

## **7. Paul's Letter to the Galatians**

**I. Galatians 1:1-6** The writer, No co-sender, The long intitutatio, the presentation of himself (v. 1) "And all the brothers and sisters who are with me" (v. 2a)

The recipients (v. 2b) All the churches, Of Galatia: the territory, or the province that Paul had visited during the second and third missionary voyages (Acts 15:6; 18:23)?

The greeting (vv. 3-4). Expansion: an apocalyptic view of history (v. 4), The doxology (v. 5) Instead of a thanksgiving, an expression of astonishment and anger (v. 6), which continues until v. 10

### **II. An Autobiographical Reflection, Intended to Defend the Gospel He**

**Preaches (1:11- 2:21)** His "thesis" (1:11-12) His "conversion" (1:13-17) Three years later (1:18-24) A visit to Jerusalem, the first meeting and two-week stay with Cephas (vv. 18-20). Paul swears that he is telling the truth. Visit to his home territory (v. 21) Reaction of the churches of Judea (vv. 22-24)

Fourteen years later (2:1-10) The revelation-prompted visit of Paul, accompanied by Barnabas and Titus, to Jerusalem (vv. 1-2) The situation of Titus (v. 3) Encounter with false believers (vv. 4-5) Division of the mission (vv. 6-10) The pillars of the church: James, Cephas, and John "Remember the poor" Peter's rebuke in Antioch (1:11-14) Justification of Jews and Gentiles through faith in Jesus Christ (1:15-21)

**III. Believers are Abraham's Children (3:1-5:12)** Promises made to Abraham and his offspring, Christ (3:1-29) The faith of Abraham (Gen 15:6; Gen 12:3) (vv. 6-9) Redemption from the curse of the law (Deut 27:26; Hab 2:4; Lev 18:5; Deut 27:26) (w. 10-14) The promises to Abraham and his offspring (vv. 15-18) The purpose of the law (w. 19-22) Those who belong to Christ are Abraham's offspring and heirs according to promise (w. 23-29).

The Galatians should not return to a position of minority and enslavement (4:1-5:12). Believers are children and heirs (4:1-7). A rebuke of the Galatians: How could they have changed so much? (4:8-20) The allegory of Hagar and Sarah (Gen 21:8-21; Isa 54:1) (4:21-31) 4) Christ has set us free (5:1-13). Neither circumcision nor uncircumcision counts for anything, just faith working through love (5:2-6). Called to freedom but through love, slaves to one another (5:13-15)

**IV. Moral Exhortation: "Live by the Spirit" (5:16-10)** Flesh and Spirit  
Works of the flesh (5:19-21) Fruits of the Spirit (5:22)

**V. Paul's Handwritten Postscript (6:11-18)** The large letters (v. 11)  
Recapitulation (vv. 12-17) Final salutation (v. 18)

**Review Questions**

1. What did you learn about Paul from reading the autobiographical section of the Letter to the Galatians?
2. Why has Paul so much to say about Abraham?
3. How do you understand Paul's distinction between the flesh and the spirit?