

# Bible Snapshots



## Galatians – Christian Liberty

**Author** – Paul, 55 A.D.

- The Bible derives its name from the foolish Galatians to whom Paul was writing (1:1, 2; 3:1).
- Paul visited the churches of Galatia on each of his three missionary journeys. He and Timothy both preached to the Galatians (Acts 16:6). Galatia derived its name from the Gauls. The Gauls were a fickle, as revealed by Paul in Acts 13 and 14. One day they were trying to make Paul a god and the next they wanted to stone him. They were not content with the grace of God, but either wanted to confuse the grace of God with works of righteousness or simply did not have a right balance concerning such things. Paul thus calls them for this reason. They wanted to mingle the Law of Moses with faith as grounds for justification. They insisted that the believer was made perfect by keeping the law. Much of this had to do with the Judaizing teachers that had come in among them (1:1-12). They were requiring circumcision (5:2; 6:12). They had apparently raised a party of opposition to Paul, though Paul had already spoken against them (1:9; 4:16). Their impact, however, was growing and Paul wrote this letter to offset their influence.
- The character of the book is doctrinal. It has 6 chapters and 149 verses.

## Themes

- The gospel is the one true power in the life of the believer
- Faith, built upon the grace of God, is the only right pathway to salvation, not Moses Law

**Key chapters/verse** – 3, justification by faith / 2:16

## Key phrase / word / thought

- Stand fast in liberty (5:1) / liberty / redeemed from the curse of the law (3:13)

**Christ In Galatians** - Our liberator (1:4; 5:1)

## Outline

- I. Introduction (1:1-5)
- II. Paul defends his apostleship (1:6-2:14)
- III. Faith and justification (2:15-4:31)
- IV. Practical exhortations (5, 6)
  - a. Liberty versus bondage (5:1-15)
  - b. Spirit versus flesh (5:16-6:10)
  - c. Cross versus circumcision (6:12, 13, 15)
  - d. Cross versus the world (6:14)
  - e. Peace and mercy by walking in his path (6:14)

**Miracles referred to** - deliverance from death and persecution (11:23-33); Paul caught up to the third heaven (12:1-4); signs, wonders and mighty deeds (12:12);

## Bible Customs

**Bearing burdens** – (6:2, 5) “Burdens” in the near east usually refer to heavy burdens carried by individuals to market. Help is needed to secure such loads and to then remove them once at market. In this chapter Paul seems to contradict himself when he tell us to “bear one another’s burdens” and then moments later that each man is to “bear his own burden.” In reality the words for burden are very different here. The first is the heavy burden that one needs help to secure and remove. The latter of the two that we bear ourselves is the equivalent of the modern backpack or light burden. There is a burden with which we should help and there is one we are called alone to bear.

## Key lessons

Comparing the Law of Moses with grace (2:21)

What it means to be crucified with Christ (2:20)

The new covenant versus the old (4:22-31). This is an allegory where Hagar represents the old and Sarah the new. The sons are children of each covenant.

Flesh works and Spirit fruit (5:19-26)