



## The Epistle of Paul to the Galatians

**Author:** Paul

**Place Written:** Corinth or Syrian Antioch

**Writing Completed:** c. 50–52 C.E.

### Greetings

**1** Paul, an apostle not from men nor by a man but through Jesus Christ and God the Father who raised him from the dead, <sup>2</sup> and all the brothers who are with me,

To the churches of Galatia:

<sup>3</sup> Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, <sup>4</sup> who gave himself for our sins to rescue us from the present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father, <sup>5</sup> to whom be the glory forever and ever. <sup>b</sup> Amen.

### There Is No Other Gospel

<sup>6</sup> I am amazed that you are so quickly deserting him who called you in the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel; <sup>7</sup> not that there is another, but there are some who trouble you and want to distort the gospel of Christ. <sup>8</sup> But even if we or an angel from heaven should proclaim to you a gospel contrary to <sup>c</sup> the one we preached to you, let him be accursed! <sup>d</sup> <sup>9</sup> As we said before, and now I say again, if anyone is proclaiming a gospel to you contrary to <sup>e</sup> what you have received, let him be accursed! <sup>f</sup>

<sup>a</sup> Two early MSS read *God the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ*

<sup>b</sup> Lit to the *ages of the ages* (idiom, meaning forever)

<sup>c</sup> Or *other than*

<sup>d</sup> Gr *anathema*

<sup>e</sup> Or *other than*

<sup>f</sup> Gr *anathema*

<sup>10</sup> For now men I am now trying to persuade or God? Or am I seeking to please men? If I were still trying to please men, I would not be Christ's slave.

### Gospel Preached by Paul Comes from God

<sup>11</sup> For I would have you know, brothers, that the gospel that was preached by me is not according to man. <sup>12</sup> For I neither received it from man, nor was I taught it, but I received it through a revelation <sup>h</sup> of Jesus Christ.

### Paul's Conversion and Early Activity

<sup>13</sup> For you have heard about my former way of life in Judaism, that to the point of excess I was persecuting the congregation <sup>i</sup> of God, and trying to destroy it, <sup>14</sup> and I was advancing in Judaism beyond many of my own age among my race, <sup>j</sup> so extremely zealous was I for the traditions of my fathers. <sup>15</sup> But when the one who set me apart <sup>k</sup> from my mother's womb and called me by his grace was pleased <sup>16</sup> to reveal his Son in me in order that I would proclaim the gospel about him among the Gentiles, immediately I did not consult with flesh and blood, <sup>17</sup> nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me; but I went away to Arabia, and returned once more to Damascus.

<sup>18</sup> Then three years later I went up to Jerusalem to visit Cephas, <sup>m</sup> and I stayed with him for fifteen days. <sup>19</sup> But I did not see any

<sup>g</sup> I.e. *human origin*

<sup>h</sup> Lit *uncovering; disclosure; Gr apokalypseos*

<sup>i</sup> Gr *ekklesia* ("assembly")

<sup>j</sup> Or *countrymen; people*

<sup>k</sup> Some manuscripts have "when God who set me apart," yet WH NU have the title "the God" in brackets because the two earliest manuscripts (P<sup>46</sup> and B), are enough to show the text lacked this title.

<sup>l</sup> I.e. *human beings*

<sup>m</sup> Also called *Peter*



of the other apostles, only James the brother of the Lord. <sup>20</sup> ((Now in what I am writing to you, behold, in the sight of God,<sup>a</sup> I am not lying.) <sup>21</sup> Then I went into the regions of Syria and Cilicia. <sup>22</sup> But I was unknown by face<sup>b</sup> to the congregations of Judea that were in Christ; <sup>23</sup> but they were only hearing, “He who once persecuted us is now proclaiming the faith he once tried to destroy.” <sup>24</sup> And they were glorifying God because of me.

**Paul Meets with the Apostles in Jerusalem**

**2** Then after fourteen years I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, taking Titus along with me. <sup>2</sup> I went up according to a revelation;<sup>c</sup> and I laid out to them the gospel that I am preaching among the Gentiles, but in private to those who were of reputation, for fear that I might be running, or had run, in vain. <sup>3</sup> But not even Titus, who was with me, though he was a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised. <sup>4</sup> But this was because of the false brothers secretly brought in, who slipped in to spy out our freedom that we have in Christ Jesus, in order that they might enslave us, <sup>5</sup> to whom not even for an hour did we yield in subjection, so that the truth of the gospel would remain with you. <sup>6</sup> But from those who seemed to be something<sup>d</sup> (what they were makes no difference to me; God shows no partiality<sup>e</sup>)—well, those who were of reputation contributed nothing to me. <sup>7</sup> But on the contrary, seeing that I had been entrusted with the gospel of the uncircumcision, just as Peter had been of the circumcision <sup>8</sup> (for the one who was at work through Peter for his apostleship of the

circumcision was at work also through me for the Gentiles), <sup>9</sup> and recognizing the grace that had been given to me, James and Cephas and John, who seemed to be pillars, they gave the right hand of fellowship to Barnabas and me, that we should go to the Gentiles and they to the circumcised. <sup>10</sup> They asked only that we should remember the poor, the very thing I also was eager to do.

**Paul Corrects Peter (Cephas) at Antioch**

<sup>11</sup> But when Cephas came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face, because he stood condemned. <sup>12</sup> For before certain men from James arrived, he used to eat with the Gentiles; but when they arrived, he stopped doing this and separated himself, fearing the ones out of circumcision. <sup>13</sup> The rest of the Jews joined him in hypocrisy, so that even Barnabas was carried away with them in their hypocrisy. <sup>14</sup> But when I saw they were not walking straight according to the truth of the gospel, I said to Cephas in the presence of all, “If you, being a Jew, live like the Gentiles and not like the Jews, how is it that you compel the Gentiles to live like Jews?”

**Declared Righteous by Faith in Christ**

<sup>15</sup> We are Jews by nature and not sinners from among the Gentiles; <sup>16</sup> but knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law but through faith in Christ Jesus, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, so that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the Law; since by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified. <sup>17</sup> But if, while seeking to be justified in Christ, we ourselves have also been found sinners, is Christ then a minister of sin? May it never be! <sup>18</sup> For if I build up again these things which I destroyed, I prove myself to be a transgressor. <sup>19</sup> For through the law I died to the law, so that I might live to God. <sup>20</sup> I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh

<sup>a</sup> Or *I assure you before God*  
<sup>b</sup> Or *unknown by sight; unknown in person*  
<sup>c</sup> Lit., *uncovering; disclosure; Gr apokalypseos; Or It was because of a revelation*  
<sup>d</sup> Or *seemed to be important*  
<sup>e</sup> Lit *does not receive a face*



I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself up for me.<sup>21</sup> I do not nullify the grace of God, for if righteousness is through the law, then Christ died for no purpose.

### **Works of Law or Faith**

**3** O foolish Galatians, who has bewitched you, before whose eyes Jesus Christ was publicly portrayed as crucified? <sup>2</sup>This one thing I want to learn from you: Did you receive the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? <sup>3</sup>Are you so foolish? Having begun by the Spirit,<sup>a</sup> are you now being perfected by the flesh? <sup>4</sup>Did you suffer so many things for nothing, if indeed it was for nothing? <sup>5</sup>Therefore, does the one who supplies you the Spirit and who works miracles among you do it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?

<sup>6</sup>Just as Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness. <sup>7</sup>Know then that the ones of faith who are the sons of Abraham. <sup>8</sup>And the Scripture, foreseeing that God justifies the nations by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, "In you shall all the nations be blessed."<sup>b</sup> <sup>9</sup>So then those who are of faith are blessed with the faithful Abraham.

### **The Righteous Will Live by Faith**

<sup>10</sup>For as many as are of the works of the law are under a curse, for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who does not abide by all the things that are written in the book of the law to do them."<sup>c</sup> <sup>11</sup>Now that no one is justified by the law before God is evident; for, "The righteous man shall live by faith."<sup>12</sup> But the law is not of faith, rather "The one who does them shall live by them."<sup>13</sup> Christ redeemed us from the curse

of the law by becoming a curse for us, because it is written, "Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree,"<sup>d</sup> <sup>14</sup>in order that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles, so that we would receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.

### **The Promise to Abraham and His Offspring (Christ) Not by Law**

<sup>15</sup>Brothers, I speak according to man:<sup>e</sup> even though it is only a man's covenant, yet when it has been ratified, no one sets it aside or adds conditions to it. <sup>16</sup>Now the promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed. He does not say, "And to seeds," as referring to many, but rather to one, "And to your seed," that is, Christ. <sup>17</sup>What I am saying is this: the Law, which came four hundred and thirty years later, does not invalidate a covenant previously ratified by God, so as to nullify the promise. <sup>18</sup>For if the inheritance is based on law, it is no longer based on a promise; but God has granted it to Abraham by means of a promise.

### **Origin and Purpose of the Law**

<sup>19</sup>Why, then, the Law? It was added because of transgressions, until the seed should arrive to whom the promise had been made; and it was transmitted through angels by the hand of a mediator. <sup>20</sup>Now a mediator is not a mediator of one; but God is one. <sup>21</sup>Is the law then contrary to the promises of God? May it never be! For if a law had been given that was able to give life, then righteousness would indeed have been from the law. <sup>22</sup>But the scriptures shut up all things under sin, so that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to them who believe.

<sup>d</sup> Quote from Deut. 21:23

<sup>e</sup> Or *in terms of human relations*; or *according to a human perspective*; or *using a human illustration*

<sup>a</sup> Or *with the Spirit*

<sup>b</sup> Quote from Gen. 12:3; 18:18

<sup>c</sup> Quote from Deut. 27:26



<sup>23</sup> But before faith came, we were kept in custody under the law, being shut up to the faith which was later to be revealed. <sup>24</sup> Therefore the Law has become our tutor<sup>a</sup> to lead us to Christ, so that we may be justified by faith. <sup>25</sup> But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor.

### Sons of God Through Faith

<sup>26</sup> For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. <sup>27</sup> For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. <sup>28</sup> There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. <sup>29</sup> And if you are of Christ, then you are of Abraham's seed,<sup>b</sup> heirs according to promise.

### No Longer Slaves But Sons and Heirs

**4** Now I say that as long as the heir is a young child, he is no different from a slave, although he is the lord<sup>c</sup> of all things, <sup>2</sup> but he is under guardians and managers<sup>d</sup> until the date set by the father. <sup>3</sup> So also we, while we were children, were held in bondage under the elemental things<sup>e</sup> of the world. <sup>4</sup> But when the fullness of time came, God sent forth his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, <sup>5</sup> that he might redeem those under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons. <sup>6</sup> And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" <sup>7</sup> So you are no longer a slave, but a son; and if a son, then an heir through God.

<sup>a</sup> Lit *pedagogue*; Gr *paidagogos*. The tutor in Bible times was not the teacher but rather a guardian who led the student to the teacher.

<sup>b</sup> I.e., *descendants* or *offspring*

<sup>c</sup> Gr *kurios* meaning *lord*, *master*, or *owner*.

<sup>d</sup> Or *stewards*

<sup>e</sup> Basic principles, elementary teachings

### Paul's Concern for the Galatians

<sup>8</sup> But at that time, when you did not know God, you were enslaved to those which by nature are not gods. <sup>9</sup> But now that you have come to know God or, rather, have come to be known by God, how is it that you are turning back again to the weak and worthless elementary things<sup>f</sup> and want to slave for them over again? <sup>10</sup> You observe days and months and seasons and years. <sup>11</sup> I fear for you, that perhaps I have labored over you in vain.

### Paul Reminds Them of Friendship

<sup>12</sup> Brothers, I beg you, become as I am, because I also used to be as you are. You have done me no wrong; <sup>13</sup> but you know that it was because of a weakness of flesh<sup>g</sup> that I preached the gospel to you the first time; <sup>14</sup> and that which was a trial to you in my flesh<sup>h</sup> you did not despise or disdain,<sup>i</sup> but you received me as an angel of God, as Christ Jesus. <sup>15</sup> Where then is that sense of blessing you had? For I bear you witness that, if possible, you would have gouged out your eyes and given them to me.

### Paul Asks if They Are Now Enemies

<sup>16</sup> So have I become your enemy by telling you the truth?<sup>j</sup> <sup>17</sup> They zealously seek you, not commendably, but they wish to shut you out so that you will seek them. <sup>18</sup> But it is good to be sought zealously in good at all times, and not only when I am present with you. <sup>19</sup> My children, I am having birth pains again until Christ is formed in you! <sup>20</sup> but I could wish to be present with you now and to change my tone, for I am perplexed about you.

<sup>f</sup> Basic principles, elementary teachings

<sup>g</sup> Or *bodily* or *physical illness*

<sup>h</sup> Or *bodily condition*

<sup>i</sup> Lit *spit out at*

<sup>j</sup> Or *dealing truthfully with you*



### Hagar and Sarah: Two Covenants

<sup>21</sup> Tell me, you who want to be under law, do you not listen to the law? <sup>22</sup> For it is written that Abraham had two sons, one by a slave woman and one by a free woman. <sup>23</sup> But the son of the slave was born<sup>a</sup> according to the flesh, while the son of the free woman was born through promise. <sup>24</sup> which things are spoken allegorically, for these women are two covenants, one from Mount Sinai, bearing children into slavery, who<sup>b</sup> is Hagar. <sup>25</sup> Now this Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia and corresponds to the present Jerusalem, for she is in slavery with her children. <sup>26</sup> But the Jerusalem above is free, which is our mother. <sup>27</sup> For it is written,

“Rejoice, O barren woman who does not bear;  
break forth and cry aloud, you who are not in labor;  
for more numerous are the children of the desolate<sup>c</sup>

than of the one who has a husband.”<sup>d</sup>

<sup>28</sup> Now you, brothers, like Isaac, are children of promise. <sup>29</sup> But just as at that time he who was born according to the flesh persecuted him who was born according to the Spirit, so also it is now. <sup>30</sup> But what does the Scripture say? “Cast out the slave woman and her son, for the son of the slave woman shall not inherit with the son of the free woman.”<sup>e</sup>

<sup>31</sup> So then, brothers, we are not children of a servant girl, but of the free woman.

<sup>a</sup> Lit *has been born*

<sup>b</sup> Lit *which*

<sup>c</sup> I.e. desolate woman

<sup>d</sup> Quotation from Isa 54:1

<sup>e</sup> Quotation from Gen 21:10; however Paul under inspiration added the words “of the free woman.”

### Walk by the Spirit – Christian Freedom

**5** For freedom Christ has set us free; stand firm therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery.

<sup>2</sup> Behold I, Paul, say to you that if you receive circumcision, Christ will be of no benefit to you. <sup>3</sup> And I testify again to every man who receives circumcision, that he is under obligation to keep the whole law. <sup>4</sup> You are severed from Christ, you who would be<sup>f</sup> justified by the law; you have fallen away from grace. <sup>5</sup> For we through the Spirit, by faith, are waiting for the hope of righteousness. <sup>6</sup> For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision means anything, but faith working through love.

<sup>7</sup> You were running well; who hindered you from obeying the truth? <sup>8</sup> This persuasion is not from him who calls you. <sup>9</sup> A little leaven leavens the whole lump. <sup>10</sup> I have confidence in you in the Lord that you will adopt no other view; but the one who is disturbing you will bear his judgment, whoever he is. <sup>11</sup> But I, brothers, if I still preach circumcision, why am I still persecuted? Then the stumbling block of the cross has been abolished. <sup>12</sup> I wish that those who are troubling you would even emasculate themselves.

<sup>13</sup> For you were called to freedom, brothers; only do not turn your freedom into an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. <sup>14</sup> For the whole law is fulfilled in one word: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” <sup>15</sup> But if you bite and devour one another, watch out that you are not consumed by one another.

### The Spirit Versus the Flesh

<sup>16</sup> But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh. <sup>17</sup> For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are

<sup>f</sup> Or *are seeking or are attempting*



against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, so that you may not do the things you want to do. <sup>18</sup>But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.

### Works of the flesh

<sup>19</sup>Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, <sup>20</sup>idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, <sup>21</sup>envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

### Fruitage of the Spirit

<sup>22</sup>But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, <sup>23</sup>gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. <sup>24</sup>And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.

<sup>25</sup>If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit. <sup>26</sup>Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another.

### Bear One Another's Burdens

**6** Brothers, even if anyone is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; each one looking to yourself, so that you too will not be tempted. <sup>2</sup>Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ. <sup>3</sup>For if anyone thinks he is something, when he is nothing, he deceives himself. <sup>4</sup>But each one must examine his own work, and then he will have reason for boasting in regard to himself alone, and not in regard to another. <sup>5</sup>For each one will bear his own load.

### What Is Sown Is Reaped

<sup>6</sup>The one who is taught<sup>a</sup> the word must share in all good things with the one who teaches. <sup>7</sup>Do not be deceived: God is not to be mocked, for whatever a person sows, this he will also reap. <sup>8</sup>For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life. <sup>9</sup>Let us not grow weary in doing good, for in due time we will reap if we do not grow weary. <sup>10</sup>So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith.<sup>b</sup>

### Circumcision of No Value

<sup>11</sup>See with what large letters I am writing to you with my own hand. <sup>12</sup>Those who want to make a good showing in the flesh who would force you to be circumcised, and only in order that they may not be persecuted for the cross of Christ. <sup>13</sup>For even those who are circumcised do not themselves keep the law, but they desire to have you circumcised that they may boast in your flesh. <sup>14</sup>But far be it from me to boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world. <sup>15</sup>For neither circumcision counts for anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation.<sup>c</sup> <sup>16</sup>And as for all who walk by this rule, peace and mercy be upon them, and upon the Israel of God.

### Conclusion and Benediction

<sup>17</sup>From now on let no one cause me trouble, for I bear on my body the marks of Jesus.

<sup>a</sup> Gr **orally**, *katechetes* taught

<sup>b</sup> I.e. related to us in the faith, namely, spiritual brothers and sisters

<sup>c</sup> Or *creature*; Gr *ktisis*



<sup>18</sup>The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, brothers. Amen.