sa	Luke	Lk
2 Samuel	2Sa	John	Jn
1 Kings	1Ki	Acts	Ac
2 Kings	2Ki	Romans	Ro
1 Chronicles	1Ch	1 Corinthians	1Co
2 Chronicles	2Ch	2 Corinthians	2Co
Ezra	Ezr	Galatians	Gal
Nehemiah	Ne	Ephesians	Eph
Esther	Est	Philippians	Php
Job	Job	Colossians	Col
Psalms	Ps	1 Thessalonians	1Th
Proverbs	Pr	2 Thessalonians	2Th
Ecclesiastes	Ecc	1 Timothy	1Ti
Song of Songs	SS	2 Timothy	2Ti
Isaiah	Isa	Titus	Tit
Jeremiah	Jer	Philemon	Phm
Lamentations	La	Hebrews	Heb
Ezekiel	Eze	James	Jas
Daniel	Da	1 Peter	1Pe
Hosea	Hos	2 Peter	2Pe
Joel	Joel	1 John	1Jn
Amos	Am	2 John	2Jn
Obadiah	Ob	3 John	3Jn
Jonah	Jnh	Jude	Jude
Micah	Mic	Revelation	Rev

GALATIANS & EPHESIANS

Law and Grace

Introduction to Galatians

Authorship: The letter tells us that it was written by the apostle Paul (1:1; 4:11) and almost all scholars accept that. Paul was experienced in Judaism, which plays an important role in this letter.

Date: Two theories have been promoted: (1) the letter may have gone to Christians in southern Galatia, based on Paul's visit there during his first missionary journey about A.D. 48. This southern Galatia theory suggests an early date, around A.D. 48-49, just before the Council of Jerusalem (Ac 15).

Or (2) it may have been written to Christians in northern Galatia, based on a later visit. The northern Galatia theory would place the writing of the book between A.D. 53-55 on Paul's third missionary journey. It would require that Paul's second apostolic journey had established these churches, which is doubtful.

Setting and purpose: Some Galatians were rapidly departing from the gospel that Paul had delivered to them, namely, the message that justification comes solely through faith in Christ. Troubles in this new group of Christ-followers stemmed from Jewish Christians who believed it was important to require gentile members to keep Jewish ceremonies and rituals. Circumcision, days of worship and dietary restrictions for gentile converts are central questions. Acts 15:1 indicates that after Paul had established churches in Galatia on his first missionary journey and had returned to Antioch, Judaizing Christians tried to water down the gospel in southern Galatia. Paul probably hurriedly wrote Galatians as he prepared to go to Jerusalem to resolve this same problem. Therefore, the difficulties that led Peter and Barnabas to withdraw from gentiles (Gal 2:11-14) seem to have happened before the resolution of Acts 15.

Background: Several factors support the southern Galatia theory. The book of Acts is silent about any church in the north, but mentions churches in the south that Paul established on his first journey (Ac 13:13,14; 14:6). Secondly, Barnabas is named in Galatians 2:1, 9, 13. Christians in southern Galatia would have

known Barnabas personally since he accompanied Paul on the first apostolic journey. There is no biblical record of Barnabas ever visiting northern Galatia. Thirdly, Paul's companions, Gaius and Timothy, came from southern Galatia (Ac 20:4). Fourthly, no reference to the Jerusalem Conference is made in Galatians. That decision would have clearly supported Paul's position. He surely would have mentioned it in the book of Galatians, had the conference already occurred.

Most scholars agree that the opposition in Galatia was comprised of zealous Jewish-Christians who were adamant that the old covenant law, exemplified by circumcision, was still required for salvation. This group must have had an influential leader, as Paul refers to him (Gal 3:1; 5:7, 10).

Outline:

I. THE PROBLEM IN GALATIA IS THE FALSE GOSPEL, 1:1-2:21

- A. The Gospel—True or False, 1:1-10
- B. When Jesus Comes Calling..., 1:11-24
- C. A Meeting of Minds, 2:1-10
- D. Dead to the Law, 2:11-21

II. THE PROMISE TO ABRAHAM IS FULFILLED IN JESUS, 3:1-29

- A. Course Correction, 3:1-6
- B. A Promise Made, 3:7-14
- C. A Promise Delivered, 3:15-29

III. THE PURPOSE OF THE LAW IS COMPLETE, 4:1-31

- A. From Slavery to Adoption, 4:1-7
- B. From Sabbaths to Savior, 4:8-20
- C. Contrasting the Covenants, 4:21-31

IV. THE PURSUIT OF LIFE IS CHRIST, 5:1-6:18

- A. The Life of Liberty in Christ, 5:1-12
- B. The Life of Love for Neighbor, 5:13-21
- C. The Life by the Spirit, 5:22-26
- D. Fulfill the Law of Christ, 6:1-10
- E. Glory in the Cross of Jesus Christ, 6:11-18

The term *Galatia* originally applied to the north central region of Asia Minor, occupied by Celtic immigrants of European origin, known as Galatians. Later, their kingdom formed the Roman province of Galatia. The southern portion of this province included the cities of Antioch of Pisidia, Iconium, Lystra and Derbe (cities evangelized by Paul in Acts 13 and 14), the congregations to whom Paul's epistle is addressed.

MEDITERRANEAN SEA
Jerusalem

Ephesus was on the west coast of Asia Minor. As a prominent port city, it contained a mixture of races, cultures and religious practices.



The Gospel— True or False?

DAY 1

Galatians 1:1-10

How did you begin your most recent letter to a parent? To a friend? Did the tone in your introduction match your mood?

OPENING
up to the Word

1. Does Paul's opening declaration of his authority ring any warning bells for his readers (v. 1)?
2. How does this greeting focus his reader's attention on the roles of God the Father and Jesus (vs. 1-5)?
3. Why does Paul sound such a powerful alarm to warn the church not to turn away from the gospel of Christ (vs. 6-7)? How could someone pervert this gospel?
4. What is the tone of Paul's letter? Why does he twice invoke a curse on those who preach a false gospel (vs. 8-9)? The Greek term *anathema* became connected to excommunication of those who caused division by teaching false doctrine.
5. Who is Paul concerned about pleasing (v. 10)?

DIGGING
into the Word

1. How is the word *grace* used to describe the gospel? Can you explain it more clearly and simply than Paul does (vs. 1-5)?
2. There are many "different" (v. 6) gospels which "pervert the gospel of Christ" (v.7). Chances are, you've had some painful experiences in this regard. Stop and ponder how corrupt legalistic, authoritarian religion is and its disastrous consequences.

LIVING
out the Word

*The **abrupt introduction** to this book is not typical of Paul. He was upset with reports from Galatia that these new Christians were turning away from the straightforward teaching about salvation by grace that Paul had recently taught them.*

WINDOW
on the Word

DAY 2

When Jesus Comes Calling...

Galatians 1:11-24

OPENING
up to the Word

How important is your high school experience for your life today? Your college experience? Travel? Hobbies? Has your background prepared you to serve God today?

DIGGING
into the Word

1. Why does Paul follow up his terse declaration in verse one with more details of his calling (vs. 11-17)?
 2. How did Paul understand God's intentions for him (vs. 15-17)? How was Paul's training in Judaism useful for God's plans for him?
 3. What part did the apostles in Jerusalem play in Paul's gospel message (vs. 18-20)?
 4. Paul (or Saul, as he was then called) had been zealously persecuting Christians because they believed in Jesus (Ac 9:1-2). How had the churches of Judea been affected by Paul's conversion (Gal 1:21-24)?
-

LIVING
out the Word

1. Have you been rescued from a false, perverted gospel? Pause to give thanks for God's amazing grace, and your current Christ-centered journey.
 2. Are you being persecuted for your beliefs? Have you persecuted anyone else for theirs? What forms can religious persecution take today?
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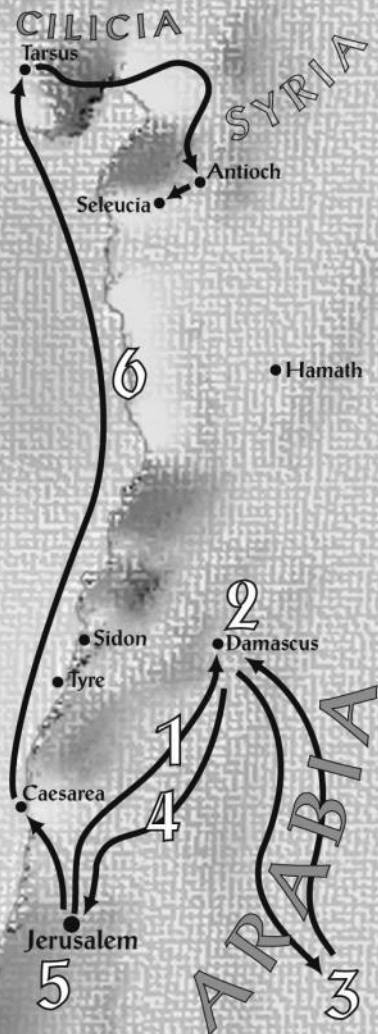
WINDOW
on the Word

*Paul probably had been a member of the **Sanhedrin**, the Jewish court that administered Jewish laws. Paul held the cloaks of the men who stoned Stephen (Ac 7:58), a job which would have been done by a member of the Sanhedrin (Ac 22:4-5). Some people believe that Paul's cryptic comment about going from Damascus to **Arabia** and three years later returning to Jerusalem for the first time as a Christian, leaves a possibility that he received instruction in the Arabian wilderness directly from Jesus.*

Journeys of Paul Immediately Following His Conversion

At first glance, the account in Acts 9:19-30 may seem to contradict Paul's own account of the events following his conversion in Galatians 1:15-2:9. The two accounts can be reconciled, however:

1. God calls Paul on the road to Damascus (Ac 9:3-9).
2. Paul is baptized and stays and preaches in Damascus (Ac 9:10-22).
3. Paul travels to Arabia for a time, and returns to Damascus (Gal 1:17; before Ac 9:23).
4. After three years, Paul is forced to leave Damascus (Ac 9:23-25; Gal 1:18), travelling to...
 5. ...Jerusalem, to see Peter (Gal 1:18-20; Ac 9:26-29).
 6. Paul returns to his hometown of Tarsus in Cilicia (Ac 9:30), and then to Syria (Gal 1:21).



DAY 3

A Meeting of Minds

Galatians 2:1-10

OPENING
up to the Word

Have you ever been initiated into a club? How would you describe your experience? (a) inspiring, (b) embarrassing, (c) painful, (d) frightening.

DIGGING
into the Word

1. When Paul went to Jerusalem about 14 years after his conversion, to whom did he present the gospel message (vs. 1-9)?
2. In contrast to those who “seemed to be leaders” (v. 2) and “pillars” (v. 9), how did Paul view the false teachers who were attacking him (v. 4)?
3. What relationship existed between the earlier apostles and Paul (v. 9)? Were they friends or colleagues? Did they have the same past religious and spiritual experiences?
4. What basic element of Christianity do you see established here (vs. 9-10)?

LIVING
out the Word

1. How grateful are you for the liberties Christ has given you?
3. Are the opinions of certain Christian leaders (dead or alive) or pastors more important to you than they ought to be? Do you show favoritism (v. 6)?

WINDOW
on the Word

*Under the **old covenant** God required the Israelites to **circumcise** their sons (Lev 12:1-3). Here in Galatians Paul showed that Titus, a Greek, had not been forced by the Jewish leaders of the church to be circumcised. In fact, on Paul's second visit to Jerusalem, these Jewish leaders had supported Paul's message to the gentiles, which did not require circumcision for gentiles. The false brethren (v. 4), however, taught that gentiles “must be circumcised and required to obey the law or Moses” (Ac 15:1-5). But, as Paul explained, Christ had declared liberty and ended any obligation to keep the old covenant law (Gal 2:4).*

Dead to the Law

DAY 4

Galatians 2:11-21

Should someone be corrected publicly in front of subordinates or followers? (a) never, (b) every time it's necessary, (c) only when the mistake is severe, (d) anytime the boss becomes angry, (e) when the mistake is public and causes confusion.

1. Did Paul correct the apostle Peter in an earlier episode in Antioch (v. 11)? Why (vs. 12-13)?
2. Barnabas was with Paul in the earlier trip to Jerusalem when Titus had not been compelled to be circumcised (vs. 1-3). Why did Barnabas side with Peter over issues of those with whom one was allowed to share a meal (vs. 12-13)?
3. How did Paul expose the hypocrisy of Peter and Barnabas (vs. 12-15)?
4. How is faith, not works, the source of justification (vs. 16-21)? How is Christ the source of that faith?
5. How does one "die to the law" (v. 19)? Is it through being crucified with Christ, who died for us under the law (vs. 20-21)?

1. What actions of people who seem to be and think of themselves as Christians seem hypocritical to you? (a) claiming "love," but slandering one's neighbor, (b) saying "rejoice," but incessantly complaining, (c) proclaiming "peace," but causing strife, (d) saying "forgive," but condemning others.
2. Build your spiritual life on grace through faith so that the crucifixion of Christ will be will not be in vain for you (vs. 21).

*Paul was by birth part of the **Jewish heritage**. He had been well-trained in the law as a Pharisee (Php 3:4-6). The dramatic call by Christ rebuilt his life (Ac 9). No longer were the works that the old covenant required of Israelites, called "observing the law" (v. 16), necessary. Grace through faith in Jesus Christ is the only way to salvation (vs. 16-21).*

OPENING

up to the Word

DIGGING

into the Word

LIVING

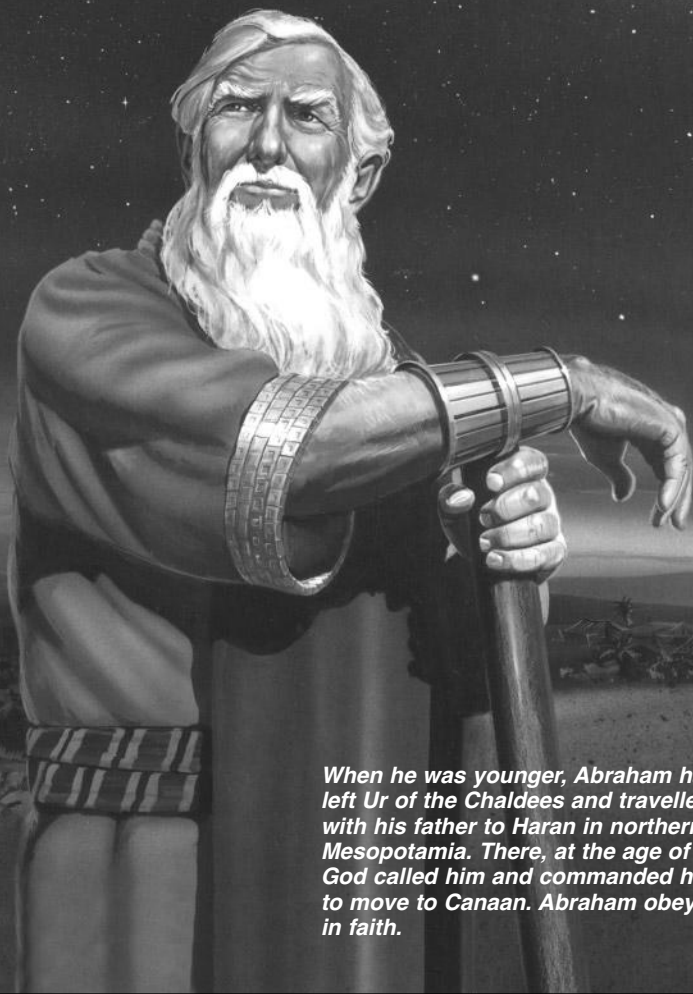
out the Word

WINDOW

on the Word

“Consider Abraham: ‘He believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness.’ Understand, then, that those who believe are children of Abraham.”

Galatians 3:6-7



When he was younger, Abraham had left Ur of the Chaldees and travelled with his father to Haran in northern Mesopotamia. There, at the age of 75, God called him and commanded him to move to Canaan. Abraham obeyed, in faith.

Course Correction

DAY 5

Galatians 3:1-6

How would you define “tough love”? When is it important to correct someone, “for their own good”? How are people able to maintain relationships after such an encounter?

1. How did the Galatians receive the Holy Spirit (v.s 2-4)? Did they receive the Spirit as a direct result of being circumcised and carefully obeying the laws of the old covenant?
2. Were the Galatians foolish because, having received the Spirit through faith in Christ, they were following teachers who were requiring circumcision and the old covenant law (vs. 1-4)?
3. Who supplied the Spirit to them (v. 5)? On what basis?
4. How had the patriarch Abraham been accepted by God (v. 6)? See Genesis 15:1-6.

1. Are you now, or have you ever been, in danger of being “bewitched” by a different gospel (Gal 1:6; 3:1)? The book of Galatians can help you to discern the difference.

2. How did you begin to understand and experience faith and grace? Do you feel the way in which God revealed his grace to you was a miracle?

*Paul corrects the Galatians with strong words, “**You foolish Galatians!**” out of his deep love for them. “**Observing the law**” (v. 2) refers to the requirements of the old covenant for the nation of Israel. Those ceremonial and ritual requirements marked Israel as the people of God but did not earn them salvation (vs. 10-13). In 5:7 Paul speaks of **obeying the truth**. He is not talking about obeying the commands of the law, but the truth that salvation is given by grace.*

OPENING

up to the Word

DIGGING

into the Word

LIVING

out the Word

WINDOW

on the Word

DAY 6

A Promise Made

Galatians 3:7-14

OPENING
up to the Word

What is your favorite part of the story of Abraham? (a) the nomadic traveler, (b) the rescuer of Lot, (c) the trip to sacrifice Isaac on Mount Moriah, (d) a man of the promise.

DIGGING
into the Word

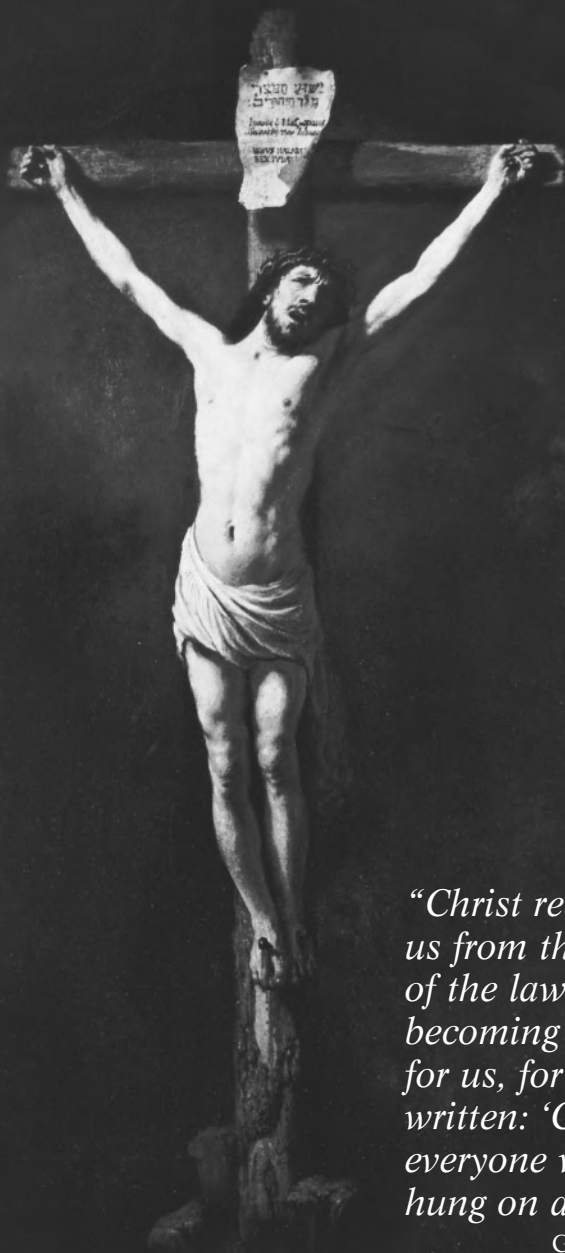
1. Does race, religion or grace determine the identity of the children of Abraham (vs. 7-9)?
 2. How was Abraham justified (v. 8)?
 3. What was God's purpose in calling Abraham (v. 8, 14)? To whom were blessings to flow through Abraham?
 4. What is the "curse" of the law (vs. 10-13)? See Deuteronomy 27:26. Since "observing the law" cannot forgive sin and impute righteousness, doesn't the law inevitably lead to death?
 5. How do the just live by faith? See Habakkuk 2:4.
 6. How is the cross of Christ central to understanding the life of faith (vs. 1, 13)?
-

LIVING
out the Word

1. Are you on the receiving end of Abraham's blessings? Have you been made righteous by faith in Jesus Christ?
 2. What does the cross of Christ mean to you? Does it remind you that Jesus became a curse (v. 13; Dt 21:23) to remove the curse from you (Dt 27:26)?
 3. What is the "promise of the Spirit" (Gal 3:14)? Does it affect your salvation?
-

WINDOW
on the Word

Abraham was one of the greatest heroes of Israel. The Jews in Jesus' day tried to claim a right to the blessings of Abraham due to lineage from him (Jn 8:31-36). From Abraham and Moses they had received the law of circumcision. Through Moses they had received the law of the old covenant.



“Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us, for it is written: ‘Cursed is everyone who is hung on a tree.’”

Galatians 3:13

“Before faith came, we were held prisoners by the law, locked up until faith should be revealed. So the law was put in charge to lead us to Christ that we might be justified by faith. Now that faith has come, we are no longer under the supervision of the law.”

—Galatians 3:23-25

“The Law Was Put in Charge”

What did Paul mean by “put in charge”? The KJV says “the law was our schoolmaster,” and the NKJV uses the word “tutor.” Neither of these words are an accurate translation of the Greek word *paidagogos*, or “child custodian.” In Greek and Roman culture, the pedagogue was a slave employed to supervise a child, from the ages of about six to sixteen. The pedagogue conducted the child to and from school, and watched him wherever he went. But the pedagogue did not teach. If Paul had meant “teacher,” “tutor” or “schoolmaster,” he would have used another Greek word, *didaskalos*.

When the child came of age, he took on the full position and role of a son, and was formally acknowledged as an adult. At that point, the supervision and responsibility of the pedagogue ceased.

Paul reminds the Jewish Galatians that they were held in custody and confined under the law in its role as a pedagogue—until the time of Christ’s coming and the revelation of their full sonship—until the arrival of the Christian faith. Now they are freed from the confinement of the Jewish law to serve Christ, their liberator.

Each Christian is liberated from his or her prison of sin or legalism when he or she accepts Christ as personal Lord and Savior. Through faith in Jesus, Christians are made full sons of God (Gal 3:26).

A Promise Delivered

DAY 7

Galatians 3:15-29

What was your least favorite rule when you were young? (a) brush, (b) flush, (c) say “please”, (d) eat your vegetables before dessert, (e) work before play.

1. Does the promise in the covenant God had given to Abraham supercede the law covenant he gave to Moses (vs. 15-18)?
2. How is Christ the “seed” of Abraham (vs. 16-17)? Is he the focus and reality of the promise of the covenant with Abraham?
3. What was the purpose of the law that God gave Israel through Moses (vs. 19-25)? Was it designed to be temporary?
4. Is the law from Mount Sinai against the promises given to Abraham (vs. 21-22)?
5. How does one become a “son” or “daughter” of God (vs. 26-27)?
6. How are all Christians, regardless of ethnicity, social status or gender, made one (vs. 28-29)? What is the unifying factor?

1. Which do you live by—the promise of grace in Jesus Christ or the covenant of law given through Moses (you can only be in allegiance to one—not both)?
2. Have you entered into a covenant with Jesus? If not, consider leaving your life of slavery to religion behind so that you might embrace his grace.

*Paul claims that the **law given to Moses**, coming 430 years after God’s promise had been guaranteed to Abraham (v. 17), was put in charge until Christ came (vs. 23-25). It served as a **guardian** (v. 24) who was responsible to babysit dependent children until they were turned over to their teacher at school. Jesus is the teacher. Once he came, the law of Moses was no longer in charge.*

OPENING

up to the Word

DIGGING

into the Word

LIVING

out the Word

WINDOW

on the Word