

GALATIANS

Galatians 1:1-10	ONLY ONE GOSPEL
Galatians 1:11-24	ONLY ONE PAUL
Galatians 2:1-10	THE ISSUE OF GENTILE BELIEVERS
Galatians 2:11-21	JUSTIFICATION - BY FAITH ALONE
Galatians 3:1-14	ABRAHAM - MAN of FAITH
Galatians 3:15-29	GOD'S LAW and GOD'S PROMISE
Galatians 4:1-18	BELIEVERS - SONS or SLAVES?
Galatians 4:19-31	BELIEVERS - CHILDREN of SARAH or CHILDREN of HAGAR?
Galatians 5:1-15	LIVING IN FREEDOM
Galatians 5:16-26	LIVING BY THE SPIRIT
Galatians 6:1-10	LIVING FOR OTHERS
Galatians 6:11-18	BOASTING ONLY IN THE CROSS
	TWO ANTIOCHS

Some key passages:

1:3-4	The Heart of the Gospel.
1:8-9	The Purity and Unity of the Gospel.
2:16, 20	The Life of the gospel.
3:11	The way of life for the Christian.
3:22-24	The schoolmaster to bring us to Christ.
4:4-7	The fullness of time.
4:22-31	The great allegory.
5:19-26	Works of the flesh and fruit of the Spirit.
6:7	Law of sowing and reaping.

*It is for freedom that Christ has set us free.
Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be
burdened again by a yoke of slavery.*

ONE WAY TO OUTLINE Paul's letter to the Galatians is to divide it into three parts: Chapters 1-2 {historical}; Chapters 3-4 {doctrinal}; Chapters 5-6 {practical}.

Of course, this is not a rigid structure but it does follow a pattern. One of the marks of Paul's epistles is that after he gives us the doctrine {teaching}, he gives us the "so what."

Doctrine without personal application is deadly.

What does it mean to be free in Christ? There are people that run around saying "once saved, always saved," that either don't attend church themselves or defend kinfolks that show no interest in the things of Christ. Does being free in Christ mean that there are no responsibilities to the church? Here we learn that true freedom comes from Christ, not circumcision {5:1-2}; true freedom comes by faith expressed through love {5:3-6}; true freedom comes from obeying the truth, not following persuasive lies (5:7-12); and true freedom leads to serving others, not to self-indulgence (5:13-15).

1. TRUE FREEDOM COMES from CHRIST

5:1-2

Why do you want to leave the freedom that is in Christ and go under the bondage of legalism? Apparently the Galatians had not yet abandoned the Gospel, but they were dangerously close to doing so.

Circumcision was the issue with the Judaizers in Galatia. The issue of circumcision stands for all types of legalism and law-keeping "in order to" be justified or saved. The practice of circumcision is not condemned: Paul had Timothy circumcised for a practical reason. But, if a person makes circumcision, or any other act obligatory before God may save you, they have abandoned the Gospel and chosen works for their righteousness.

If salvation is, after all, by works, then Christ's atonement is meaningless.
Are we saved by faith in Christ or by our own works?

2. TRUE FREEDOM COMES by FAITH

5:3-6

Submitting to circumcision is not an isolated act. It would be the beginning of an obligation to keep the whole law. Why can't anyone see the futility in imagining that they could actually keep every one of God's commandments perfectly?

Does Verse 4 mean that a person who is truly saved could "fall from grace," and be lost again? Remember that the context here is how a person is saved in the first place, works or grace.

At Verse 5, Paul stops using the second person pronoun "you," and begins to use the inclusive first person "we." All who believe are included in what he now says.

Faith in Christ, through the Holy Spirit, brings peace with God in this life and promises eternal righteousness.

Works don't count for anything "in order to" be in Christ, but love demonstrated will be an evidence of our faith in Christ Jesus.

3. TRUE FREEDOM COMES from OBEYING the TRUTH

5:7-12

Using the analogy of a foot race, Paul says you started out well. What "cut into" you? God did not originate this false teaching. You may think this is making too much of a small issue. Not so. Like yeast, this error will grow until it permeates the entire body.

Apparently Paul had been misunderstood {probably on purpose} vs. 11, because of his having Timothy circumcised. He makes it clear that if he had compromised the Gospel, he would not continue to be persecuted.

More importantly, the Gospel would not be offensive to lost people.
{Discuss the offence of the Gospel.}

There was a pagan cult centered in Galatia who worshipped Cybele, "the great mother of the gods," who sometimes climaxed their worship by mutilating themselves. Paul is equating their pagan rituals with the Jewish legalists.

4. TRUE FREEDOM LEADS to SERVING OTHERS

5:13-15

Freedom in Christ is not a license to indulge the sinful nature; rather it allows opportunities to serve others.

The law is not to be ignored; it just is not the way of salvation.

As Christians we have the privilege of finding ways to serve one another.
The opposite of Christian love is to "devour" one another

Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit. 5:25

BELIEVERS HAVE BEEN freed from slavery to the law. When the people first heard that they leaped to the false conclusion that they could then sin without consequence. They were free, they said, to indulge the lusts of the flesh. Well, the Bible never taught that. That idea comes from an evil imagination that is looking for a way to excuse sin and avoid Christian responsibility.

That error is still around and you hear it when people excuse their own and their near kin's rebellion with such statements as: "Well, I know so-and-so hasn't been to church in 10 years, but you know, 'once saved, always saved.' "

It never occurs to them that rebellion and indifference are clear indications that old so-and-so has never been saved in the first place. When a person's life is more characterized by the "works of the flesh," than by the "fruit of the Spirit," why would anyone ever think that that person has a saving interest in Jesus Christ? The Bible gives no comfort to the so called "back-slider." In fact, backsliding, as promoted by some, is not to be found anywhere in the New Testament. In the Old Testament, "backsliding" was to literally turn your back on God. A believer cannot backslide in the pure sense of the word.

1. THE INNER WARFARE: FLESH versus SPIRIT

5:16-18

As Paul develops his argument in this letter to the Galatians he shows that the law can have no part in salvation. But that doesn't mean that the law has no purpose for a believer. In 5:13-14 he has shown that the law for a believer produces love for your neighbor.

Until a person is saved, they **always** have a selfish motive for everything they do. Even those things that are of benefit to others are done for some kind of reward or recognition.

Do you ever, as a Christian, get disgusted with yourself? Why did I say that? Do that? Think that? Well, don't feel like the "Lone Ranger." Every other Christian has the same inner warfare going on. Someone once said that Christians were the happiest, most miserable people on earth. Our joy is in Christ because our sin is forgiven. But we still have a sinful nature. The Spirit of God Who indwells the believer, is at war with the sinful nature.

This is why the Word of God tells us to be "led by the Spirit." Paul, in Romans Chapter 7, describes his own struggle with the flesh. In Ephesians Chapter 6, he tells us that the battle is spiritual and can only be fought and won through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Jude 21 says, "keep yourselves...."

2. WHAT THE FLESH DOES

5:19-21

This is not intended to be a complete list of the works of the flesh, but it represents nearly every type of sin. For convenience, they may be sorted into four categories: sexuality, religion, human relations, and intemperance.

Sexuality

1. Sexual immorality {adultery, KJV}; *porneia* Greek: pornography, any form of immoral sexual behavior, illicit, clandestine and inappropriate relationships of every description. The standard is the Word of God, not some church committee dominated by homosexuals as in the conflict in the Presbyterian Church, USA.
2. Impurity or uncleanness. Closely associated with #1 and includes words, thoughts and desires of the heart.
3. Debauchery. Absence of restraint. Indecency, licentiousness, lasciviousness, or unbridled "sensuality."

Religion

1. Idolatry. The adoration of anything or anybody other than God Himself.
2. Witchcraft. *pharmakia* Greek, the use of drugs and spells to protect the user from the occult. Sorcery or magic that replaces trust in God.

Human Relations

1. Hatred. Enmity, hostility, animosity demonstrates hatred.
2. Discord. Lack of harmony, contentions, strife or variance.
3. Jealousy. *zelos* Greek, misplaced zeal, emulations, resentment.
4. Fits of rage. Outbursts of anger.
5. Selfish ambition. To woo followers away from others to oneself
6. Dissensions. Divisions, "standing apart."
7. Factions. Choosing up sides in a dispute.
8. Envy. Close to "jealousy," but always produces unhappiness at the expense of others.

Intemperance

1. Drunkenness. Excess in drinking, inebriety.
{some manuscripts include "murders" and "envy."}
2. Orgies. Revellings, carousings, excesses in groups.

"And the like...." are not consistent with the behavior of a redeemed person.

3. WHAT THE SPIRIT PRODUCES

5:22-26

"If anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Christ."
Romans 8:9

The "**fruit** of the Spirit" is singular. It may be that the fruit of the Spirit is **love**. That love is demonstrated by the eight qualities that follow love.

1. Love. agape` Greek, the kind of unselfish love God demonstrates.
2. Joy. Not happiness which depends on circumstances, but joy derived from our relationship with God.
3. Peace. No more warfare. Peace with God, others, and self.
4. Patience. Longsuffering, calmness under provocation.
5. Kindness. Mildness, benignity. A pleasant, benevolent spirit with others because we have been the recipient of God's kindness.
6. Goodness. Outgoing generosity, quite apart from whether the other person deserves it.
7. Faithfulness. Loyalty, fidelity to God and others.
8. Gentleness. Meekness, which basically means to be teachable, not to be a "doormat" for others to abuse.
9. Self-control. The power to keep self in check.

"Against such things there is no law."

The "walk" is the manner of living. We are to live by the Spirit. That leaves no place for "windbags," to boast and swagger in haughtiness and conceit about what they have (or think they have).