

## Sermon #1: Galatians Series Overview

18 Jan 2026

### BREAKING THE ICE

What surprised you this week from the sermon introducing our series on the book of Galatians?

### UNDERSTANDING THE TRUTH

*Before diving into individual chapters, it is helpful to see the "big picture" of Paul's letter to the Galatians. Written probably in the late 40s A.D., this letter addresses a specific crisis that threatened to undermine the very foundation of the Christian faith (NIVAC, Galatians).*

*(See graphic on next page for a simple, visual overview of Galatians).*

#### **Read the Passage** (Galatians 1:1–5)

1. According to verse 1, how does Paul identify himself, and what does he emphasize about the source of his authority compared to human sources?
2. Looking at verse 2, who are the recipients of this letter?  
Note: The Galatians lived in the southern districts of the Roman province of Galatia; specifically cities like Pisidian, Antioch, Iconium, Lystra, and Derbe. Paul and Barnabas founded these churches during their first missionary journey, winning many converts through the preaching of the gospel and the demonstration of miracles (NAC, Galatians)
3. Based on verses 3-4, what does Paul identify as the "heart" of the gospel message regarding what Jesus Christ did and the specific purpose of His sacrifice?
4. In verse 4, Paul states that Christ died to "rescue us from this present evil age"; how does this reveal that the gospel is a divine initiative rather than a humanly devised plan?
5. Paul concludes this greeting with a doxology of praise in verse 5. Who does Paul want to receive the glory for the beauty of the gospel? Why is this important?
6. Read Gal 1:6-7 & 3:1-3 and discern from these passages why Paul wrote this letter.
7. Read Gal 2:11-14. What do you learn about a certain group of people who had come into the Galatian church with false teaching? Summarize what they were teaching/doing. Read Acts 15:1-5 to see this same group of people being spoken of elsewhere in Scripture.

Note: This group of people who were causing trouble in Galatia and throughout the early church are referred to as "Judaizers". This term comes from the Greek verb used to describe what they were trying to do; make non-Jewish believers "live like Jews".

### SEEING JESUS CHRIST

In Galatians, Jesus Christ is not just a teacher or a helper; He is the all-sufficient Savior. Paul emphasizes that Christ "gave Himself for our sins" to rescue us from this present evil age according to the Father's will. Jesus is the true "seed" of Abraham, and it is only through union with Him that we become true heirs of God's promise. To add human requirements to Christ's finished work is to imply that His death was for nothing.

- How does the fact that Jesus is our "sole and sufficient Savior" change the way you view your own failures and successes this week?

## MAKING IT MATTER

1. The Judaizers were trying to force the Galatians to adopt specific Jewish practices on top of their faith to be "true" Christians. In our modern context, do we ever teach that people must adopt our specific social or cultural habits to be truly acceptable to God?
2. Paul warns that focusing on external rituals (like circumcision) leads to a judging mentality. Where are you tempted to find your identity in your religious performance rather than in Christ's grace?
3. The false teaching in Paul's day came from within the church from people who appeared to be very religious. How must we be watchful today in order to avoid getting caught up in false teaching?
4. Paul was willing to oppose even the apostle Peter "to his face" when the truth of the gospel was at stake. How can we learn to speak the truth in love when we see the gospel being compromised in our own circles?

## PRAYING FOR GOD'S POWER

"This is the confidence we have before him: If we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. And if we know that he hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have what we have asked of him." — 1 John 5:14-15.

Applying these truths in our own strength is just legalistic obedience. But when we ask God to change us, it becomes transformational and glorifies Him.

- Share one specific area where you need the Holy Spirit to help you "stand firm" in the freedom of the gospel this week. Pray for one another in these specific needs.

**Grace vs. Works:**  
The Core Conflict in Galatians

**The False 'Gospel' of Legalism**

- A Human-Centered Message**  
It adds human works, like circumcision, as necessary requirements for salvation.
- Troubles the Church**  
This teaching confuses believers and creates division within the community.
- Leads to Destruction**  
Paul condemns this perverted message with an apostolic curse ("anathema").

**The True Gospel of Grace**

- A God-Given Revelation**  
Paul received it directly from Jesus Christ, not from any human source.
- Christ's Work is Finished**  
Salvation is a free gift based entirely on Christ's sacrifice for our sins.
- Produces True Freedom**  
This gospel frees believers to serve one another in love, fulfilling "the law of Christ."