

“The Gospel and Freedom”

Date / Time: January 12–16, 2026, 7:30–9:00 PM

Location: Community Church of Seattle

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Date	Lecture Topic
Monday (12 th)	Introduction to Galatians (Gal 1:1–4)
Tuesday (13 th)	Defense of the Gospel (1): Defense through Testimony (Gal 1:6–2:21)
Wednesday (14 th)	Defense of the Gospel (2): Defense through Scripture (Gal 3:1–4:31)
Thursday (15 th)	Defense of the Gospel (3): Defense through Life (Gal 5:1–6:18)
Friday (16 th)	Pauline Theology as Seen through Galatians

Lecture 1 (Monday, January 12)

Introduction to Galatians (Galatians 1:1–5)

Christians believe the gospel to be the truth and regard the proclamation of the gospel as the **Great Commission entrusted to them on earth**. The gospel stands at the very heart of the Christian faith.

But **what exactly is the gospel that Christians cherish so deeply?** When and how did the gospel begin? What relationship does the gospel of Jesus Christ have with the **Abrahamic covenant**? How does it relate to the **Mosaic Law**? Does the gospel deny the covenant and the Law, replace them, or fulfill them?

Christians who believe the gospel teach that a person is justified **not by works**, but **only by faith in Christ**. Then, **are faith and works opposed to one another?** Does this mean that faith is important and works are not important? Furthermore, what does it mean to be “justified”? What relationship is there between being justified through the forgiveness of sins and living a righteous life?

These questions may be felt to be burdensome. However, because these questions concern the essence of the Christian faith, they are very important. Therefore, if one is a Christian, one must think about them seriously and seek the answers within the Scriptures.

The book of the Bible that explains these questions most clearly is Galatians. The gospel is the theme of Galatians. Galatians emphasizes, explains, and defends the gospel more than any other book.

What Is the Book of Galatians?

1. It is one of the letters written by the apostle Paul (Gal. 1:1–2a).

(1) The New Testament contains ____ letters.

(2) Among these, the letters written by the apostle Paul total ____ in number.
The Letter to the Hebrews is also closely related to Paul.

(3) Letters have established forms.

These forms differ somewhat depending on the time period and culture.

(The writing and delivery process of letters in the ancient Greek/Roman world)

- Types of letters:
- Writing materials and instruments:
- Process of writing:
- Methods of delivery:
- Measures for authenticity and security:

(4) Paul’s letters resemble the letter form of the ancient Greek/Roman world, but they also have several distinctive characteristics.

- Compared to ancient letters, Paul’s letters are very long.

The number of characters (words) in ancient personal letters ranges from 18 to 209.

By contrast, the average length of Paul’s letters is approximately 1,300 words.

The longest letter is Romans, which consists of as many as 7,114 words.

- All of Paul's letters are _____ letters. However, they are closely related to the _____ community.
- All of Paul's letters are _____ letters, and they are _____ letters.
- Depending on Paul's relationship with the recipients and the purpose for writing, the form, content, and mode of expression of his letters differ significantly.
- Most of Paul's letters can be divided into an introduction, a main body, and a conclusion.
- The main body of Paul's letters can often be divided into a first half and a second half: the first half consists of _____ content, and the second half consists of instructional (ethical) content. The first half is written primarily in descriptive form, while commands frequently appear in the second half.
- The introductions of Paul's letters usually contain five elements:
(a) _____, (b) _____, (c) _____, (d) _____, (e) _____
- The introduction of a letter hints at Paul's relationship with the recipients, the background and purpose of the letter, and the core content of the letter.

(5) How does Paul introduce himself in the book of Galatians?

- There are three titles that Paul uses when introducing himself.

(a) _____, (b) _____, (c) _____

What kind of impression does each title give?

- How does Paul introduce himself in Galatians? Which title does he use? Why does he use an official and authoritative title?
- When introducing himself, what does he say about Christ and about God? What kind of implication does this give concerning the content of Galatians?
- Paul mentions co-senders. Who are they? Why does he mention them?

2. It is a letter sent to the churches located in the region of Galatia (Gal. 1:2b).

(1) Where is the region of Galatia?

- It is a region that belongs to present-day Turkey (Türkiye).
- There are two views among scholars: the South Galatian hypothesis and the North Galatian hypothesis.
- When the geography and history of the time, the record of the Acts of the Apostles, and the content of Galatians are analyzed, the South Galatian hypothesis is more persuasive.

(Reference: supplementary materials at the back of the textbook)

(2) When did Paul establish churches in the region of Galatia?

According to the South Galatian hypothesis, he established them during his first missionary journey. This is estimated to have taken place around A.D. 46–47. Paul's first missionary work is recorded in detail in Acts chapters 13 and 14.

Let's trace the Apostle Paul's First Missionary Journey using a map.

MAP

Let us look for answers to the following questions, focusing on the Book of Acts.

- Who traveled with Paul?
- Which cities did he visit? Why did he visit these cities? What happened in each city?
- Approximately how far did Paul and his companions travel? What means of transportation did they use, and how long might the journey have taken?
- How difficult were these missionary journeys? Paul's sufferings are vividly described in **2 Corinthians 11:23–27**.

3. This is a letter written because problems arose in the Galatian churches.

(1) After Paul returned to Antioch from his first missionary journey, problems arose in the Galatian churches.

- What kind of problems arose?
- Who caused these problems? Was it one person or several? Were they people from within the church or outsiders who came in?
- How did they disrupt the churches?
- What negative things did they say about Paul?
- What did they teach, and how did they behave?
- In what way did they distort the gospel?
- Why were the believers in the Galatian churches so easily swayed by them?

(2) When Paul heard that there were problems in the churches, how did he respond?

Paul was extremely angry with those who distorted the gospel, and he strongly rebuked the believers who were so easily misled by false teaching. He passionately defended the gospel. This side of Paul appears very clearly in the Letter to the Galatians.

- **Galatians 1:1**

"Paul, an apostle—not from men nor through man, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father, who raised him from the dead..."

From the very beginning of the letter, Paul strongly defends his apostleship and mentions the core of the gospel: Christ's death and resurrection. Why did he do this? Why was it necessary?

- **Galatians 1:6–10**

"I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting him who called you in the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel (I marvel, I am amazed, I am astonished)—not that there is another one, but there are some who trouble you and want to distort the gospel of Christ. But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach to you a gospel contrary to the one we preached to you, let him be

accursed (Let him be accursed! Curse be upon him!). As we have said before, so now I say again: If anyone is preaching to you a gospel contrary to the one you received, let him be accursed. For am I now seeking the approval of man, or of God? Or am I trying to please man? If I were still trying to please man, I would not be a servant of Christ.”

Here Paul expresses deep disappointment toward the Galatian believers and twice pronounces a curse on those who distorted the gospel he preached.

- **Galatians 3:1–3**

“O foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you? It was before your eyes that Jesus Christ was publicly portrayed as crucified. Let me ask you only this: Did you receive the Spirit by works of the law or by hearing with faith? Are you so foolish? Having begun by the Spirit, are you now being perfected by the flesh?”

Paul rebukes the Galatians strongly, calling them “foolish” or “senseless.”

- **Galatians 4:12–16**

“You know it was because of a bodily ailment that I preached the gospel to you at first, and though my condition was a trial to you, you did not scorn or despise me, but received me as an angel of God, as Christ Jesus... What then has become of your blessedness? For I testify to you that, if possible, you would have gouged out your eyes and given them to me. Have I then become your enemy by telling you the truth?”

Paul asks rhetorically whether he has now become their enemy simply for telling them the truth, when they once welcomed him so warmly.

- **Galatians 5:7–10**

“You were running well. Who hindered you from obeying the truth? This persuasion is not from him who calls you. A little leaven leavens the whole lump. I have confidence in the Lord that you will take no other view, but the one who is troubling you will bear the penalty, whoever he is.”

Paul compares those who disturb the church to leaven and declares that God’s judgment will come upon them.

- **Galatians 5:11–12**

“But if I, brothers, still preach circumcision, why am I still being persecuted? In that case the offense of the cross has been removed. I wish those who unsettle you would emasculate themselves!”

Paul bluntly states that he wishes those who are troubling the church would cut themselves off.

- **Galatians 6:17**

“From now on let no one cause me trouble, for I bear on my body the marks of Jesus.”

Paul ends the letter with a stern warning: do not trouble him anymore.

In this way, Galatians reveals Paul’s intense emotions more openly than any of his other letters. What was it that made Paul so angry?

4. This is a letter written to prevent the distortion of the gospel.

Therefore, the core of the gospel that Paul insists on is this: **“A person is justified not by works of the law but by faith”** (Galatians 2:15–16).

This statement, together with Romans, provided the theological cornerstone of the Reformation known as “**justification by faith alone**” (*sola fide*).

5. Galatians is very logical in its development, apologetic (defensive), and rhetorical.

The Paul we see in Galatians is like a **trial lawyer** standing in court, powerfully defending the truth.

Let us read **Galatians 1:6–10** once again:

“I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting him who called you in the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel (I marvel, I am amazed, I am astonished)—not that there is another one, but there are some who trouble you and want to distort the gospel of Christ. But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach to you a gospel contrary to the one we preached to you, let him be accursed (Let him be accursed! Curse be upon him!). As we have said before, so now I say again: If anyone is preaching to you a gospel contrary to the one you received, let him be accursed. For am I now seeking the approval of man, or of God? Or am I trying to please man? If I were still trying to please man, I would not be a servant of Christ.”

The Paul we see in Galatians is like a trial lawyer passionately defending his client in court. In order to protect the believers in the Galatian churches, he points out the problems of those who were troubling them. He then explains point by point, presenting evidence, why the gospel he preached is the only true gospel.

He proves and defends why the gospel he preached is the true gospel in **three ways**:

(1) _____ defense (1:11–2:21); _____ defense (3:1–4:31); _____ defense (5:1–6:10)

We can also find **rhetorical elements** in Paul’s defense.

1. **Ethos**: persuasion based on credibility and moral character
2. **Pathos**: persuasion that appeals to emotion
3. **Logos**: persuasion based on logic and reason

Conclusion and Application

1. I hope you have come to realize how important it is to know the story behind Galatians and the background in which it was written. I hope you have gained a deeper understanding of Paul’s heart as revealed in Galatians. I hope that the apostle Paul’s passion and devotion to the gospel and the church have challenged you. I hope Galatians now feels more familiar to you. I hope you feel a desire to read Galatians once again. I hope you want to study Galatians more deeply. And I hope this creates an eager anticipation for the next lecture.
2. Consider the following questions and share your thoughts:
 1. What is something new you learned or realized through today’s lecture?
 2. What is the core of the gospel as presented in Galatians?
 3. What things today distort the gospel?
 4. Examine yourself to see whether you have the same conviction and passion for the gospel that Paul had.

Lecture 2 (Tuesday, January 13)

Defense of the Gospel (1): Defense through Experience (Testimony) (Galatians 1:6–2:21)

The main body of Galatians begins at chapter 1, verse 6. The first word that appears is the verb **“thaumazō”** (다우마조). In the Korean Bible, it is translated as “내가 이삼히 여기노라” and appears at the end of the sentence due to differences in word order. In English Bibles, it is translated as “I am astonished” (ESV, NIV, RSV), “I marvel” (NKJV), or “I am amazed” (NAS). It expresses considerable disappointment or astonishment.

Why was Paul disappointed and astonished? It was because he heard that the Galatian believers had been led astray by false teaching.

At the beginning, Paul firmly states, **“There is no other gospel than the one I preached”** (v.7). He strongly condemns those who distort the gospel (vv.8–9) and presents himself as a servant of Christ seeking only the approval of God (v.10).

Next, he explains, point by point and logically, why the teaching of those who troubled the church was wrong and why the gospel he preached is the true gospel. First, he explains through his actions after his conversion (1:11–2:21), and then he explains by citing the Old Testament scriptures (3:1–4:31). The reason he mentions his own actions is to prove that the gospel he preached was not received from humans or taught by them, but revealed to him by God’s grace. He mentions Abraham and the Law of Moses from the Old Testament because the false teachers boasted of being Abraham’s descendants and were insisting on circumcision and works of the law (3:1–4:31).

The events from his own life that Paul mentions are as follows:

- (1) the event of meeting Jesus on the road to Damascus (1:11–16),
- (2) the time he stayed in Damascus and Arabia (1:17),
- (3) his first meeting with Peter and James in Jerusalem (1:18–20),
- (4) the time he stayed in the regions of Cilicia and Syria (1:21–24),
- (5) his return visit to Jerusalem (2:1–10), and
- (6) the incident in Antioch where he publicly opposed Peter (2:11–14).

These events that Paul mentions are extremely important biblical data for tracing Paul’s life and constructing his chronology in connection with the record of Acts. Above all, they are crucial for understanding the Letter to the Galatians.

Read Galatians 1:11–2:21 and think about the following.

1. The source of the gospel: The gospel that I preached did not originate from man, but was understood by God’s grace (Gal 1:11–24).

(1) The encounter with Jesus Christ (Gal 1:11–16)

- What kind of person was Paul before his conversion? Why did he persecute the church so violently? (see vv. 13–14)
- How does Paul say he came to understand the gospel that he preached? (see vv. 11–12)

- What does “the revelation of Jesus Christ” mentioned in verse 12 mean? Think about this in connection with verse 16.

Note: The Greek word *apokalypsis*, translated as “revelation,” not only means “revelation” but also carries the meaning of “appearance” or “manifestation.” In this passage, the emphasis is less on revelation through words and more on the appearance (manifestation) of the risen Jesus. In verse 16, Paul confesses that God was pleased to reveal His Son to him. The verb used here shares the same root as *apokalypsis*. This points to the risen Jesus appearing to Paul on the road to Damascus.

- When and where did Paul experience his conversion—on the road to Damascus or inside the city of Damascus? (see Acts 9:1–19) Why is this important?
- According to Paul, why did God choose him? (vv. 15–16)
- Paul says that immediately after his conversion he did not consult with flesh and blood, nor did he go up to Jerusalem to meet the apostles. Why does he mention this fact?

Note: It seems that among Paul’s relatives, there were some who believed in Jesus before him. For example, in Romans 16:7, Paul calls Andronicus and Junia “my relatives” and says that they were in Christ before him. In addition, he refers to Herodion (Rom 16:11), Lucius, Jason, and Sosipater (Rom 16:21) as his relatives.

(2) The time Paul stayed in Damascus and Arabia (Gal 1:17)

After his conversion, Paul did not immediately return to Jerusalem. He did not go to consult with his relatives about what had happened to him. Instead, he stayed in Damascus and Arabia.

- **What did Paul do in Damascus?** Galatians does not tell us what Paul did there. However, Acts 9:19–25 mentions his activities.
- **Why did Paul go to Arabia? What region does Arabia refer to? What might he have done there?**

Note: When people commonly hear the word “**Arabia**,” they think of an uninhabited sandy desert or a barren wilderness. Because of this, some assume that after his conversion Paul went into an uninhabited wilderness, spent three years alone in prayer, and devoted himself to spiritual discipline. However, this is not the case. Arabia is the largest peninsula in the world and refers to a vast region that today includes Yemen, Oman, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and the southern regions of Iraq and Jordan. From ancient times, large kingdoms existed in Arabia, and trade was very active. We cannot know exactly which part of this vast region Paul went to, but it is quite possible that he traveled as far as the Nabataean Kingdom in the south. A clue can be found in 2 Corinthians 11:32: **“In Damascus, the governor under King Aretas was guarding the city of Damascus in order to seize me, but I was let down in a basket through a window in the wall and escaped from his hands.”** The King **Aretas** mentioned here is Aretas IV, who ruled the Nabataean Kingdom from 9 BC to AD 40. He was the father-in-law of Herod Antipas, the Jewish ruler who beheaded John the Baptist. At the time of Paul’s conversion, he was a very influential king and exercised considerable influence over Damascus. The Nabataean Kingdom controlled the trade routes connecting China, India, southern Arabia, and Egypt. Petra, which is famous today as a tourist site, was a Nabataean city built along this trade route. Why would King Aretas of the Nabataean Kingdom send soldiers all the way to Damascus to arrest Paul? If Paul had only gone to a quiet Arabian desert to pray alone, Aretas would not even have known who Paul was, nor would he have issued an

order for his arrest. It is highly likely that Paul entered Nabataean cities and caused conflict among the people. How might he have caused conflict? Most likely, by proclaiming Jesus Christ as the Messiah to the Jews living there. This is because Paul did the same thing in Damascus, in Jerusalem, and everywhere he went during his missionary work (Antioch, Iconium, Lystra, Ephesus, Thessalonica, Corinth, etc.), encountering the same kind of opposition.

(3) The first meeting with Peter (Cephas) and James, the Lord's brother (Gal 1:18–20)

- How long after leaving Jerusalem did Paul return to Jerusalem?
- After returning to Jerusalem, whom did he meet, and how many days did he spend with them?

Note: Cephas is Peter's Aramaic name (John 1:42). Peter is his Greek name, and his Hebrew name is Simon. Having three names is evidence that he was influenced by three cultures. In Scripture, the name Peter is used most frequently (156 times). However, Paul uniquely refers to Peter as Cephas.

The James mentioned in this passage is one of Jesus' brothers, not James who was one of the Twelve disciples. We do not know exactly when James, the Lord's brother, came to believe in Jesus, but it is highly likely that he converted after Jesus' resurrection. In a short period of time, he emerged as a leader of the early church. In Acts 15, he appears as the leading figure of the Jerusalem Council. From the records in Acts, Galatians, and the Epistle of James, it is clear that he was a highly influential leader in the early church. Even when the other apostles left Jerusalem, he remained there, and according to the first-century Jewish historian Josephus, he was martyred in Jerusalem in AD 62.

- What did Paul do during the fifteen days he stayed in Jerusalem? Why did he have to leave Jerusalem in haste? Galatians does not explain the reason, but Acts 9:26–30 provides the explanation.
- What Paul emphasizes in this passage is that for three years after his conversion he did not meet the apostles in Jerusalem. Even when he visited Jerusalem after three years and met Peter and James, the time he spent with them was very short (fifteen days), and he did not have deep fellowship with them.

Why does Paul emphasize this fact?

(4) Ministry in Cilicia and Syria (Gal 1:21–24)

- After leaving Jerusalem, where did Paul go? (Gal 1:21; cf. Acts 9:30)
- What did Paul do as he traveled through Cilicia and Syria?

Note: Luke records in Acts that Paul went to Tarsus. Because of this, people often say that Paul went to his hometown of Tarsus and quietly prayed there, waiting for God's timing until he was invited to serve in the church at Antioch. However, this is absolutely not the case. Galatians 1:21 records that Paul traveled throughout the regions of Cilicia and Syria, preaching the gospel widely, and that the news of this reached the apostles and believers in Jerusalem. Tarsus was a city in Cilicia, and Antioch was a city in Syria. From immediately after his conversion until he was invited to the Antioch church, Paul was a passionate evangelist who actively proclaimed the gospel. He preached widely in Damascus, Arabia, Jerusalem, Cilicia, and Syria.

2. Approval of the Gospel: The gospel I preached was also recognized and affirmed by the apostles in Jerusalem (2:1–10).

(1) When did Paul visit Jerusalem again?

Note: Paul says that he visited Jerusalem again after fourteen years. It is not entirely clear whether this means fourteen years after his conversion or fourteen years after his first visit. If it is fourteen years after his conversion, it is most likely the relief visit mentioned in Acts 11 (AD 46). If it is fourteen years after his first visit, it is likely his attendance at the Jerusalem Council mentioned in Acts 15 (AD 49 or 50). Scholars are sharply divided on this issue. However, considering Paul's statements in Galatians and various historical circumstances of the time, it is more likely that this was the relief visit.

- Revelation is mentioned (Gal 2:2). The prophet Agabus foretold that there would be a great famine. Therefore, the church in Antioch collected a relief offering, and Paul and Barnabas went to Jerusalem carrying the relief funds (Acts 11:28–30).
- It was a private meeting (Gal 2:2). When they went with the relief offering, they met privately. In contrast, the Jerusalem Council was a public gathering.
- The poor are mentioned (Gal 2:10). This fits well with a relief visit.
- Paul emphasizes that this was his second visit to Jerusalem (the first visit after three years, the second visit after fourteen years). If the second visit had been his attendance at the Jerusalem Council, Paul would either have forgotten the earlier relief visit or intentionally avoided mentioning it.

(2) Who went with Paul to Jerusalem? Why does he mention Titus? Whom did he meet? What kind of conversation did they have? How did the Jerusalem apostles treat Paul and Barnabas? What did they say about the gospel Paul preached? Why do you think Paul mentions this meeting?

3. Protection of the Gospel: I opposed Peter in order to prevent the gospel I preached from being distorted (Gal 2:11–14).

Paul mentions the incident in Antioch where he publicly opposed Cephas (Peter).

(1) What happened in Antioch?

(2) Who were the people who came from James?

(3) What kind of behavior did Peter show? Why was Peter so conscious of those who came from James and acted the way he did? Why was Peter's behavior a problem? Why was Paul so angry that he openly opposed and rebuked Peter in front of everyone?

(4) Why does Paul mention this incident in Galatians?

Note: Some biblical scholars place excessive significance on the incident in which Paul opposed Peter. Based on this event and the division in the Corinthian church (1 Corinthians 1–4), they argue that there were serious conflicts and clashes in the early church. They suggest that there was a deep confrontation between **Jewish Christianity** centered on Peter and James, and **Gentile Christianity** centered on Paul and Barnabas. Within this framework of conflict and tension, they reconstruct the history of the early church and interpret Paul's letters.

However, although the incident mentioned in Galatians is important, it was not an event that permanently separated Paul and Peter. Even after this incident, Paul continued to visit Jerusalem, and Paul and Peter recognized each other's apostleship and ministry. The same coworkers (Barnabas, Silas, Mark, etc.) ministered

back and forth between Paul and Peter. These facts show that Paul and Peter were not enemies but coworkers who cooperated with one another.

4. The True Gospel: The gospel I preached teaches that a person is justified not by works of the law but only by faith (Gal 2:15–21).

Paul clearly summarizes the gospel he preached and concludes his defense of the gospel through personal experience with his confession of faith.

(1) **A person cannot be justified by works of the law but only by faith in Christ.** Even Jews, who think they are not sinners like the Gentiles, know this well (2:15–16).

(2) **If Jews give up trying to be justified by works of the law, do they become sinners like the Gentiles? If so, does Christ become a means of producing more sinners?** Absolutely not! (2:17).

(3) **Paul's confession:** I died to the law so that I might live to God (2:19). I have been crucified with Christ, and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me (2:20). I do not nullify the grace of God, for if righteousness were through the law, then Christ died for no purpose (2:21).

Note: Paul says that a person is justified not by works of the law but by faith. In Galatians, what is contrasted with faith is not general “good works,” but “works of the law,” that is, keeping the law. Many people think that Paul emphasized faith alone and ignored good works, but this is absolutely not true. Paul never emphasized faith while ignoring good works. He taught that those who are justified by faith must live lives worthy of God's calling and the gospel. He taught that believers must live not according to the desires of the flesh but according to the desires of the Spirit, and that they must express their faith through love. He taught that genuine faith must be manifested in one's life. Therefore, the teachings of Paul and James are not contradictory; they simply emphasize different aspects.

Justification includes not only a change of status through the forgiveness of sins but also the restoration of relationship. Believing in Jesus and being forgiven and declared righteous is not the end; it is the beginning. Those who believe in Jesus and are justified have their relationship with God restored. Therefore, they must continue to maintain a right relationship with God through righteous living. This does not mean salvation by works. Those who have been forgiven and justified by grace through faith and have entered into a right relationship with God must, with the help of the Holy Spirit, continually live lives that grow into the holy likeness of Christ.

Conclusion and Application

1. What new insights did you gain from today's passage, and how did it help your faith?
2. Why is personal testimony important in proclaiming the gospel?
3. Meditate deeply on Paul's confession of faith in Galatians 2:18–21, and share what lessons and challenges it gives you.

Lecture 3 (Wednesday, January 14)

Defense of the Gospel (2): Defense through the Word (Scripture) (Galatians 3:1–4:31)

Paul defended the gospel he preached through his own experience in Galatians chapters 1–2. In chapters 3–4, he defends the gospel by centering on what is mentioned in the Old Testament Scriptures. In particular, he shows what kind of relationship the covenant with Abraham and the Law of Moses have with the gospel. This can be called a biblical and theological defense. Old Testament passages are frequently quoted in this section. Therefore, we can observe how Paul cites and interprets Scripture (the Old Testament).

1. Rebuking the foolishness of the Galatian believers (3:1–5)

Before presenting his scriptural defense, Paul rebukes the foolishness of the believers in the Galatian churches. Toward the Galatian believers he says, “O foolish Galatians!” and then proceeds to ask a series of questions. All of these questions expect negative answers. This is similar to the way he appealed to the emotions of the Galatian believers by expressing his disappointment and bewilderment before giving his experiential defense in chapter 1. Likewise, in chapter 4, in the middle of his argument, he suddenly appeals to their emotions (4:12–20).

Why did Paul call the Galatian believers foolish? It was not because they were uneducated or ignorant due to lack of learning. Rather, he was rebuking their immaturity in spiritual discernment. They had clearly heard that Jesus Christ was crucified, and by believing in Him they had been set free from sin and the bondage of the Law. They had received the Holy Spirit and experienced many miracles. Nevertheless, they were being shaken so easily by false teaching and were making the death of Christ meaningless. Because they were spiritually and theologically immature, they made a foolish judgment. Even today, Christians can be easily deceived by false teachings (heretical doctrines) when their faith is immature, when they are ignorant of Scripture, and when sound theology is not well established. As a result, churches can experience great difficulties. There is a need to listen carefully and pay close attention to the warning and exhortation of the apostle Paul contained in Galatians.

Note: In verse 1, the expression “Who has bewitched you?” appears. The word “bewitch” is translated in English Bibles with the meaning of “to cast a spell” or “to enchant,” reflecting the original sense well. The Greek word is related to the practice of magic (witchcraft) that was prevalent at the time. It carries the meaning of “casting an evil eye,” that is, bewitching or enchanting someone by looking at them with one eye and evil intent.

2. The Covenant with Abraham and the Law (3:6–4:7)

In Galatians chapter 3, Paul traces the root of the gospel back to Abraham. He then explains the limitations of the Law and the temporary purpose of the Law.

Why did Paul mention the covenant with Abraham and the Law? The reason is that the false teachers (the Judaizers) boasted in their descent from Abraham and forced Gentile Christians to receive circumcision, the sign of the covenant, and compelled them to keep the Law like Jews.

Paul speaks about Abraham as follows. Paul’s view differs greatly from the commonly held Jewish understanding (interpretation) of his time.

(1) **Abraham was justified by faith** (3:6; quoting Gen 15:6). He was not justified by keeping the Law. In the time of Abraham, there was no Law. The Law came 430 years later. Therefore, how could a Law that did not yet exist make Abraham righteous?

(2) **The descendants (offspring) of Abraham are those who have faith like his** (3:7). Simply being born into Abraham's physical lineage does not automatically make one his descendant. This would have been a shocking statement to Jews of that time, who placed great importance on lineage.

(3) **The blessing of Abraham already included the Gentiles** (3:8–9). God said to Abraham, "All nations shall be blessed through you" (Gen 12:3; 18:18). "All nations" includes the Gentiles. Therefore, God's promise was not given only to Jews by bloodline, but includes all Gentiles who have faith like Abraham. This too would have been a shocking statement to Jews of that time, who believed that they alone were the chosen people and that they alone possessed the blessing of Abraham.

(4) **Those who rely on works of the Law are under a "curse of the Law"** (3:10). Therefore, no one can be justified before God by the Law (3:11). To prove this, Paul quotes Deuteronomy 27:26, Habakkuk 2:4, and Deuteronomy 27:26.

(5) **Christ redeemed believers from the curse of the Law by becoming a curse and dying on the cross** (3:13). In this section, Paul quotes Deuteronomy 21:23.

(6) **In Christ, the blessing of Abraham comes upon all who believe (the Gentiles), so that we receive the promise of the Spirit through faith** (3:14).

(7) **The promise of God was given to Abraham and to his offspring, and "offspring" is used in the singular**, meaning one person, and that one person is Jesus Christ (3:15–16). That is, the blessing of Abraham is transmitted to all nations (the Gentiles) through Jesus Christ.

(8) **The Law, which came 430 years later, cannot annul the covenant that God had already confirmed** (3:15–18).

(9) **The inheritance of Abraham was given by promise, not by the Law** (3:18).

(10) **Then why did God give the Law? What was its purpose?**

- The Law was added because of transgressions and remained in effect until the offspring of the promise, Jesus Christ, came (3:19–20).
- The Law does not nullify the promise of God (3:21–22).
- We (the Jews) were kept under the Law as a guardian (tutor) until faith (Christ) came (3:23–25).
- After faith (Christ) has come, we are no longer under the Law, but through faith we have become children of God, have become one in Christ, and have become Abraham's offspring and heirs according to the promise (3:26–28).
- The believer is no longer a slave, but a son and an heir (4:1–7).

Note: Paul calls the Law a *paidagogos* (3:24). In the old Korean Bible it was translated "tutor," and in the Revised Version as "elementary teacher." English Bibles translate it variously as "tutor," "schoolmaster," "guardian," "disciplinarian," or "custodian." This diversity shows how difficult the term is to translate, because the role existed in ancient society but does not exist in modern society.

The word is a compound noun, formed from *paidion* (child) and *agogos* (leader or guide). Thus, a *paidagogos* refers to one who guides, protects, leads, or supervises a child. In ancient society, this role was usually carried out by a slave or servant who had the complete trust of the master. His role was to control, protect, guide, and educate the master's son until he reached adulthood. Although the son was an heir, while he was young he could not fully exercise his rights as a son. He had to remain under the protection and control of the *paidagogos* and receive his instruction and discipline. Once he reached adulthood, he was freed from that guardianship and exercised his rights as a son and heir. Paul explains the role of the Law by comparing it to this role of the *paidagogos*.

3. Paul's Love for the Galatian Believers (4:8–20)

Paul once again appeals to the emotions of the Galatian believers. He recalls how they treated him when he first visited them and preached the gospel, and he asks what caused them to change. He affirms his unchanging love for them and says that he is again in the pains of childbirth for their sake.

(1) **What kind of life did the Galatian believers live before they believed the gospel?** (4:8–10)

(2) **What is Paul worried about?** (4:11)

(3) **How did the Galatian believers treat Paul in the past?** (4:12–15)

(4) **Who is responsible for the change in the Galatian believers?** (4:13, 17)

(5) **How does Paul express his unchanging love for the Galatian believers?** (4:18–20)

Note: Paul says that he had a bodily illness. In 2 Corinthians 12:7–10, he also says that he has a “thorn” in his flesh, a “messenger of Satan,” that torments him. It is not known exactly what this illness or thorn was. There are many speculations. What is clear is that Paul had a physical disability or illness, and that it was easily noticeable to others. Based on statements such as “If possible, you would have torn out your eyes and given them to me” (4:15) and “See with what large letters I am writing to you” (6:11), some argue that Paul had a problem with his eyes (an eye disease). Although we cannot know exactly what his ailment was, it could have caused people to despise him and could have been an obstacle to accepting the gospel he preached. But the Galatians did not do that. Rather, they treated Paul warmly, as an angel and as Christ Jesus himself.

In an apocryphal book written around the second century, *The Acts of Paul and Thecla*, Paul's appearance is described. This book is set in southern Galatia (Pisidian Antioch, Iconium, Lystra). In the opening section, a man named Onesiphorus hears that the apostle Paul is coming to Iconium and invites him to his house. He goes as far as Lystra to meet him and sees Paul for the first time on the King's Highway, and describes him as follows: **“He saw Paul coming, a man small in stature, bald-headed, with crooked legs, of good bodily condition, with joined eyebrows and a slightly hooked nose, full of grace. He had the appearance of a man, but the face of an angel.”** This is not a highly reliable historical account, but in any case, Paul's appearance does not seem to have been particularly impressive. It is possible that the author of this book was influenced by Paul's words in Galatians chapter 4.

4. An Allegorical Explanation through Hagar and Sarah (4:21–31)

Finally, Paul uses Sarah, Abraham's wife (the free woman), and Hagar (the slave woman), and their sons—the son of promise, Isaac, and the son of the slave, Ishmael—to explain in a contrasting way the old covenant and the new covenant, the Law and the Spirit, and the status of the free person and the slave.

(1) Allegorical Interpretation:

Abraham's Wife	Status	Child	Symbol
Sarah	Free Woman	Isaac (born according to the promise)	The Jerusalem above = New Covenant = Freedom
Hagar	Slave	Ishmael (born according to the flesh)	Mount Sinai (present Jerusalem) = Old Covenant = Law

(2) Application:

- The son of the slave (Ishmael) persecuted the son of the free woman (Isaac). Likewise, those born according to the flesh (the legalists) persecuted those born according to the Spirit (the Galatian church believers).
- God commanded Abraham to cast out the slave woman and her son. He said that the son of the slave would not inherit together with the son of the free woman. This implies that the Galatian believers should reject the legalists (false teachers).
- Those who believe are not children of the slave, but children of the free woman.

Conclusion and Application

1. Through today's lecture, let us share anything newly realized or anything that was helpful to us.
2. Briefly explain how faith (grace) in Christ is related to the covenant with Abraham and the Law of Moses.
3. The apostle Paul was very familiar with Scripture (the Old Testament) and understood and explained the gospel of Christ through the Word. Based on this, let us discuss how important the Word is in our life of faith, and share our thoughts and plans on how we can build our faith upon the Word.

Lecture 4 (Thursday, January 15)

Defense of the Gospel (3): Defense through Life (Galatians 5:1–6:10)

Most of the Apostle Paul's epistles have a dual structure. They can be divided into a first half and a second half. The first half is mainly theological (doctrinal) in content. That is, it explains what a believer has become in Christ. Therefore, the sentences are primarily descriptive. The second half contains ethical exhortations. Based on the doctrinal content explained in the first half, it explains how Christians should live in the Lord. Therefore, when beginning the ethical sections, the conjunction "therefore" often appears (e.g., Rom 12:1, Gal 5:1, Eph 4:1, Col 3:1), and there are many imperative sentences like "...do" or "...do not." In the case of Galatians, chapters 1–4 contain doctrinal content, and chapters 5–6 contain ethical content.

The core exhortations of Paul included in Galatians 5–6 are as follows:

1. Christ has set you free; therefore, stand firm and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery! (5:1–12)

Circumcision is a yoke that enslaves. Christ has removed this yoke, but if one submits to circumcision, they are putting themselves under the yoke again. In doing so, the work Christ accomplished becomes meaningless. Those who insist on circumcision are like leaven; one must not follow them. For Christians, circumcision or uncircumcision is no longer the issue. What matters is faith working through love.

Note: The issue of circumcision in the early church was closely related to the mission to the Gentiles. When Gentiles believed in and received Jesus Christ, the question arose whether they needed to be circumcised. This issue did not apply to Jews, because Jewish males were circumcised eight days after birth. Therefore, Jewish adults had already been circumcised.

2. For you were called to freedom; do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but serve one another through love! (5:13–15)

Believers are those who have received freedom in Christ. Being called to freedom does not mean indulging in self-will. It does not mean acting according to one's own desires without restraint. Though one is free, one should become a servant to others, using freedom as an opportunity to serve through love.

3. Walk by the Spirit, not by the desires of the flesh! (5:16–26)

(1) *Already but Not Yet:* Salvation has already been accomplished but not yet fully completed. Even those who believe in Christ and are born again by the Spirit still live in this world with a physical body. They belong to heaven, but they are still citizens of this earth. They are a new creation in Christ, yet the old nature's tendencies remain within them. Therefore, temptations and conflicts persist.

(2) Christians must live according to the desires of the Spirit, not the desires of the flesh. The desires of the flesh conflict with the desires of the Spirit.

(3) The difference between one who lives according to the desires of the flesh and one who lives according to the Spirit can be seen in the fruits of life.

- Life lived according to the flesh shows characteristics such as sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, anger, quarrels, divisions, heresies, envy, drunkenness, and debauchery.
- Life lived according to the Spirit produces fruit such as love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.

Note: In the latter half of Paul's letters, exhortations like "...do" or "...do not" frequently appear. What Christians ought to do are called virtues, and what they ought not to do are called vices. Not all virtues and vices are listed in a single letter; rather, Paul selectively mentions those relevant to the individual or church receiving the letter.

4. Examine yourself first, and bear one another's burdens! (6:1–10)

One will reap what they sow. Therefore, whenever possible, do good to all people, especially to those of the household of faith.

Lecture 5 (Friday, January 16)

Pauline Theology Examined through Galatians

1. Key Words Used in Galatians

- **God** (31 times), **Christ** (38), **Jesus** (17), **Lord** (6), **Spirit** (18)
- **Gospel** (7), **Preach the gospel** (7)
- **Faith** (22), **Believe** (4)
- **Law** (32), **Works** (8)
- **Promise** (14), **Covenant** (3)
- **Righteousness** (4), **To be justified** (8)
- **Circumcision** (7), **Uncircumcision** (3), **To be circumcised** (6)
- **Cross** (3), **To be crucified** (3)
- **Freedom** (4), **To be made free** (6)
- **Flesh** (18), **Sin** (3), **Servant** (4), **Servitude** (2), **To serve/enslaved** (4)
- **Creation** (1), **Generation** (3), **Kingdom of God** (1), **Love** (3)

2. The Source and Core of the Gospel

3. The Relationship Between the Gospel and the Covenant

4. The Relationship Between the Gospel and the Law

5. The Relationship Between Faith and Works

6. The Big Picture of Pauline Theology as Seen through Galatians

PICTURE

Reference Material: Introductory Elements of Galatians

Galatians is one of the major epistles written by the Apostle Paul. It is closely connected to Paul's mission to the Gentiles and was written to prevent the churches in the region of Galatia from being misled by false doctrine. Its core message is the gospel that "a person is justified by faith, not by works of the law." The letter is highly logical and systematic, clearly showing Paul's conviction and passion for the gospel, as well as his heart for the churches. In defending the gospel, Paul sometimes reveals strong emotional responses.

A. Sender

In Galatians 1:1, the Apostle Paul is explicitly named as the sender. There is little to no scholarly dispute regarding the authorship of Paul.

B. Recipients

In Galatians 1:2, the recipients are named as "the churches of Galatia." There is significant scholarly debate about the exact location referred to by "Galatia." Two main theories exist: the **North Galatian Hypothesis** and the **South Galatian Hypothesis**.

North Galatian Hypothesis:

The term "Galatia" originally referred to the region inhabited by the Celtic (Gaul) people, corresponding to the central-northern part of modern Turkey (see map). The North Galatian Hypothesis holds that Paul established churches there during his second missionary journey and wrote this letter to those churches. However, the Bible does not explicitly record that Paul preached the gospel or established churches in northern Galatia. Based on Acts 16:6 and 18:23, it can be inferred that Paul passed through northern Galatia during his second and third missionary journeys, but there is no mention of actual ministry taking place there.

C. South Galatian Hypothesis

Around 25 B.C., Emperor Augustus reorganized the administrative regions, greatly expanding the area called Galatia. At Paul's time, the administrative region of Galatia included not only northern Galatia, inhabited mainly by Celts, but also the southern region, which was culturally open and well-connected by roads (including Antioch, Iconium, Lystra, and Derbe). Therefore, according to the South Galatian Hypothesis, the "Galatia" Paul refers to is southern Galatia, and Galatians was addressed to the churches established there. The Book of Acts records in detail that Paul visited these southern cities during his first missionary journey and established churches, and then revisited them to continue ministry (Acts 13:13–14:28; 16:1–5).

Considering biblical, historical, and archaeological evidence, the South Galatian Hypothesis is more persuasive.

MAP

D. Date of Writing: The date of writing varies slightly depending on how one identifies Galatia. Scholars who support the North Galatian Hypothesis generally regard Galatians as having been written after Paul's second missionary journey (AD 50–53), estimating the date between AD 53–56. Scholars supporting the South Galatian Hypothesis generally hold that Galatians was written immediately after Paul's first missionary journey (AD 47–48), just before the Jerusalem Council. Therefore, they date it to AD 48 or 49. Considering various internal elements in Acts and Galatians, it is highly likely that Galatians was written before the Jerusalem Council (AD 49 or 50). Some scholars support South Galatia but date the writing after the Jerusalem Council.

Knowing when and to which regional churches Galatians was sent greatly aids in understanding why and for what purpose the letter was written at that time. Such historical understanding significantly affects the interpretation of its content.

E. Purpose and Motivation of Writing: Judaizers infiltrated the Galatian churches, which Paul had painstakingly established at great personal risk, and caused major disruption. These Judaizers claimed to be Christians but argued that Gentile believers must be circumcised and follow the Law of Moses like the Jews. Their claims contradicted Paul's teaching that "a person is justified by faith, not by works of the Law, and Gentiles do not need circumcision." They challenged Paul's authority to persuade the Galatian believers and claimed close ties to the apostles in Jerusalem, teaching that Paul's gospel of justification by faith alone was wrong or incomplete. As a result, the Galatian believers, who were not yet mature in faith and whose theology was not yet fully established, fell into great confusion, and the churches faced serious difficulties. Paul, who was in Antioch of Syria at the time, heard this news and was greatly angered. Although he wanted to go immediately to Galatia, circumstances prevented him. Therefore, he wrote the letter to protect the churches from the Judaizers. This letter is the Epistle to the Galatians.

1. Identity and Teachings of the False Teachers: Galatians was written to confront those who corrupted the gospel and disturbed the church through false teachings, to preserve the essence of the gospel and establish the church correctly. Accordingly, much of the letter consists of rebuking and arguing against them. To understand this fully, it is crucial to know who Paul opposed, how they distorted the gospel, and what they demanded of the believers. Unfortunately, while Paul's words remain in Scripture, the words of his opponents (the Judaizers) were not recorded. Therefore, we must trace back their identity and teachings through Paul's writings.

The characteristics of these individuals as seen in Galatians are as follows:

1. They were not from within the Galatian churches but came from outside (2:4), apparently traveling through various regions to conduct missionary activities.
2. They were likely Jews.
3. They boasted of Jewish lineage and tradition and displayed worldly achievements.
4. They flaunted their association with the apostles in Jerusalem.
5. They considered themselves Christians, but Paul called them false brothers (2:4).
6. They attacked Paul's apostleship to weaken his influence.
7. They compelled Gentile Christians to undergo circumcision and observe the Law. Hence, they are commonly called "Judaizers."

The issue of circumcision and observance of the Law became a central matter in early Gentile missions. It was a crucial issue that could determine the future of Paul's missionary work among the Gentiles. This problem was not limited to the Galatian churches; other Gentile churches faced the same challenge. Even the Antioch church, which provided the foundation for Gentile missions, experienced difficulty because of this issue. Eventually, the apostles and church representatives met in Jerusalem to discuss it and concluded that Gentile Christians did not need circumcision, thus opening the way for Gentile missions fully.

F. Method of Defense: In Galatians, Paul acts like a lawyer defending a client in court. To protect the Galatian believers, he strongly attacks the Judaizers who troubled them and points out their errors. He systematically proves why the gospel he preached is true. Paul defends his gospel of justification by faith alone through his personal experience (1:6–2:21) and Scripture (3:1–4:31). He also explains how those justified by faith should live (5:1–6:10). Paul's defense of the gospel can be summarized as follows:

1. **Defense through Testimony:** He asserts that his apostleship and the gospel he preached did not come from humans nor was it learned, but was revealed to him through the appearance of Christ and God's revelation.
2. **Defense through Scripture:** Abraham, who received God's covenant and became the source of blessing, was justified not by works of the Law but by faith. The Law did not even exist in Abraham's time. How could Abraham be justified by works of the Law that did not exist? The circumcision received by Abraham's descendants was a sign of the covenant, not a means of justification. Above all, Abraham's blessing was not for Jews alone; Gentiles were already included. Then why was the Law given? Because of human sin. It was not a means to justify sinners. The Law served as a tutor (guardian, steward, or custodian) until Christ came. Therefore, after the promised Jesus came, its role was fulfilled.
3. **Defense through Life:** Being justified by faith does not mean that good works can be ignored. Those who are justified by faith must live according to the desires of the Spirit, not the desires of the flesh, and their faith must be accompanied by corresponding actions (fruits). Those who have been made free by faith in Christ must use that freedom not as an opportunity for indulgence but as an opportunity to serve others.

G. Summary of Content

Introduction (1:1–5):

1. **Sender (1:1–2a):** Apostle Paul
2. **Recipients (1:2b):** Churches of Galatia
3. **Greeting (1:3–5):** Grace and peace from God

Main Body (1:6–6:10):

1. **Paul's Warning Against Those Who Corrupt the Gospel (1:6–10):**
 1. Astonishment at news that they had been led astray by a false gospel (1:6)
 2. Assertion that there is no other gospel (1:7)
 3. Curses on those who distort the gospel (1:8–10)
2. **Defense of the Gospel through Personal Experience (1:11–2:21):**
 1. The gospel he preached came not from humans but from God (1:11–24)
 2. The apostles in Jerusalem recognized his gospel (2:1–10)
 3. Rebuked Peter to prevent distortion of the gospel (2:11–14)

4. Taught that justification comes by faith, not by works of the Law (2:15–21)

3. Defense of the Gospel through Scripture (3:1–4:31):

1. Rebuke of the Galatians' foolishness (3:1–5)

2. **Appeal to Abraham** (3:6–18)

- Abraham was justified by faith, and believers are Abraham's descendants (3:6–8)
- All who have faith share in Abraham's blessing (3:9)
- Those relying on works of the Law are under the "curse of the Law" (3:10–12)
- Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law by becoming a curse for us (3:13)
- Abraham's blessing comes to believing Gentiles in Christ (3:14)
- The Law given later does not annul the covenant established earlier (3:15–18)
- Abraham's promise was given to his one descendant, Christ (3:16)

3. **Promise and Law (3:19–4:7):**

- The Law was added because of transgression and was effective until the promised offspring came (3:19–20)
- The Law does not nullify God's promise (3:21–22)
- Before faith came, we were under the Law as a tutor (3:23–25)
- After faith, we are no longer under the Law but are God's children, one in Christ, and heirs according to the promise to Abraham's offspring (3:26–28)
- Believers are no longer slaves but sons and heirs (4:1–7)

4. **Paul's Love for the Galatian Believers (4:8–20):**

- Their former condition (4:8–11)
- Their love shown to Paul (4:12–15)
- Paul's love for them (4:16–20)

5. **Allegorical Explanation Through Hagar and Sarah (4:21–31):**

- Abraham had two wives, Sarah and Hagar, through whom Isaac, the son of the promise, and Ishmael, the son of the slave, were born (4:21–23)
- Hagar represents the covenant of Moses (Law), and Sarah represents the new covenant (4:24–27)
- The son of the slave cannot share the inheritance with the son of the freewoman, and believers are not sons of slaves but sons of the freewoman (4:28–31)

4. Defense of the Gospel through Life (5:1–6:10):

1. Stand firm in the freedom in Christ; do not submit again to a yoke of slavery (5:1–12)
2. Do not use freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but serve one another (5:13–15)
3. Live by the desires of the Spirit, not the flesh (5:16–26)
4. Examine yourself first and bear one another's burdens (6:1–10)

Conclusion (6:11–18):

1. **Personal Greeting in His Own Hand (6:11)**
2. **Final Warning Against the False Teachers (6:12–17)**
3. **Final Greeting and Benediction (6:18)**