

Questions & Answers on Galatians
Based on the King James Version
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A serious student of God's Word will read each epistle many times in order to understand it better. The questions below can help you, section by section, observe what the apostle Paul says in his Epistle to the Galatians. For each new number, first read all its information and subquestions (if any). Then do its indicated Bible reading and answer all its questions. Finally, check your answers for that number against those provided at the end.

Sometimes I change Jesus' royal title Christ to its equivalent Messiah (as authorized by John 1:41). For more help on the epistle, see my website, www.kingdominbible.com.

The apostle Paul writes this epistle to defend the gospel against those who pervert it. Galatians has often and rightly been called "The Charter of Christian Liberty." Paul summarizes the gospel in the first verse: "Jesus Messiah...raised...from the dead." Notice the same two elements in the summary of Paul's gospel as preached at Thessalonica, Acts 17:2-3, also Romans 10:8-10.

1. Read Paul's salutation in Galatians 1:1-5, noticing his emphasis on (a) his divine calling to be an apostle and (b) the divine purpose in the gospel. The Greek word translated "world" in verse 4 is *aionos*, which usually refers to a period of time, an age (and which the NIV translates "age" here, Matthew 12:32, and elsewhere). What is the purpose of the gospel?
2. Paul's other epistles to churches have his thanksgiving for the church(es) right after the salutation. Galatians lacks this thanksgiving and has, instead, his emotional statement of the situation prompting him to write. Read Galatians 1:6-9.
 - a. What were the Galatians doing that prompted him to write?
 - b. The false teachers were trying to get the Galatians to be circumcised and keep the law like Jews. We call such teachers "Judaizers." What did Paul want to happen to them?

After the introduction, Galatians chapters 1 and 2 deal with the divine authority of Paul's gospel. It came from God and not from men.

3. Read Galatians 1:10-14. Why could Paul not have learned the gospel before his conversion?
4. Read Galatians 1:15-24. How does Paul show that he did not learn the gospel from the original apostles?
5. Though Paul did not get his gospel from other church leaders, their message was in agreement with his. Read Galatians 2:1-10, which proves this by telling what happened when he and Barnabas visited Jerusalem taking Titus, a Gentile.

- a. How does the treatment of Titus show that the Jerusalem leaders considered Paul's gospel legitimate?
 - b. How did the Jerusalem leaders formally show their agreement? (v. 9)
6. Even apostles did not always act according to the truth. Read Galatians 2:11-21, which tells of a public confrontation Paul had with Peter (sometimes called Aramaic *Cephas* in the Greek version).
- a. What did Peter do that was not in accord with the gospel?
 - b. Peter's action had the effect of forcing Gentiles to live like Jews (v. 14) if they wanted to be acceptable to Jewish Christians. In response Paul in one sentence (v. 16) stated three times a particular truth about Jewish salvation. What truth?
 - c. Galatians 2:19-21 can be considered the key verses of the whole epistle. According to them, how does a person die to the law and live to God?
NOTE: If at all possible, memorize Galatians 2:19-21, at least verse 20.

Galatians chapters 3 and 4 revolve around Abraham—his faith and God's promise to him and his "seed."

7. Read Galatians 3:1-5. The Galatians were foolish because they were substituting "flesh"—weak human nature—for God's powerful gift received by faith. What gift?
8. No doubt one of the Judaizers' arguments was the fact that God commanded Abraham and others under his covenant to be circumcised (Gen. 17). Paul goes to an earlier time in Abraham's life, to show that he was already right with God—in a way his children must follow. Read Galatians 3:6-9 and tell on what basis Abraham was already right.
9. No doubt the Judaizers also praised God's law. They could easily prove that it was divine. They would also conclude that it was designed to make men good and acceptable to God—qualified to receive the blessing promised to Abraham. Read Paul's answer in Galatians 3:10-14.
 - a. Instead of Abraham's blessing, what do those under the law receive?
 - b. How do men get freed from the curse in order to be blessed?
10. The promise to Abraham was also for his "seed," who had not come when the law was given. Read Galatians 3:15-24.
 - a. Who was Abraham's "seed," heir of the promise?
 - b. Why could the law not be a part of the covenant with Abraham?
 - c. What was the purpose of the law? (3:19, 24)
11. Read Galatians 3:25 to 4:7, noticing how our relation to God is different now.
 - a. Because we are in Messiah, how are we related to Abraham? (3:25-29)
 - b. What is our relation to God in contrast to what it was under law? (4:1-7)
12. Read Galatians 4:8-20.
 - a. What was some evidence that the Galatians were returning to "weak and beggarly elements" of religion?

- b. How had their attitude toward Paul changed?
13. Read Galatians 4:21-31, noticing Paul's analogy, in which he compares the two present sets of Abraham's descendants to Abraham's two sons.
- a. From 4:22-27 make two lists of items that are contrasted with each other. For example, the first list would include Abraham's son born after the flesh, his mother (the handmaid), the covenant she represents, and the city now in the same bondage. Label the first list "The Flesh" and the second list "The Spirit."
 - b. From 4:28-30 list three applications of the analogy, one per verse.

Galatians chapters 5 and 6 pass to practical exhortation.

14. The first exhortation is to live in liberty rather than in bondage to law. Read Galatians 5:1-12.
- a. "Fallen from grace" does not describe a person careless of how he lives. Whom does it describe?
 - b. What is the principle that "availeth" in Messiah? (5:6)
15. The next exhortation is to live in liberty rather than license (freedom without limits). This is a constant struggle. Read Galatians 5:13-25.
- a. What should liberty lead us to do? (5:13)
 - b. How can we avoid doing what our old nature (flesh) wants?
 - c. List the fruit of the Spirit and what you understand by each one. ("Temperance" should be "self-control.")
16. The next exhortation is to live in liberty by serving others. Read Galatians 5:26 to 6:10.
- a. What is our obligation when we see a Christian fall in sin?
 - b. The "burdens" of 6:2 are heavy weights of sin and failure that no Christian should carry alone. "Burden" in 6:5 is a different word, sometimes used of a soldier's pack, which he must carry himself. What, then, does it represent?
 - c. What is the rule about sowing and reaping?
17. Read Paul's conclusion in Galatians 6:11-18. "How large a letter" in verse 11 should be "with what large letters." Paul himself was writing the last verses (or maybe the whole epistle) instead of having a scribe write. His large letters did not show poor eyesight but great concern.
- a. Judaizers did not keep the law themselves but wanted others circumcised to glory in their flesh. What was Paul's only glory?
 - b. Some understand "the Israel of God" (6:16) to be the church. Yet, the term *Israel* is used elsewhere in the New Testament (about eighty times) only of the Jews. If that usage holds true here, what part of "Israel" does Paul mean?

ANSWERS

- 1. "to deliver us from this present evil age" (v. 4)
- 2. a. They were leaving the gospel of Messiah for a different gospel.

- b. He wanted them to be accursed. (1:8,9)
- 3. because zealous for traditions, he was persecuting the church (1:13-14)
- 4. by telling of his lack of contact with them
- 5. a. They did not require Titus to be circumcised.
b. by giving Paul and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship
- 6. a. He withdrew from Gentiles, as though it were wrong to eat with them (2:12).
b. that justification is not by works of law but by faith in Messiah
c. by being identified with Messiah in His death and resurrection—then Messiah lives in him
NOTE: This is **already true** of every believer, as the apostle teaches also in Romans 6:1-11. It is not something we are to do but something we are to count on.
- 7. the Holy Spirit
- 8. on the basis of believing God (3:6)—that is, faith (3:9)
- 9. a. a curse (3:10, 13)
b. through the death of Messiah, who took their curse (3:13)
- 10. a. Messiah (3:16)
b. because it would make the promise of no effect (by substituting requirements for promise)
c. because of transgressions, to be a school master (child discipliner)
- 11. a. In Messiah we are Abraham’s seed—and therefore heirs.
b. redeemed from slavery under law and adopted as sons—and therefore heirs—and given the Holy Spirit
- 12. a. They were observing days, months, times, years. (4:10)
b. When he had brought the gospel, they had highly valued him (4:14-15); now they considered him an enemy (4:16).
- 13. a.

THE FLESH Abraham’s son born after the flesh his mother (the handmaid) the covenant made at Mt. Sinai Jerusalem which now is her children	THE SPIRIT Abraham’s son born by promise his mother (the free woman) the [new] covenant Jerusalem which is above believers
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 b. (1) We are children of promise, not after the flesh (4:28).
 (2) The children after the flesh persecute those born after the Spirit (4:29).
 (3) The bond woman and her son are to be cast out, will not inherit with us (4:30).
- 14. a. whoever wants to be justified by the law (5:4)
b. faith that works by love
- 15. a. serve one another
b. walk in the Spirit (5:16)
c. love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, meekness, faith, self-control (You should have added your own understanding of each one.)
- 16. a. restore him in the spirit of meekness (6:1)
b. It probably represents one’s responsibilities (see “his own work,” 6:4).
c. Whatever a man sows is what he will reap.
- 17. a. the cross of Messiah (6:14)
b. those that believe in Jesus as Messiah