
THE BOOK OF
GALATIANS
STAND
FIRM
IN THE GOSPEL
OF GRACE


Paul's Ministry Recognized by the Apostles
Galatians 2:1-10
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Cross Walk kids recognized for verse memorization



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Alan & James recognized as elders in May, 2022



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David Johns recognized as a full time worker in May, 2023



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Outline of Galatians

I. The True gospel defended (Chapters 1-2)

A. Greetings (1:1-1:5)

B. The distortion of the true gospel (1:6-1:9)

C. The revelation and affirmation of the true gospel (1:10-2:10)

1) Paul's calling and defense of his discipleship (1:10-17)

2) Paul's testimonies (1:18-24)

3) Paul's ministry recognized by the apostles (2:1-10)

D. The hypocrisy of Peter (2:11-2:14)

E. Justification is by faith, not by works (2:15-2:21)

II. The True gospel explained (Chapters 3-4)

III. The True gospel applied (Chapters 5-6)

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Saul’s encounter with the risen Christ on the road to Damascus



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Many believe the conversion of this man was the most significant event in the history of the church, second only to the resurrection of Jesus Christ Himself.

Why? Saul's conversion was one of the most convincing proofs of the reality and credibility of the Christian faith.

Why such a radical change?

The only explanation for Saul's conversion is that He had a life changing personal encounter with the Resurrected Christ on the road to Damascus. In the years following he endured immense suffering as he preached the Gospel. Why would he do that unless he was absolutely convinced of Christ's resurrection?

Galatians 2:1 “Then after an interval of fourteen years I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, taking Titus along also.”

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2:2 “And it was because of a revelation that I went up; and I submitted to them the gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but I did so in private to those who were of reputation, for fear that I might be running, or had run, in vain.”

* Why did Paul submit to the apostles in private the Gospel he preached?

“It was a matter of common courtesy to speak to the leaders first. It was also desirable that the leaders should be thoroughly convinced as to the genuineness of Paul’s gospel. If they had any questions or difficulties, Paul wanted to answer them at the outset. Then he could go before the church with the full support of the other apostles.”

Bill MacDonald

* Why would Paul fear that he “might be running or had run in vain?”

“Paul desired to present his gospel privately at first, in an atmosphere free from possible mass hysteria. Had Paul acted otherwise, a serious dispute might have arisen, dividing the church into a Jewish wing and a Gentile one. Then the purpose of Paul’s trip to Jerusalem would have been defeated. This is what he means by lest by any means I might run, or had run, in vain.”

Bill MacDonald

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2:3 “But not even Titus who was with me, though he was a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised.”

* What was Paul’s motive for bringing Titus with him to Jerusalem?

Perhaps Paul brought Titus to test the Jerusalem church.

Would they receive an uncircumcised Gentile believer?

Or insist that he be circumcised?

The Judaizers would say Titus needed to be circumcised or else he was not saved.

The early church came to the right conclusion. Circumcision was not necessary for salvation.

* What about later in Acts 16:3 when Paul circumcised Timothy? Acts 16:3 “Paul wanted this man to go with him; and he took him and circumcised him because of the Jews who were in those parts, for they all knew that his father was a Greek.”

The situation with Timothy was different. As Paul, Silas and Timothy were embarking on the second missionary journey, Jews they encountered would learn that even though his father was Greek, Timothy was Jewish and had a Jewish mother. If they knew Timothy was not circumcised they might not listen to them. So Paul circumcised Timothy, not under compulsion in order for him to be saved, but to win a hearing with Jews.

Paul circumcising Timothy was consistent with what Paul said in 1Cor. 9:19,20, 22b, 23:

“For though I am free from all men, I have made myself a slave to all, that I might win the more. And to the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might win Jews; to those who are under the Law, as under the Law, though not being myself under the Law, that I might win those who are under the Law… I have become all things to all men, that I may by all means save some. And I do all things for the sake of the gospel, that I may become a fellow partaker of it.”

Gal. 2:4 “But it was because of the false brethren who had sneaked in to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, in order to bring us into bondage.”

* Who were these false brethren?
These were Judaizers who may have outwardly professed faith in Christ, but taught another gospel. They showed their true colors of what they really believe in Acts 15:1, “And some men came down from Judea and began teaching the brethren, ‘Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved.’"

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* Besides circumcision, what are some other things that are wrongly added to the Gospel of faith in Christ alone for salvation?
- Being baptized
- Going to church
- Receiving the sacraments
- Keeping the 10 commandments
- Doing good works

Paul clearly declared in Eph 2:8-10 “For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, that no one should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.”

Pop Quiz: Which equation is correct?

1) Faith in Christ + Works = Salvation

2) Faith in Christ = Salvation + Works

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2:4 * What did these false brethren do?

They “sneaked in to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ in order to bring us into bondage.”



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But Paul proclaimed the liberty we have in Christ in Gal. 5:1 “It was for freedom that Christ set us free; therefore keep standing firm and do not be subject again to a yoke of slavery.”

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2:5 “But we did not yield in subjection to them for even an hour, so that the truth of the gospel might remain with you.”

This last phrase gives us the reason why it was so important for Paul to write this letter to the Galatians: “so that the truth of the gospel might remain with you.”

* How well do you and I understand and hold fast to the truth of the Gospel?
* How prepared are we to share it and defend it?

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* What are ways some religions or false teachers try to impose unscriptural restrictions that bring bondage?

Paul gives some examples:
1 Timothy 4:3,4: “men who forbid marriage and advocate abstaining from foods which God has created to be gratefully shared in by those who believe and know the truth. For everything created by God is good, and nothing is to be rejected, if it is received with gratitude;”

In Col 2:16 Paul warns about things Judaizers would insist on: “Therefore let no one act as your judge in regard to food or drink or in respect to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath day”

“Food or drink”: the Judaizers were probably trying to impose dietary restrictions from the Mosaic Law. But those restrictions have been done away with in the age of grace. Acts 10:10-16.

“Or in respect to a festival or a new moon”

“Or a Sabbath day”
Messianic Judaism: blends evangelical Christian theology with elements of religious Jewish practice.

Seventh Day Adventists: teach that Christians should keep the Sabbath.

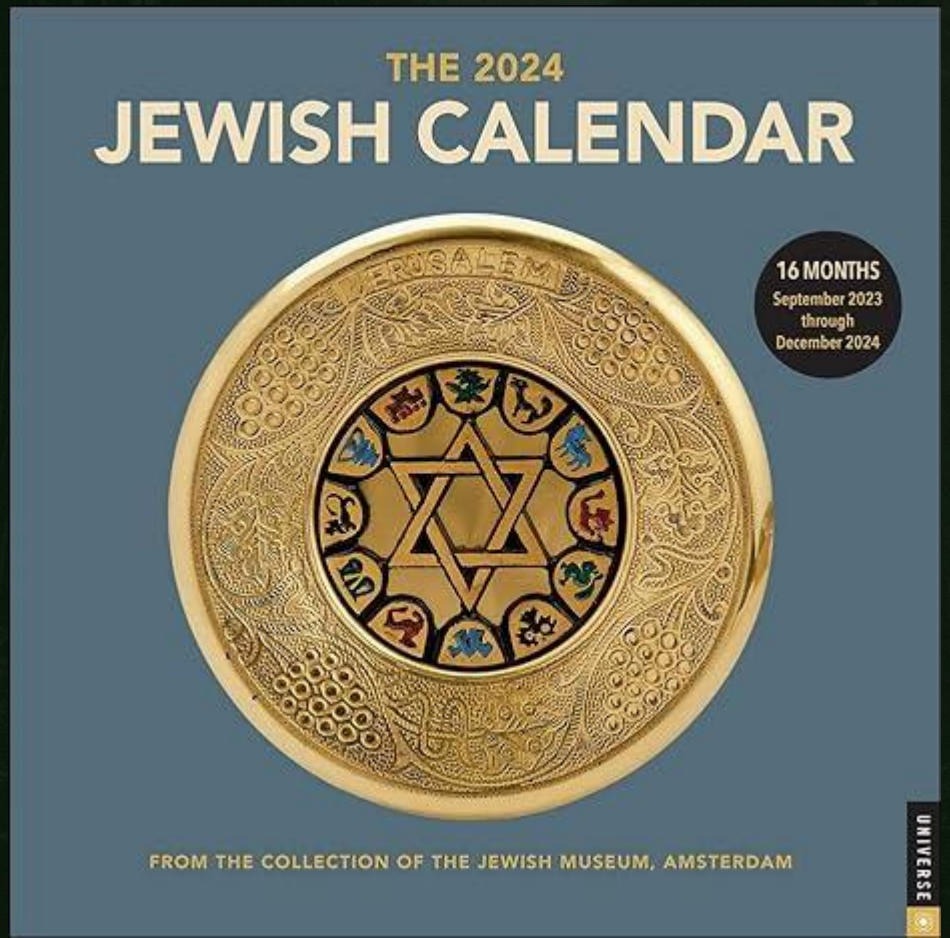
* What does Scripture say about the observance of days?
Rom 14:5,6 “One man regards one day above another, another regards every day alike. Let each man be fully convinced in his own mind. He who observes the day, observes it for the Lord”

* For whom was the Sabbath given?

Exod 31:16,17 “So the sons of Israel shall observe the sabbath, to celebrate the sabbath throughout their generations as a perpetual covenant. It is a sign between Me and the sons of Israel forever; for in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, but on the seventh day He ceased from labor, and was refreshed.“

All the 10 commandments are repeated in the NT except one: the 4th commandment to keep the Sabbath.

In Galatians 4:10,11 Paul said of the Galatians “You observe days and months and seasons and years. I fear for you, that perhaps I have labored over you in vain.”



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* As Christians, why do we gather for corporate worship on Sunday not Saturday?

1) This is the day of Christ's resurrection. Mat.28:1

2) This is the day that the resurrected Lord Jesus first showed Himself to His disciples and sent them to preach the Gospel. John 20:19-23

3) Sunday is the day the early disciples in Troas met for the Breaking of Bread. Acts 20:7

4) It was on Sunday, the first day of the week, that the saints in Corinth were instructed by Paul to take up a collection for the saints, just as he instructed the churches in Galatia to do. 1Cor. 16:1,2

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Gal. 2:6 “But from those who were of high reputation (what they were makes no difference to me; God shows no partiality)-- well, those who were of reputation contributed nothing to me.”

* Why did Paul seem to discount or slight these leaders by saying their “high reputation… makes no difference to me?”

* What did Paul mean when he said of the church leaders that they “contributed nothing to me?” Other translations like the ESV and KJV say, “added nothing to me.”

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2:7 “But on the contrary, seeing that I had been entrusted with the gospel to the uncircumcised, just as Peter had been to the circumcised”

Paul had been entrusted with the most important message on earth: the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

We too have been entrusted with that same Gospel and want to always be ready to share it.
1Thess. 2:4: “but just as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel, so we speak, not as pleasing men but God, who examines our hearts.”

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2:8 “(for He who effectually worked for Peter in his apostleship to the circumcised effectually worked for me also to the Gentiles)”
Paul knew any effectiveness he or any other apostle experienced in their ministry and preaching of the Gospel was totally due to the Lord working through them.

The same is true for us, isn’t it?
As Paul said in 2 Corinthians 3:5,6 “Not that we are adequate in ourselves to consider anything as coming from ourselves, but our adequacy is from God.”

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2:9 “and recognizing the grace that had been given to me, James and Cephas and John, who were reputed to be pillars, gave to me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship, that we might go to the Gentiles, and they to the circumcised.”

*What does it mean that they gave Paul and Barnabas the “right hand of fellowship?”

This was not an official ordination, but an expression of identification, recognition and fellowship with Paul and his ministry.

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2:10 “They only asked us to remember the poor-- the very thing I also was eager to do.”

During Paul’s third missionary Journey we see Paul remembering the poor in 1Cor. 16:1-3, “Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I directed the churches of Galatia, so do you also. On the first day of every week let each one of you put aside and save, as he may prosper, that no collections be made when I come. And when I arrive, whomever you may approve, I shall send them with letters to carry your gift to Jerusalem.”

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* What does caring for the poor have to do with telling others about Christ?

Sharing Christ with the poor is very near to His heart as Jesus said in Luke 4:18 "The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, Because He anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor. He has sent Me to proclaim release to the captives, And recovery of sight to the blind, To set free those who are downtrodden.”

* What can you and I do to help the poor? Some suggestions:

- Pray about sending funds to missionaries or mission agencies like CMML who are ministering to the poor overseas.

- Locally we can give to groups like City Team or the Bay Area Rescue Mission who are specially equipped to minister to the poor and unhoused.

- When encountering people on the street asking for help you can prepare small packages of food and other necessities including a Gospel tract to give to them.

Some

Some applications

We should:

- Be ready to share the Gospel 1Pet 3:15
- Reject any work added to the Gospel Gal. 2:5
- Recognize & thank God for those who minister. Gal. 2:9
- Remember the poor Gal. 2:10

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