

Journey Through the Bible

Galatians 1-3

July 3rd, 2025

Overview

In Galatians 1–3, Paul urgently defends his authority as an apostle and the **gospel he preached to the Galatians, which centers on the faithfulness of Jesus Christ, not the works of the law**. He recounts his own dramatic calling and his agreement with the Jerusalem apostles to include Gentiles without requiring them to follow the Jewish law. Paul then argues passionately that Abraham was counted righteous by faith long before the law existed, and that the true children of Abraham are those who believe, not those who rely on circumcision or Torah observance. He insists that the law served as a “disciplinarian” until Christ came, and now, through faithfulness and baptism, all believers—Jew or Gentile, slave or free, male or female—are one in Christ Jesus.

Outline

How to Study the NT Bible

The Jerusalem Agreement (2:1–10)

How to Read Paul

Traditional Protestant View

Conflict in Antioch: Paul Opposes Cephass (2:11–14)

New Perspective on Paul

Paul Within Judaism (RNP)

Theological Core: Justification and the Faith of Christ (2:15–21)

Apocalyptic Paul

Galatians Outline

Opening and Greetings (1:1–5)

Faithfulness, Not Law (3:1–14)

Paul Condemns Other Gospels (1:6–10)

God's Promise and the Law (3:15–29)

Paul's Call and Gospel Origins (1:11–24)



Galatians is Paul's most intense and emotional letter—he skips the usual thanksgiving section and dives straight into rebuke, calling the Galatians “foolish” and expressing shock that they've abandoned the gospel so quickly.



Galatians 3:28 was a revolutionary declaration of equality, proclaiming that in Christ there is no longer Jew or Greek, slave or free, male or female—a shocking idea in the rigidly hierarchical Roman world.



The phrase “works of the law” doesn't mean “trying to earn salvation”, but refers to Jewish identity markers like circumcision, food laws, and Sabbath observance that some believers were wrongly requiring of Gentile Christians.



Galatians may be Paul's earliest letter, written around AD 48–50—possibly even before the Jerusalem Council in Acts 15—making it the oldest document in the New Testament.



The recipients of this letter, the Galatians, were likely Celtic tribes living in central Asia Minor, descended from Gauls who had migrated from Western Europe centuries earlier.

Schedule:

July 3: Galatians 1-3
July 10: Galatians 4-6
July 17: Ephesians 1-2
July 24: Ephesians 3-4
July 31: Ephesians 5-6
Aug 7: Philippians 1-2
Aug 14: Philippians 3-4
Aug 21: Colossians 1-2
Aug 28: Colossians 3-4

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