

GALATIANS

A QUESTION & ANSWER STUDY GUIDE

Bryan Matthew Dockens

GALATIANS: A QUESTION & ANSWER STUDY GUIDE

Galatians: A Question and Answer Study Guide © 2024 by Bryan Matthew Dockens is licensed under Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International. To view a copy of this license, visit <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/>



Because Jesus taught, *“Freely you have received, freely give”* (Matthew 10:8), permission is granted to duplicate and distribute this material without compensating the author, provided it is done without financial gain. Although it is personally encouraging to know material I write is being shared, there is no obligation to inform me when this is done.

I accept full accountability for all that I teach, but cannot claim any credit as all glory belongs to God. Constructive feedback is welcome. Please email me: BryanDockens@gmail.com.

Quotations of Scripture are from the New King James Version.

GALATIANS: A QUESTION & ANSWER STUDY GUIDE

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter One	4
Chapter Two	26
Chapter Three	40
Chapter Four	57
Chapter Five	75
Chapter Six	99

CHAPTER ONE

1. Who wrote this epistle? Who is the Author?

“Paul” identified himself as the sender in the first word of the first verse (Galatians 1:1).

Of course, Jesus is the *“Author”* of salvation (Hebrews 5:9) and of our faith (12:2). He sent the Holy Spirit to guide apostles into *“all truth”* (John 16:13), so He is credited, always, as the source of inspiration.

2. What is the writer’s role and how did he obtain that position?

Paul is quick to describe himself as *“an apostle (not from men nor through man, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father who raised Him from the dead)”* (Galatians 1:1).

GALATIANS: A QUESTION & ANSWER STUDY GUIDE

An apostle is, by definition, one sent out. There were apostles from men, such as Barnabas (Acts 14:4, 14), who was sent out by the church in Antioch (Acts 13:1-3). Paul was more than that. His apostleship was an appointment by Christ the Lord (Acts 22:21; 26:17). The defense of his apostleship will be prominent in this letter, as it was in 2nd Corinthians.

3. Who joined the writer in sending this message?

Paul included *“all the brethren who are with me”* (Galatians 1:2), by which it would be clear that any refutation of his doctrine herein, or of him, personally, would be a rejection of them, as well. He could have been including whichever traveling companions were with him at the time, or even the church where he was writing from; it is not certain whom they were, but the implication is clear.

4. Who were the recipients?

GALATIANS: A QUESTION & ANSWER STUDY GUIDE

He was writing *“To the churches of Galatia”* (Galatians 1:2).

Some epistles were sent to individuals (Philemon; 1st Timothy; 2nd Timothy; Titus; 2nd John; 3rd John), some to generalized audiences (Hebrews; James; 1st Peter; 2nd Peter; 1st John), and others to single churches (Romans; 1st Corinthians; 2nd Corinthians; Ephesians; Philippians; Colossians; 1st Thessalonians; 2nd Thessalonians); yet, only two letters were written to multiple churches (Revelation; Galatians).

That several congregations were the intended recipients of this message necessarily implies that the letter would be circulated immediately, an action expressly commanded with at least one other epistle (Colossians 4:16). Hardly any lag existed between the establishment of the New Testament and the ability of Christians to read it.

5. **Locate the province on a map and identify the cities therein where Paul had preached. Describe what happened in those places.**

The province of Galatia included the regions of Pamphylia, where the city of Perga was, the region of Pisidia, where there was another Antioch, not to be confused with the one in Syria, and the region of Lycaonia, where the cities of Iconium, Lystra, and Derbe were located.

Perga is where John Mark abandoned Paul and Barnabas on the first major preaching tour (Acts 13:13).

In Antioch, Paul preached in the synagogue and drew a great deal of attention, winning both Jew and Gentiles, but the Jews resented the Gentiles and persecuted Paul and Barnabas, so they had to shake the dust off themselves and move along (Acts 13:14-52).

GALATIANS: A QUESTION & ANSWER STUDY GUIDE

A similar occurrence transpired in Iconium as had happened in Antioch (Acts 13:51; 14:1-6).

They preached in Lystra (Acts 14:6-7), and Paul healed a cripple there (8-10), but the idolaters of that place mistook Paul and Barnabas for gods and tried to worship them, which they refused (11-18). Then, persecutors from Antioch and Iconium followed them and actually stoned Paul, who survived the ordeal (19-20).

They preached in Derbe, evidently without opposition (Acts 14:6-7, 20-21).

Afterward, Paul and Barnabas returned to Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch, encouraging them and establishing elderships (Acts 14:21-23).

Finally, they revisited Perga, and, apparently for the first time, preached there (Acts 14:24-25). Whether they were fruitful is not specified.

GALATIANS: A QUESTION & ANSWER STUDY GUIDE

Later, in a second major tour, Paul was joined by Silas instead of Barnabas (Acts 15:36-41), and they brought the circumcision decision from Jerusalem to Galatia (Acts 16:1-6), where they met Timothy and Paul had him circumcised.

On a third major tour, Paul revisited Galatia (Acts 18:23).

6. Compare the introductory greeting to those Paul sent to other churches.

He included the standard *“Grace to you and peace from God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ”* (Galatians 1:3).

Ordinarily, though, he called his recipients *“faithful”* or *“sanctified”* or *“saints,”* but he glaringly omitted such qualifiers here. It would seem their faithfulness and holiness were in doubt. Even the Corinthians were regarded in better spiritual condition!

Also, he elaborated on the standard greeting, saying of Christ, *“who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen”* (Galatians 1:4-5). Paul wasted no time in dealing with sin, telling his readers that it cost the Son of God His very life! There is nothing trivial about sin. He contrasted the work of the glorious God against a present age that is decidedly evil! More to the point of this letter as whole, the salvation here described had nothing to do with the Law of Moses – just Jesus.

7. What did Paul find so surprising?

“I marvel that you are turning away so soon” (Galatians 1:6). He was astonished both by their apostasy and by the swiftness of it.

This *“so soon”* likely does not refer to it happening quickly after their obedience to the gospel, but rather to it

happening so quickly after the error was introduced. He and Barnabas had converted the Galatians (Acts 13), and then they returned to strengthen them (Acts 14:21-23), and then Paul revisited them with Silas (Acts 16:1-5). Apparently, they were well and strong during all three visits, so they did not fall away immediately after being converted.

Thus, it seems the departure from truth occurred rapidly after the falsehood was introduced. Generally, such departures happen gradually, with one compromise leading to another. The Galatians were different.

8. How was their departure personal?

“From Him who called you in the grace of Christ, to a different gospel” (Galatians 1:6). Their error distanced themselves from Christ Himself. The gospel and Christ cannot be separated.

9. How many gospels are there?

“Which is not another; but there are some who trouble you and want to pervert the gospel of Christ” (Galatians 1:7). It was a “different gospel,” not “another.” The good news is a singular message, without need of accompaniment (Ephesians 4:4-6).

10. Is anyone authorized to alter what God has revealed?

“But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed” (Galatians 1:8). Paul excludes himself and all fellow apostles, as well as, even, heavenly angels from being permitted to preach a gospel that varies at all from the one originally preached!

Angels can sin (2nd Peter 2:4). Apostles can sin (Acts 1:25). Prophets can sin (2nd Peter 2:15-16). Elders can sin (1st Timothy 5:19-20). Therefore, no one is authorized to alter

the word of God! Jesus said His words would never pass away (Luke 21:33). It will never be honest to augment divine revelation (Proverbs 30:6).

11. Cite historical examples of angels allegedly preaching a different gospel.

Muhammed alleged that Gabriel, who is an authentic angel from Scripture (Daniel 8:16; 9:21; Luke 1:19, 26), revealed Islam to him. It didn't actually happen, but if it did, Gabriel would go to hell.

Joseph Smith alleged that Moroni, who sounds more like a pasta than an actual angel, revealed the Book of Mormon to him. That never happened, but if it did, Moroni would face unending torture from God.

12. How emphatic was Paul about the singular gospel?

“As we have said before, so now I say again, if anyone preaches any other gospel to you than what you have received, let him be accursed” (Galatians 1:9). He repeated himself, which he only ever did it again in a much more pleasant way (Philippians 4:4).

13. What is Christ’s bondservant obliged to do to men and to God, respectively?

“For do I now persuade men, or God? Or do I seek to please men? For if I still pleased men, I would not be a bondservant of Christ” (Galatians 1:10).

We please God by persuading men. We don’t persuade God, that is change His mind, and we don’t please men, that is seek their satisfaction over the Lord’s.

14. Where did the gospel preached by Paul originate?

“But I make known to you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached by me is not according to man. For I neither received it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came through the revelation of Jesus Christ” (Galatians 1:11-12).

Eleven verses in, and Paul considered it necessary to defend the source of his material a second time!

15. What did misplaced zeal motivate Paul to do?

“For you have heard of my former conduct in Judaism, how I persecuted the church of God beyond measure and tried to destroy it” (Galatians 1:13).

His antagonism toward Christians is thoroughly documented (Acts 7:57-8:3; 9:1-2; 22:3-5; 26:9-11).

The apostle recounts his violent opposition to the gospel to verify he didn't get the gospel from the usual sources. Moreover, he impresses his audience with the fact that

they were never going to find someone more fond of the Law of Moses than Paul had been.

16. Where was his zeal placed previously?

“I advanced in Judaism beyond many of my contemporaries in my own nation, being more exceedingly zealous for the traditions of my fathers” (Galatians 1:14).

He was zealous about tradition, family, and the Jewish religion. Zeal is not always a good thing (Romans 10:2). Tradition can be dangerous (Mark 7:9; Colossians 2:8; 1st Peter 1:18). Family is not the highest priority (Luke 8:21). And the religion of the Jews was no longer relevant (Hebrews 7:12).

17. Whose choice was it that Paul became an apostle?

“It pleased God, who separated me from my mother’s womb and called me through His grace, to reveal His Son

GALATIANS: A QUESTION & ANSWER STUDY GUIDE

in me, that I might preach Him” (Galatians 1:15-16).

The Lord chose the first twelve apostles (Luke 6:13), as well as Judas’s replacement Matthias (Acts 1:24), and He chose Paul, too (1st Corinthians 9:16-17). It was a divine act. The same one who gave him life, bestowed apostleship on him, as well.

Paul didn’t claim to be an apostle on his own and he wasn’t just sent by a local church.

- 18. When God “called [Paul] through His grace,” was the calling irresistible?**

No, the call had to be answered and could have been disregarded, but Paul obeyed (Acts 26:19)!

- 19. Who were the primary recipients of Paul’s preaching?**
“To reveal His Son in me, that I might preach Him among the Gentiles” (Galatians 1:16).

GALATIANS: A QUESTION & ANSWER STUDY GUIDE

Gentiles were the target audience from the get-go (Acts 9:15; 22:21; 26:17-18). He even identified himself as “*an apostle to the gentiles*” (Romans 11:13; cf. 15:16; Galatians 2:7; Ephesians 3:1; Colossians 1:27; 1st Timothy 2:7; 2nd Timothy 1:11). As such, he would resent any effort to impose Judaism on the disciples he was making.

20. **Did Paul rely on man’s advice to carry out his apostolic commission?**

“I did not immediately confer with flesh and blood, nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me; but I went to Arabia, and returned again to Damascus” (Galatians 1:16-17).

No, he did not. He even seemed to be avoiding the other apostles!

Yes, human agency was required for him to obey the gospel (Acts 9:10-18; 22:12-16), but not to obey his

calling as an apostle.

21. Where did Paul spend his first three years as a Christian?

“Nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me; but I went to Arabia, and returned again to Damascus. Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem” (Galatians 1:17-18).

Contrary to expectation, he didn't go straight to Jerusalem, where the apostles stayed (Acts 8:1). He was converted in Damascus (Acts 9:2-3, 6). From there, he went to Arabia, and then returned to Damascus. He never needed to consult with apostles to confirm his apostleship, nor to learn the gospel from them.

This passage proves the need to cross-reference in our study of Scripture. Readings Acts in isolation would suggest that Paul went straight from Damascus (Acts 9:18-

25) to Jerusalem (Acts 9:26). Luke did not err in his documentation; he simply did not include the details that Paul here elucidates: namely, that three years transpired between Acts 9:25 and Acts 9:26.

22. How did he regard the twelve?

He identified them as *“those who were apostles before me”* (Galatians 1:17). By defending his apostleship, he did disparage or undermine the apostleship of the twelve, but acknowledged them for what Christ made them, while still upholding his divine authority.

23. When Paul eventually got to Jerusalem following his conversion, what was his purpose?

“I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter” (Galatians 1:18). He didn’t go to be ordained, anointed, appointed, or commissioned by Peter, nor even to be educated or

trained by Peter. He just went to see him. He wanted to meet a fellow apostle. That was all. It was a visit.

24. How long did that visit last?

“I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and remained with him fifteen days” (Galatians 1:18). The effort undertaken by Barnabas to vouch for Paul and get the church to receive him (Acts 9:26-30) was for a visit lasting barely two weeks. Granted, it was a visit cut short by persecution (Acts 9:29-30), but this demonstrates that brethren don’t need to spend months figuring out whether to enter fellowship.

25. How is James identified?

He was one *“of the other apostles”* (Galatians 1:19), as opposed to *“those who were apostles before me”* (Galatians 1:17). He contrasted the twelve specific

GALATIANS: A QUESTION & ANSWER STUDY GUIDE

apostles with the generic apostles, those sent by churches, rather than directly by Christ.

Two among the twelve were named James (Luke 6:13-16), but this one was neither of them; rather, he was “*the Lord’s brother*” (Galatians 1:19). One of Jesus’s four brothers was named James (Mark 6:3), and his brothers lacked faith in Him during his life, so much so they encouraged Him to endanger His life (John 7:1-5). However, James witnessed the resurrection (1st Corinthians 15:7) and the brothers became disciples even before Pentecost (Acts 1:14). James especially became highly regarded in the church of Jerusalem (Acts 12:17; 15:13; 21:18), one of its “*pillars*” even (Galatians 2:9).

This James was the only notable figure Paul encountered besides the apostle Peter during his 15-day stay in Jerusalem, three years after his conversion. He still had not met the rest of the twelve apostles. That would have been

nice, but he didn't need them to carry out his heavenly assignment.

26. How serious was Paul about his independence from his predecessor apostles?

"Now concerning the things which I write to you, indeed, before God, I do not lie" (Galatians 1:20). He called God as his witness. This was no jest.

27. Where did Paul spend his time following that initial Jerusalem visit?

"Afterward I went into the regions of Syria and Cilicia" (Galatians 1:21). Luke did chronicle some of this (Acts 9:30; 11:25-26). He really had no need to remain in Jerusalem, around his fellow apostles. They had their work and he had his. Granted, he left earlier than anticipated because of persecution (Acts 9:29-30), but he didn't feel compelled to get back as soon as possible either.

28. How were the churches of Judea generally aware of his work?

“And I was unknown by face to the churches of Judea which were in Christ. But they were hearing only, ‘He who formerly persecuted us now preaches the faith which he once tried to destroy’” (Galatians 1:22-23). Word of mouth got back to them about his preaching, but he wasn’t personally acquainted with any of them besides the one in Jerusalem, and that only briefly.

29. What did those Christians who knew Paul’s reputation do about him?

“And they glorified God in me” (Galatians 1:24). Paul’s example, as a persecutor turned Christian, preacher, and apostle is meant to prove salvation is intended for every sinner (1st Timothy 1:15-16).

CHAPTER TWO

1. How much time lapsed until Paul revisited Jerusalem?

“Then after fourteen years I went up again to Jerusalem” (Galatians 2:1). This further solidifies the idea that Paul was not at all reliant on his fellow apostles to certify his authority.

It also gives insight on the timeline from Acts 9:30 to Acts 15:1. Cross-referencing always improves our perception.

This is not to say that Paul made no visits to Jerusalem in the meantime (Acts 11:28-30), only that none involved face-to-face visits with the apostles.

2. Who accompanied him?

“I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, and also took Titus with me” (Galatians 2:1). This agrees with Acts 15:2

and provides the detail concerning Titus.

3. Did Paul confer with the brethren in Jerusalem using his own wisdom and discretion?

“I went up by revelation” (Galatians 2:2). He was guided by the Holy Spirit, as were the others (Acts 15:28).

4. What did he inform the church at Jerusalem of?

He *“communicated to them that gospel which I preach among the Gentiles”* (Galatians 2:2). His and Barnabas’s contribution to the circumcision question in Jerusalem consisted of giving examples of preaching among the gentiles (Acts 15:12).

5. How was the meeting in Jerusalem conducted?

He communicated *“privately to those who were of reputation”* (Galatians 2:2).

GALATIANS: A QUESTION & ANSWER STUDY GUIDE

After he had been received by the church (Acts 15:4), certain Pharisees got involved and heated up the controversy (5), so a private meeting was held with the elders and apostles (6).

6. **What would have caused Paul to have “run in vain?”**

“Lest by any means I might run, or had run, in vain” (Galatians 2:2) refers to the gospel he had preached to the gentiles, which he reported on to the Jerusalem church, meaning that gospel would have been pointless if the people he preached to had needed circumcision.

7. **What was the outcome of the meeting?**

“Yet not even Titus who was with me, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised” (Galatians 2:3). The Jerusalem conference settled the matter: circumcision was not to be imposed (Acts 15:22-29).

8. How did Titus differ from Timothy?

There was zero cause to compel Titus, a Greek man, to be circumcised, whereas Timothy, who was half Jewish, would have lost all credibility preaching to Jews if he wasn't (Acts 16:1-3). Timothy didn't need circumcision to please God but to be effective in preaching God's gospel to feeble men (1st Corinthians 9:19-23).

9. What was the origin of this controversy?

"And this occurred because of false brethren secretly brought in (who came in by stealth to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage)" (Galatians 2:4). This was not a matter of confusion or a sincere inquiry reaching an incorrect conclusion, but was rooted in malicious intent, meaning to tie souls down to a burdensome load.

10. How did “*false brethren*” gain access to the church at Antioch?

They practiced “*stealth*” in order “*to spy*” (Galatians 2:4), meaning they were dishonest and not straightforward, which is what Jesus warned about when identifying Himself as “*the Door*” (John 10:1-10).

11. What made them “*false brethren*?”

The element he contended with in Antioch, whom he called “*false brethren*,” were either the same people who opposed him in the Jerusalem meeting or were their allies, and those in Jerusalem were described as “*some of the sect of the Pharisees who believed*” (Acts 15:5). Thus, it was not their brotherhood that was false, but their beliefs. They were real brethren who believed falsely.

12. What goal were they pursuing?

They meant to “to spy out our liberty” and “bring us into bondage” (Galatians 2:4). Peter referred to it as “a yoke on the neck... we were unable to bear” (Acts 15:10), while the apostles and elders of Jerusalem called it “trouble” and “unsettling” (24), implying it was a “burden” (28).

The liberty under consideration is, particularly, freedom from the Law of Moses. That is what was being imposed. Nothing else fits the context.

13. How tolerant was Paul toward the “false brethren?”

“We did not yield submission even for an hour, that the truth of the gospel might continue with you” (Galatians 2:5). While it is good to “become all things to all men,” that is done to accommodate the uninformed and not lose influence. Being coerced into unnecessary restrictions is an altogether different matter, so Paul didn’t put up with that at all. Nor should we.

14. What did Paul gain by associating with fellow apostles during this meeting in Jerusalem?

Nothing. *“From those who seemed to be something — whatever they were, it makes no difference to me; God shows personal favoritism to no man — for those who seemed to be something added nothing to me”* (Galatians 2:6).

He went to serve the cause of Christ by sharing what had been revealed to him, so that others could be settled on this matter. He was not served in any way by being there. Their clout did not enhance his own.

15. What did the *“pillars”* of the Jerusalem congregation perceive about Paul?

“They saw that the gospel for the uncircumcised had been committed to me” (Galatians 2:7) and *“perceived the grace that had been given to me”* (9). Rather than Paul

gaining something from them, they came to recognize him as no less than an equal.

16. To whom were Paul and Peter especially sent?

“The gospel for the uncircumcised had been committed to me, as the gospel for the circumcised was to Peter (for He who worked effectively in Peter for the apostleship to the circumcised also worked effectively in me toward the Gentiles)” (Galatians 2:7-8).

These were not exclusive spheres of influence as Peter was the one who first took the gospel to the gentiles (Acts 10:1-11:18; 15:7-11), and Paul consistently began preaching in the synagogue of whatever city he went to (13:14; 14:1; 17:1, 10, 17; 18:4; 19:8). Nevertheless, they recognized the fields in which they were most fruitful. Thus, if a preacher finds himself most effective among a certain demographic, then it is not sinful discrimination to focus on winning those souls.

17. How did the “pillars” manifest their approval of Paul?

“They gave me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship” (Galatians 2:9). Although kisses were common greetings among brethren at the time (Romans 16:16), they weren’t the only method of showing acceptance. Laying hands on a person is an indication of approval.

18. What did they request of him?

“They desired only that we should remember the poor, the very thing which I also was eager to do” (Galatians 2:10). The poor in question were the destitute brethren in Jerusalem who were depending on gentiles to relieve their needs (Romans 15:25-27).

19. Why did Paul stand up to Peter?

“Now when Peter had come to Antioch, I withstood him to his face, because he was to be blamed; for before certain

men came from James, he would eat with the Gentiles; but when they came, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing those who were of the circumcision” (Galatians 2:11-12).

Paul’s authority is on full display when even another apostle is rebuked by him, and face to face, at that!

This shows that no man is infallible. Peter had impetuous tendencies while Christ was on earth, and, many years removed, he still let fear control his behavior at times.

20. How far did this hypocrisy extend?

“And the rest of the Jews also played the hypocrite with him, so that even Barnabas was carried away with their hypocrisy” (Galatians 2:13). Barnabas was, easily, one of the most encouraging characters in the New Testament (Acts 4:36), and made a habit of including the excluded (9:27; 15:36-39). Still, even this man got *“carried away!”*

Past good behavior is not a valid excuse for current bad behavior.

21. In which setting did Paul confront Peter?

“But when I saw that they were not straightforward about the truth of the gospel, I said to Peter before them all, ‘If you, being a Jew, live in the manner of Gentiles and not as the Jews, why do you compel Gentiles to live as Jews?’” (Galatians 2:14). He did this publicly, not privately. It is widely thought that all rebukes must be initiated in private before escalating to a public censure (Matthew 18:15-17), however such a procedure is for sins which were private to begin with. Apollos was confronted privately for something he did in public (Acts 18:24-28), but he was not a Christian at the time and what he taught was merely incomplete, not inaccurate. When error is taught publicly, it deserves to be corrected in the same setting.

22. Which “works” are contrasted to “faith” in the matter of justification?

“We who are Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles, knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law but by faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified” (Galatians 2:15-16).

Twice, Paul specifically mentioned “works of the law,” thereby indicating obedience to the Law of Moses was being considered, which fits the contextual discussion of circumcision. Works of obedience to Christ are not part of the conversation (cf. James 2:14-26).

23. What premise would force the conclusion that Christ is “a minister of sin?”

“But if, while we seek to be justified by Christ, we ourselves

also are found sinners, is Christ therefore a minister of sin? Certainly not!” (Galatians 2:17). Paul is saying that if circumcision or any aspect of the former covenant remains in place, then turning sinners to Christ only keeps them in their sin, which is absurd.

Within a few verses, he concluded: *“I do not set aside the grace of God; for if righteousness comes through the law, then Christ died in vain”* (Galatians 2:21).

24. What two analogies were employed to demonstrate Paul’s separation from the Old Law?

“For if I build again those things which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor. For I through the law died to the law that I might live to God” (Galatians 2:18-19). He refers to it as a destroyed building and as something he died to. No one respecting such words from the New Testament can presently regard the Old Testament as a valid system to obey.

25. What became of Paul's personal identity?

"I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me" (Galatians 2:20). It was surrendered to the will of Jesus cf. Colossians 3:3.

26. When does one become *"crucified with Christ?"*

This text alludes to what Paul taught elsewhere concerning the efficacy of baptism (Romans 6:3-6; Colossians 2:12).

CHAPTER THREE

1. **How were the Galatians “foolish?”**

“O foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you that you should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ was clearly portrayed among you as crucified? This only I want to learn from you: Did you receive the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? Are you so foolish? Having begun in the Spirit, are you now being made perfect by the flesh? Have you suffered so many things in vain — if indeed it was in vain?” (Galatians 3:1-4)

They were behaving illogically, contradicting themselves by simultaneously maintaining reliance on Christ and on the Law He ended.

2. **What transpired that diverted them from truth?**

GALATIANS: A QUESTION & ANSWER STUDY GUIDE

Paul wanted to know *“Who has bewitched you?”* (Galatians 2:1), which means a third party had changed their mind; they hadn’t arrived at this conclusion from any independent study of Scripture.

He compared this change of mind to being put under the spell of witchcraft. As God perceives it, rebellion is equal to witchcraft in sinfulness (1st Samuel 15:23).

3. How had Christ’s crucifixion been portrayed before their eyes?

“Before whose eyes Jesus Christ was clearly portrayed among you as crucified” (Galatians 3:1) refers to the fact that an eyewitness of Christ had preached His death to them. They saw it (Hebrews 2:9) with eyes of faith (2nd Corinthians 5:7).

4. If Paul wanted to know one thing, why did he ask five questions?

GALATIANS: A QUESTION & ANSWER STUDY GUIDE

“This only I want to learn from you: Did you receive the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? Are you so foolish? Having begun in the Spirit, are you now being made perfect by the flesh? Have you suffered so many things in vain — if indeed it was in vain? Therefore He who supplies the Spirit to you and works miracles among you, does He do it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?” (Galatians 2:2-5).

All the questions were rhetorical, not intended to be answered, but to stir them to contemplation, all with the same goal. They got where they were spiritually through the Spirit of Christ (John 6:63; 2nd Corinthians 3:17), not through the Old Law.

5. How did Abraham obtain his righteousness?

“Abraham ‘believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness’” (Galatians 3:6). His trust in God’s promises was counted as righteousness (Genesis 15:1-6) before

circumcision was ever taught him by God (Genesis 17:9-14). This does not at all mean that obedience was not required, for the same Scripture is quoted elsewhere in the New Testament to prove that works are necessary (James 2:21-24).

6. Who are Abraham's true sons?

"Therefore know that only those who are of faith are sons of Abraham" (Galatians 3:7). Genealogy is now religiously irrelevant (Luke 3:8; Titus 3:9), as is circumcision (1st Corinthians 7:19). Faith matters.

7. How was *"the gospel preached to Abraham?"*

"And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel to Abraham beforehand, saying, 'In you all the nations shall be blessed.' So then those who are of faith are blessed with believing Abraham" (Galatians 3:8-9).

In promise (Genesis 12:3), God had foretold to Abraham the good news for all people everywhere, but He only required circumcision of Abraham and his descendants (Genesis 17:10). Thus, the good news did not impose circumcision on anyone else.

8. How are those accountable to the law all cursed?

“For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse; for it is written, ‘Cursed is everyone who does not continue in all things which are written in the book of the law, to do them.’ But that no one is justified by the law in the sight of God is evident, for ‘the just shall live by faith.’ Yet the law is not of faith, but ‘the man who does them shall live by them’” (Galatians 3:10-12).

No one living under that law ever kept it perfectly (James 2:10-11), and so they were cursed, a fact the law itself asserted (Deuteronomy 27:26). This is in stark contrast to

the blessings intended by God which were mentioned previously.

Even the Old Covenant informs its readers that life comes from faith (Habakkuk 2:4). When people under that covenant exercised such faith that they took action according to God's will (Hebrews 11; James 2), they were rewarded.

9. How did Christ redeem us from that curse?

“Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us (for it is written, ‘Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree’), that the blessing of Abraham might come upon the Gentiles in Christ Jesus, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith” (Galatians 3:13-14).

The Law of Moses stated that a hanged man was cursed by God (Deuteronomy 21:23), and Jesus was such a Man, hanged on a tree (Acts 5:30; 10:39). Thus, Jesus became

cursed, and the only reason He did so was on behalf of sinners who deserved that curse, not due to any deserving on His part. Thus, He has *“become a curse for us.”* This verse plainly teaches the vicarious nature of Christ’s suffering; He died in our place, as all of Scripture affirms (Isaiah 53:4-6, 11; 2nd Corinthians 5:21; 1st Peter 2:24; 3:18), despite the prominence of certain preachers who deny this manifest fact.

10. What comparison illustrates the validity of the covenant God made with Abraham?

“Brethren, I speak in the manner of men: Though it is only a man's covenant, yet if it is confirmed, no one annuls or adds to it” (Galatians 3:15).

Contract law is the allegory. Conditions cannot be added to a contract once it is signed. If it is axiomatic concerning the covenants of men, then how much more so is it true of covenants handed down by God?

11. Which of Abraham's seed were the promises spoken to? Which of his seed were the promises about?

“Now to Abraham and his Seed were the promises made. He does not say, ‘And to seeds,’ as of many, but as of one, ‘And to your Seed,’ who is Christ” (Galatians 3:16).

Abraham received the promises several times over (Genesis 12:1-3, 7; 13:15-16; 15:5, 7; 17:5-8; 22:17-18), his son Isaac received them (26:3-4), too, and Isaac's son Jacob also received them (28:13-14).

The promise of a nation (12:2) was about all of Abraham's descendants through Isaac (21:12). The promise of land, which was Canaan specifically (17:8), applied to Jacob's, that is Israel's, children (28:13). The promise of all nations blessed in Abraham's Seed (22:18) meant in Jesus Christ, particularly. The Hebrew word translated “seed” can be singular or plural, like “fish,” “deer,” or “bison” in English. Paul wasn't arguing from the original language; rather, he

was providing newly inspired insight into the meaning of God's promise. Christ is the one Seed of Abraham through whom all people may be blessed.

12. Did the Law of Moses amend the promise to Abraham?

“And this I say, that the law, which was four hundred and thirty years later, cannot annul the covenant that was confirmed before by God in Christ, that it should make the promise of no effect. For if the inheritance is of the law, it is no longer of promise; but God gave it to Abraham by promise” (Galatians 3:17-18).

The law was not a codicil to an existing will. What came four centuries later did not amend, modify, or add conditions to a promise already ratified. The Law was simply not a part of God's covenant with Abraham to bless all families of the earth; therefore, it could not be imposed on anyone to realize that promise.

13. How much elapsed between the promise to Abraham and the establishment of the law?

Paul mentions 430 years (Galatians 3:17) because that is a figure well grounded in the minds of Old Testament students (Exodus 12:40-41), even though it was sometimes rounded down (Genesis 15:13; Acts 7:6). It is an understatement, though, since that was merely the amount of time the Israelites spent in Egypt; the number does not take into account the time from God promising Abraham until Jacob and the patriarchs entered Egypt. That was a span of 215 years, insomuch as Abraham was in Canaan 25 years before Isaac was born (Genesis 12:4; 21:5), Isaac was 60 when Jacob was born (25:26), and Jacob was 130 when he entered Egypt (47:9). Therefore, the law was given 645 years after the promise, to be precise, which only deepens Paul's point.

14. If the law was not intended to be permanent, why did it ever exist?

GALATIANS: A QUESTION & ANSWER STUDY GUIDE

“What purpose then does the law serve? It was added because of transgressions” (Galatians 3:19).

Sin existed before, but the law made accountability obvious (Romans 3:20; 5:13; 7:7). The grace offered in Christ would not be understandable without there first having been a law with severe consequences for sin.

15. What does the word *“added”* imply?

“What purpose then does the law serve? It was added because of transgressions” (Galatians 3:19).

The law of Moses did not exist from the beginning; in fact, 24 centuries passed from Creation until the Law. Not having existed from the beginning, there is no reason to expect it to last until the end. Long-lasting though it was, that Covenant was temporary.

16. What does the word *“till”* imply?

“It was added because of transgressions, till the Seed should come to whom the promise was made” (Galatians 3:19).

Just as *“added”* means it was not from the beginning, so *“till”* means it would not last forever. It was meant to expire with the advent of Christ, the One who is the Seed.

17. How was the law appointed?

“It was appointed through angels by the hand of a mediator. Now a mediator does not mediate for one only, but God is one” (Galatians 3:19-20).

God made His promises to Abraham directly, without mediation of any kind, whereas the law came through angels (Acts 7:38, 53; Hebrews 2:1-4) and Moses (Exodus 20:19-21) to the children of Israel. Thus, the law was inferior.

18. Was there a contradiction between the law of Moses and the promises to Abraham?

“Is the law then against the promises of God? Certainly not! For if there had been a law given which could have given life, truly righteousness would have been by the law. But the Scripture has confined all under sin, that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe” (Galatians 3:21-22).

They did not contradict. Each came from God and each served a purpose. Paul was not disparaging the Law at all, but he was ensuring his readers knew that both the past promises and present faith excelled it, and that the Law was done.

19. What capacity did the law function in “*before faith came?*”

“Before faith came, we were kept under guard by the law, kept for the faith which would afterward be revealed. Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor” (Galatians 3:23-25).

It was a tutor/schoolmaster/guardian, depending on translation. Regardless, it was a temporary role with a specific purpose of preparation and safekeeping, to be dispensed with when something more important happened.

20. How do people become *“sons of God?”*

“For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus” (Galatians 3:26). Faith is required. Elsewhere, Paul wrote, *“as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God”* (Romans 8:15). So, faith in Christ and dependence on the Holy Spirit’s leadership are what matter.

It is true that the phrase *“sons of God”* has referred to

angels, or at least heavenly beings (Job 1:6; 2:1; 38:7). And that has led some to assume it usually meant that, as *“when the sons of God came in to the daughters of men and they bore children to them”* (Genesis 6:2, 4), but it makes far greater sense to think that people who believed in God chose to marry unbelievers than to think that angels, who cannot marry (Matthew 22:30), married human women.

21. How do people *“put on Christ?”*

“For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ” (Galatians 3:27). Those who remain unbaptized are spiritually naked, and likely don’t realize it (Revelation 3:17). After being baptized, it is necessary to live accordingly (Romans 13:14).

22. Where is real unity found?

“There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus” (Galatians 3:28). True oneness is in Christ. He is the great equalizer.

This should not be construed to mean that no differences exist at all, only that all persons have equal access to salvation in Christ and fellowship between one another in Him.

23. What makes someone *“Abraham’s seed?”*

“If you are Christ’s, then you are Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise” (Galatians 3:29). Physical lineage is now irrelevant (John 8:37-39). What matters is inheriting the promise, and that is fulfilled in Jesus.

CHAPTER FOUR

1. What is the status of an heir prior to maturity?

“Now I say that the heir, as long as he is a child, does not differ at all from a slave, though he is master of all, but is under guardians and stewards until the time appointed by the father” (Galatians 4:1-2).

This continues the thought previously presented that *“before faith came, we were kept under guard by the law, kept for the faith which would afterward be revealed. Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor” (Galatians 3:23-25).*

2. What were the children in bondage under?

“Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world” (Galatians 4:3).

The word translated “*elements*” has reference to the periodic table of elements, the very building blocks of matter throughout the universe, which will be destroyed on the Judgment Day (2nd Peter 3:10, 12). The word applies to elementary or rudimentary aspects of worldliness (Colossians 2:8, 20), as well as to the Old Covenant (Galatians 4:9), and even to basics of the gospel meant to be accepted and mastered early in discipleship (Hebrews 5:12).

3. When did God send forth His Son?

“When the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son” (Galatians 4:4).

In immediate context, using the allegory presented, the fullness of time refers to when the minor heir reached maturity. In the greater context of New Testament inspiration, it means God had a precise time in history

GALATIANS: A QUESTION & ANSWER STUDY GUIDE

(Daniel 2:44) predetermined for Christ's arrival on earth (Ephesians 1:10; Romans 5:6; 1st Timothy 2:6). Earlier in history was not God's intention (1st Peter 1:10-12).

4. Why is it relevant that He was *"born of a woman?"*

That He was *"born of a woman"* (Galatians 4:4) fulfilled the very first prophecy made concerning Christ (Genesis 3:15) – a prophecy about defeating Satan who first corrupted mankind by deceiving a woman (1st Timothy 2:14).

Moreover, it emphasizes His humanity, which was necessary for Him to prove humble under God (Philippians 2:7-8), sympathetic toward men under temptation (Hebrews 4:15), and victorious over death (Hebrews 2:14).

5. Why is it relevant that He was *"born under the law?"*

That He was *“born under the law”* (Galatians 4:4) means He was able to fulfill it (Matthew 5:17-18) and thereby end it (Romans 10:4), and thus *“to redeem those who were under the law”* (Galatians 4:5).

6. Why did God send forth His Son?

“That we might receive the adoption as sons” (Galatians 4:5). By His only begotten Son, God means for us to know we are sons, too! That we enjoy the parent/child relationship with our Maker is proof we are loved (1st John 3:1). Love displaces fear (1st John 4:18). Displacing fear is the whole point of adoption (Romans 8:14-17)!

7. Whom did God send forth after sending His Son?

“Because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, ‘Abba, Father!’” (Galatians 4:6). As Jesus cried, *“Abba, Father!”* in the garden (Mark

14:36), we who have His Spirit within do likewise (Romans 8:15).

8. As a son, no longer under guardianship, what is each Christian?

“Therefore you are no longer a slave but a son, and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ” (Galatians 4:7). The inheritance we anticipate is eternal salvation in heaven (1st Peter 1:3-5).

9. What had the Galatians been doing when they *“did not know God?”*

“When you did not know God, you served those which by nature are not gods” (Galatians 4:7).

Whereas Paul has been implying a Jewish audience in the previous verses, those who were under the temporary guardianship of the Law of Moses, he moves now to

address the Gentiles of Galatia insomuch as they previously *“did not know God,”* which could not have been said of Jews.

In their ignorance of God, these Gentiles submitted themselves under false deities, being idolaters. That’s how idolatry goes—false gods are worshiped because the true God is unknown (Acts 17:22-23).

10. As disciples of the Lord, who knows whom?

“But now after you have known God, or rather are known by God” (Galatians 4:9).

The disciple knows God, but, much more importantly, God knows the disciple. That was Jesus’ point: *“Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, ‘Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in*

Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?’ And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!’” (Matthew 7:21-23).

11. How were the Galatians *“turn[ing] again?”*

“How is it that you turn again to the weak and beggarly elements, to which you desire again to be in bondage?” (Galatians 4:9).

They were in bondage to false gods before they obeyed the gospel to gain its freedom, but they were resuming bondage by submitting to Judaism, the “elements” of which were “beggarly,” meaning “poor.” This poverty is in contrast to the wealth of the gospel (Ephesians 1:7, 18; 3:8).

12. What examples did Paul cite to demonstrate the Galatians’ submission to *“weak and beggarly elements?”*

“You observe days and months and seasons and years”
(Galatians 4:10).

The religious observance of holy days cannot be rightly imposed on anyone because they are part of a system that anticipated the gospel, not a part of the gospel itself (Colossians 2:16-17). Observing Jewish customs wasn't the problem, exactly, because that could be done in good conscience (Romans 14:5-6). The problem was Gentiles assuming these practices from and falling into servitude under a dead Law.

13. What did Paul fear?

“I am afraid for you, lest I have labored for you in vain”
(Galatians 4:11).

He was afraid his work in the gospel on behalf of the Galatians would be wasted by them turning from Christ to

Moses. Salvation is at stake when Christians prefer the former Covenant to the present one.

14. Why did Paul urge his readers to become like him?

“Brethren, I urge you to become like me, for I became like you” (Galatians 4:12).

He had *“become all things to all men”* in order to win souls to Christ (1st Corinthians 9:19-23), which included counting his gains in Judaism loss for Christ (Philippians 3:3-7). Herein, he beseeches the Galatians to do what he had done in surrendering Old Covenant obedience.

15. Had the Galatians mistreated Paul?

“You have not injured me at all. You know that because of physical infirmity I preached the gospel to you at the first. And my trial which was in my flesh you did not despise or reject... For I bear you witness that, if possible, you would

have plucked out your own eyes and given them to me” (Galatians 4:12-15).

Not only had they not mistreated him previously (12), but they welcomed him despite ill health (13), and were willing to help him sacrificially (15).

His *“thorn in the flesh”* is well known (2nd Corinthians 12:7), and may have involved some visual impairment (Galatians 6:11), but they wanted to help. This diverges greatly from the Corinthians who had a very low regard for Paul’s bodily presence (2nd Corinthians 10:10).

16. How did they regard him initially versus later on?

At first, he says, *“You received me as an angel of God, even as Christ Jesus”* (Galatians 4:14), but he was concerned, *“Have I therefore become your enemy because I tell you the truth?”* (16).

Receiving the apostles sent by Christ as God's messenger, or even as Christ, is appropriate (John 13:20). But Christ was hated for telling the truth (John 15:18), so His apostles would be, too.

17. Is zeal good or bad? How was zeal affecting the churches of Galatia?

"They zealously court you, but for no good; yes, they want to exclude you, that you may be zealous for them. But it is good to be zealous in a good thing always, and not only when I am present with you" (Galatians 4:17-18).

Zeal is good if properly directed (Romans 10:2), but the Judaizers were zealous in trying to win the Galatians' attention and admiration only for the purpose of excluding them if they didn't act Jewish so that the Gentiles would be zealous in pursuing them, to the point of taking on Jewish behavior.

18. What was Paul still doing for the Galatians that should have been completed already?

“My little children, for whom I labor in birth again until Christ is formed in you” (Galatians 4:19). They should already be sons of God through adoption and rebirth, but he was still in labor for them. Formation remained incomplete!

This is the only kind of “getting in touch with your feminine side” that a man is allowed – to have maternal nurturing instincts for weak souls (Matthew 23:37)!

19. How was Paul concerned about his tone?

“I would like to be present with you now and to change my tone; for I have doubts about you” (Galatians 4:20).

He has been hard on them throughout this epistle, especially in the first chapter, where he skipped over the

usual niceties contained in most introductions to chastise them immediately. Now, he employs terms of endearment, calling them his “*little children*” (19) and regarding himself as their birth-giver (19), spiritually. He wants the relationship to improve, but that is up to them.

20. How could Paul “*have doubts about*” the Galatians?

If the basic tenet of Calvinism, “Perseverance of the Saints,” or “Once Saved – Always Saved,” was the least bit true, then there could be zero cause for Paul’s expressed doubts. That such a one as the apostle Paul could be uncertain of the salvation of people he converted is proof that salvation is not a one and done proposition.

21. What should people under the law know about the law?

“*Tell me, you who desire to be under the law, do you not hear the law?*” (Galatians 4:21). The difference between “*the two covenants*” (24) should be obvious!

22. What metaphors did Paul present to teach “*the two covenants?*”

“For it is written that Abraham had two sons: the one by a bondwoman, the other by a freewoman. But he who was of the bondwoman was born according to the flesh, and he of the freewoman through promise, which things are symbolic. For these are the two covenants: the one from Mount Sinai which gives birth to bondage, which is Hagar — for this Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia, and corresponds to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children — but the Jerusalem above is free, which is the mother of us all” (Galatians 4:22-26).

“Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are children of promise” (Galatians 4:28).

Nevertheless what does the Scripture say? ‘Cast out the bondwoman and her son, for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman.’ So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman but of the free” (Galatians 4:30-31).

GALATIANS: A QUESTION & ANSWER STUDY GUIDE

The two covenants are represented by the two sons of Abraham. Yes, he had six more sons by Keturah (Genesis 25:1-2), but his first two sons were born in pursuit of fulfilling God's promise – one in vain (Genesis 16:1-12), and the other in righteousness (Genesis 17:15-21).

The two covenants are also represented by two mountains. Mount Sinai is where Jehovah descended and gave Israel the Ten Commandments and all the Law of Moses (Exodus 19:1-31:18). Mount Zion, situated in Jerusalem (1st Kings 8:1), was prophesied as the location from which God's new Law in Christ would be established (Isaiah 2:1-4; Micah 4:1-3). Because of this, the bride of Christ, the church, is pictured as "*New Jerusalem*" (Revelation 3:12; 21:2).

GALATIANS: A QUESTION & ANSWER STUDY GUIDE

2 SONS, 2 MOUNTAINS = 2 COVENANTS	
<i>"By a bondwoman"</i>	<i>"By a freewoman"</i>
<i>"Born according to the flesh"</i>	<i>"Born... through promise"</i>
<i>"Hagar"</i>	<i>"The mother of us all"</i>
<i>"Mount Sinai in Arabia"</i>	
<i>"Jerusalem which now is"</i>	<i>"The Jerusalem above is free"</i>
<i>"In bondage with her children"</i>	<i>"Children of promise"</i>
<i>"Cast out the bondwoman and her son"</i>	<i>"We are not children of the bondwoman but of the free"</i>

23. How is the quotation from Isaiah 54 meant to be applied?

"For it is written: 'Rejoice, O barren, you who do not bear! Break forth and shout, you who are not in labor! For the desolate has many more children than she who has a husband'" (Galatians 4:27; Isaiah 54:1-6).

While there is some comparison to recognize with Sarai (Genesis 11:30), the prophecy was given to Judah in

captivity, where they were to learn their punishment and grief were brief in contrast to the blessings that would follow (Isaiah 54:7-10). The New Testament, the gospel of Jesus Christ the Savior, is where those blessings are found!

24. What transpired between Ishmael and Isaac that is still going on?

“But, as he who was born according to the flesh then persecuted him who was born according to the Spirit, even so it is now” (Galatians 4:29).

Ishmael, born according to the flesh, mistreated his brother Isaac, born according to the Spirit (Genesis 21:8-9), and so it continues now that spiritual people should expect persecution from fleshly-minded people (2nd Timothy 3:12).

Notice that what Paul describes as persecution was a boy

“scoffing” at his little brother. Persecution manifests in varying levels of severity and we should not disregard verbal insults of what is true simply because they are not physically violent.

25. What consequence did Hagar and Ishmael experience and what does that mean now?

“Nevertheless what does the Scripture say? ‘Cast out the bondwoman and her son, for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman.’ So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman but of the free” (Galatians 4:30-31; Genesis 21:10).

Since Hagar and Ishmael were cast out because of Ishmael’s mockery toward Isaac, then, certainly, Christians must remove from fellowship those Christians were trying to impose the Law of Moses on their brethren.

CHAPTER FIVE

1. **From what are Christians set “free?”**

“Stand fast therefore in the liberty by which Christ has made us free, and do not be entangled again with a yoke of bondage” (Galatians 5:1).

The over all theme of the epistle indicates the entire Law of Moses, specifically including ordinances relative to circumcision, are the “yoke of bondage” one should not be “entangled” in, and from which Christ offers “liberty.”

2. **Identify two consequences of becoming circumcised.**

“Indeed I, Paul, say to you that if you become circumcised, Christ will profit you nothing. And I testify again to every man who becomes circumcised that he is a debtor to keep the whole law. You have become estranged from Christ,

GALATIANS: A QUESTION & ANSWER STUDY GUIDE

you who attempt to be justified by law; you have fallen from grace” (Galatians 5:2-4).

- 1) *“Christ will profit you nothing,” “you have become estranged from Christ,” and “you have fallen from grace.”* Reversion to the former covenant will nullify the effect of Christ for that person. That is to say that salvation will be forfeit! *“Once saved, always saved”* is proven false, once again.
- 2) *“A debtor to keep the whole law.”* One who is inclined to select portions of the Law of Moses is not authorized to cherry pick the parts he likes. He will be obligated to the entire system (James 2:10). The present covenant does not coincide with the previous, but has replaced it altogether (Hebrews 10:9).

3. How is righteousness obtained?

GALATIANS: A QUESTION & ANSWER STUDY GUIDE

“For we through the Spirit eagerly wait for the hope of righteousness by faith. For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything, but faith working through love” (Galatians 5:5-6).

“Righteousness” is:

- 1) *“Through the Spirit,”* meaning the Holy Spirit who has revealed God’s will to man. It is not through oneself that righteousness is achieved (Romans 10:3).

- 2) *“By faith,”* meaning belief in that which God presently teaches, rather than reliance on an obsolete system (Romans 3:21-22). This is not faith in contrast to obedience, for Paul writes here of *“faith working,”* so it refers to faith in contrast to the Law.

4. **What had the Galatians been doing that they were *“hindered”* from continuing?**

GALATIANS: A QUESTION & ANSWER STUDY GUIDE

“You ran well. Who hindered you from obeying the truth?”
(Galatians 5:7).

Salvation is dependent on obedience (Hebrews 5:9). Whatever obstacles had arisen kept them on the side of falsehood, rather than truth.

5. Whom had their present persuasion come from?

“This persuasion does not come from Him who calls you”
(Galatians 5:8). The One who called was God, through the gospel (2nd Thessalonians 2:13-14). Thus, the persuasion they were falling under came from someone other than Him and through some source other than His gospel, the implication being that it was damnable heresy from the devil.

6. Describe the potential of leaven.

“A little leaven leavens the whole lump” (Galatians 5:9).

Whether for good (Matthew 13:33) or ill (Matthew 16:5-12; 1st Corinthians 5:6-8), leaven, that is yeast, represents influence and its far-reaching effects. In context, leaven is Judaism in the church, and Paul is warning about it.

7. What thoughts did Paul have about the two separate parties?

“I have confidence in you, in the Lord, that you will have no other mind; but he who troubles you shall bear his judgment, whoever he is” (Galatians 5:10).

Despite all his frustration heretofore, Paul actually expressed confidence in the Galatian brethren themselves, but anticipated judgment on the one who was troubling them. The apostle might have been unaware of the troubler’s identity, or he may simply have indicated the impartiality of divine judgment (Romans 2:11).

8. What was Paul experiencing and how did that confirm his stance on the subject?

“And I, brethren, if I still preach circumcision, why do I still suffer persecution? Then the offense of the cross has ceased” (Galatians 5:11).

Paul was still being persecuted, so he clearly was at odds with the Judaizers. If they tried to use him as an example of a circumciser (Acts 16:1-3) to justify themselves, it would not make sense that they opposed him so vociferously.

9. What did Paul wish the troublemakers would do?

“I could wish that those who trouble you would even cut themselves off!” (Galatians 5:12).

Some versions water down the sense of Paul’s intent to make it seem he only wished they would separate themselves. Others, more accurately, convey the idea of

emasculatation. We don't need to try and make it sound nice because it wasn't. He was suggesting that if they were so focused on taking a knife to one's genitals that they would just cut the whole thing off and be done with it.

10. Is liberty in Christ absolute?

“For you, brethren, have been called to liberty; only do not use liberty as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another” (Galatians 5:13).

No, liberty is not so absolute that it carries no weight of responsibility. Liberty presents opportunity to serve and to do so with love. It does not free anyone to sin with impunity.

11. How is the law summarized?

“For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this: ‘You

shall love your neighbor as yourself” (Galatians 5:14).

It is not that love negates all the other commands, but that love is the impetus for obedience to those commands (Matthew 22:37-40; Romans 13:8-10).

12. What is the predictable outcome of infighting?

“But if you bite and devour one another, beware lest you be consumed by one another!” (Galatians 5:15).

It cannot continue long before souls are destroyed.

13. How may a Christian properly refrain from fleshly lusts?

“I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh” (Galatians 5:16).

It is insufficient to simply abstain from doing bad; he must

also actively engage in good. Removing naughty habits is not enough; they must be replaced with righteous behavior (Luke 11:24-26).

14. What is the relation between “*the flesh*” and “*the Spirit*?”

“For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish” (Galatians 5:17).

They contradict one another. This should be obvious, self-evident, goes without saying, but far too many people claim to be Christians while living immoral lives totally consistent with the world and altogether opposed to the gospel.

15. Where does the law fit into the life of a Spirit-led person?

“But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law”
(Galatians 5:18).

Because the Holy Spirit moved the apostles and prophets (2nd Peter 1:21) to record in Scripture that the law has been terminated (Romans 7:4; 10:4), those who are led by the Spirit know they are not under that law.

- 16. List the *“evident” “works of the flesh”* and be prepared to define each one.**

“Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are”
(Galatians 5:19-21):

- 1) *“Adultery”* (KJV & NKJV only): Unlawful intercourse with the spouse of another. Even if the Holy Spirit did not include it in this list, it is mentioned many other times in the New Testament, so its sinfulness is indisputable (Hebrews 13:4). While it starts in the heart (Matthew 5:28), it is not merely a

GALATIANS: A QUESTION & ANSWER STUDY GUIDE

thought, but an action (John 8:4). It is most often committed in marriage following divorce (Romans 7:1-3; Luke 16:18).

- 2) *“Fornication”*: Illicit sexual intercourse, including adultery, homosexuality, bestiality, and heterosexual copulation without the benefit of marriage (1st Corinthians 6:12-7:5; 1st Thessalonians 4:3-8).
- 3) *“Uncleanness”*: In a physical sense, just dirtiness (Matthew 23:27), but applied to behavior with implications concerning morality (1st Thessalonians 2:3), almost always mentioned morally in the context of sexual purity (2nd Corinthians 12:21; Ephesians 4:19; 5:3; Colossians 3:5; 1st Thessalonians 4:7). It is an intentionally generic word meant to cover a broad range of immorality, especially conduct that would suggest sexuality without being specific. Thus, when an unmarried

GALATIANS: A QUESTION & ANSWER STUDY GUIDE

couple wonders if they've "gone too far," the answer is almost certainly affirmative.

- 4) "*Lewdness*": Indecent bodily movements, unchaste handling of males and females. This is not quite as vague as "*uncleanness*" as it does particularly indicate physical contact, but it certainly doesn't require completion of a sexual deed. It falls on the spectrum between sexual thought – lust (Matthew 5:28) and sexual intercourse – fornication (1st Corinthians 6:9). Applications include groping, feeling up, and most modern dancing. "Women equate dancing to sex" (Will Smith, "Hitch," 2005).

Having mentioned three or four sins of a sensual nature, which Paul would expect his readers to readily agree are wrong, he moves to sins of a religious sort:

GALATIANS: A QUESTION & ANSWER STUDY GUIDE

- 5) *“Idolatry”*: The worship of false gods. While anything that comes between man and God is an idol, such as covetousness (Colossians 3:5), and that notion must be applied widely, the reality is that actual worship of false gods is still a real problem. It causes an irreconcilable problem for Christians (1st Corinthians 10:14-22). It is totally unreasonable (Romans 1:22-25).

- 6) *“Sorcery”*: From the same Greek word that gives us *“pharmacy”* in English, it refers to the use of drugs to cause people to believe in magic. The condemnation of this sin applies to both non-medicinal drug use, as well as forays into the dark arts, spiritism, witchcraft, and such (Deuteronomy 18:10; Revelation 21:8; 22:15).

After quickly addressing certain religious sins that both Christians and Jews should comprehend as wrong, the

GALATIANS: A QUESTION & ANSWER STUDY GUIDE

apostle then points to several problematic attitudes that would characterize some members in a divided church:

- 7) *“Hatred”*: Definitely, this is the opposite of love (1st John 2:9-11; 3:15; 4:20; Matthew 5:43-48).
- 8) *“Contentions”*: Strife, quarrel, especially rivalry, contention, wrangling.
- 9) *“Jealousies”*: Unfavorable zeal.
- 10) *“Outbursts of wrath”*: Passion, angry heat, fierceness.
- 11) *“Selfish ambitions”*: Party-making, seeking to win followers.
- 12) *“Dissensions”*: Disunion. Standing apart.

GALATIANS: A QUESTION & ANSWER STUDY GUIDE

- 13) *“Heresies”* : Opinion substituted for truth, leading to division and the formation of sects.

- 14) *“Envy”*: Displeasure at the prosperity of others.

After mentioning so many sinful mindsets that seemed to be present in Galatia, the apostle returns to certain immoral behaviors he would expect all Christians to comprehend as worldly. It would seem that he bookended this list with sins he would expect his audience to recognize and disapprove of to gain their agreement, and then sandwiched the troubles they were involved in between those things.

- 15) *“Murders”* (KJV & NKJV only): Even if the Holy Spirit did not include it in this list, it is mentioned many other times in the New Testament, so its sinfulness is indisputable.

GALATIANS: A QUESTION & ANSWER STUDY GUIDE

- 16) *“Drunkenness”*: Intoxication, which starts with the first drink (Proverbs 23:31; 20:1; 1st Timothy 5:23; Ephesians 5:18).
- 17) *“Revelries”*: A nocturnal and riotous procession of half-drunken and frolicsome fellows who after supper parade through the streets with torches and music in honor of Bacchus or some other deity, and sing and play before the houses of their male and female friends.

17. Is the list exhaustive?

“And the like” (Galatians 5:21) indicates there could be more to fleshly living, but the list provides a gist of what it means to be fleshly-oriented. Anything similar to this does not need to be explicitly enumerated to be recognized as an *“evident”* sin.

18. What becomes of *“those who practice such things?”*

“Of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God” (Galatians 5:21).

Similar lists of sins likewise conclude with warnings of condemnation (1st Corinthians 6:9-11; Ephesians 5:3-7; Revelation 21:8; 22:15).

19. How many fruits of the Spirit are there?

“But the fruit of the Spirit is” (Galatians 5:22) uses a singular, not plural form of the noun in both Greek and English; therefore only one fruit exists with its component elements. “Love, joy, peace,” etc. are not various fruits, but parts of the whole fruit. If any portion of this fruit is lacking, the Christian cannot be the productive disciple he needs to be.

20. List the component elements of *“the fruit of the Spirit”* and identify which *“works of the flesh”* each one contradicts.

“But the fruit of the Spirit is” (Galatians 5:22-23):

- 1) *“Love”*: It is the bond of perfection (Colossians 3:14) because it is the fulfillment of every law (Romans 13:8-10), which is why it comprises the first and second greatest commandments (Matthew 22:36-38). To know if love truly occupies one’s heart, read 1st Corinthians 13:1-8_a and replace the word *“love”* with one’s own name and consider if what is said is accurate.

This quality of the fruit of the Spirit stands in direct contrast to every one of the works of the flesh.

- 2) *“Joy”*: Cheerfulness, delight, gladness. This is not mere happiness, which depends on what is

GALATIANS: A QUESTION & ANSWER STUDY GUIDE

happening. It transcends circumstance inasmuch as we are to rejoice at all times (1st Thessalonians 5:16), in the Lord (Philippians 4:4), even during trial (James 1:2).

Hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, and envy all violate joy.

- 3) *“Peace”*: Tranquility, harmony, concord. This is stillness of the soul which comes from the Lord (John 14:27) and permeates our being despite outward conflict (16:33).

As with joy, so peace is in opposition to hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, and envy.

- 4) *“Longsuffering”*: Forbearance, endurance. It means putting up with ill treatment, not out of acceptance

GALATIANS: A QUESTION & ANSWER STUDY GUIDE

or approval, but in order to eventually forgive, as God has done (1st Timothy 1:12-16). We look to Job and the prophets for our human examples (James 5:10-11).

Like the two preceding qualities, this one is in contrast to hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, and envy.

- 5) *“Kindness”*: Moral goodness, integrity, benignity. It is this quality on God’s part that makes man’s salvation possible (Romans 11:22; Titus 3:4).

It, too, contrasts against hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, and envy.

- 6) *“Goodness”*: Virtue, beneficence, uprightness of heart and life. It is quality which pursues

GALATIANS: A QUESTION & ANSWER STUDY GUIDE

knowledge and enables one to admonish others (Romans 15:14).

It encapsulates the entirety of the Spirit's fruit (Ephesians 5:9-11), and so it opposes all the works of the flesh.

- 7) *"Faithfulness"*: Belief, persuasion, conviction, assurance. Faith is the firm trust a disciple has in the Master (Matthew 8:5-13; 21:21) that motivates action in accordance with that reliance (Hebrews 11; James 2:14-26). *"Faith,"* as the KJV has it, is probably more accurate here since *"faithfulness"* suggests being reliable, which is a different characteristic than reliance.

Since it is trust in God, the works of the flesh most directly at odds with faith would be idolatry and sorcery, which manifestly redirect faith away from the Almighty.

GALATIANS: A QUESTION & ANSWER STUDY GUIDE

- 8) *“Gentleness”*: Mildness, humility. It is the opposite of harshness, but only when it comes from someone fully capable of harshness (1st Corinthians 4:21). Consider that Moses was the meekest of all men (Numbers 12:3), but even he was capable of physical force to the point of homicide (Exodus 2:12)!

As with the majority of this list, gentleness conflicts with hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, and envy.

- 9) *“Self-control”*: Continenence, self-restraint. It is personal discipline, mastery over the self, and is always goal-driven (1st Corinthians 9:24-27). There is no greater strength than self-control (Proverbs 16:32), but the person who lacks this quality has squandered his value (Proverbs 25:28)

A lack of self-control causes one to indulge in any of the works of the flesh.

21. Which law do the preceding virtues comport with?

“Against such there is no law” (Galatians 5:23).

The fruit of the Spirit is consistent with both the Old Law and the New.

22. What have *“those who are Christ’s”* done and what do those who *“live in the Spirit”* do?

“And those who are Christ’s have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit” (Galatians 5:24-25).

23. What behaviors will be refrained from when living and walking in the Spirit?

GALATIANS: A QUESTION & ANSWER STUDY GUIDE

“Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another” (Galatians 5:26).

CHAPTER SIX

1. Whose responsibility is restoring the man overtaken in trespass?

“Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one” (Galatians 6:1). Spiritual people help their brethren out of sin (James 5:19-20) because those souls matter (Luke 15) and they are facing severe condemnation (2nd Peter 2:20-22; Hebrews 10:26-31). Those unwilling to engage in this cannot be accurately described as spiritual.

The wayward must confess their faults (1st John 1:9) and repent of their sins and pray for forgiveness (Acts 8:22)

2. How should restoration be approached?

“In a spirit of gentleness” (Galatians 6:1). This is a command to the restorer, not the backslider. The restorer

needs to impart the same forbearance the Lord does, being merciful and patient (2nd Timothy 2:24-26). While this ought to be so, the backslider needs to be receptive to correction even if the one offering it fails to be gentle.

3. What concern should the restorer be cognizant of during the process?

“Considering yourself lest you also be tempted” (Galatians 6:1). One who hasn’t yet mastered himself regarding a certain temptation is not qualified to help others struggling with the same problem.

4. How may the law of Christ be fulfilled?

“Bear one another’s burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ” (Galatians 6:2). Although we can think of many applications to the concept of burden bearing, what the context points to is the restoration of the wayward. It refers to lifting up those with moral infirmity.

5. How might one deceive himself?

“For if anyone thinks himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceives himself” (Galatians 6:3).

6. Whose work ought one to examine?

“But let each one examine his own work, and then he will have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another” (Galatians 6:4). While a disciple aids a struggling brother or sister, he must avoid comparisons between himself and the one who is weak. The weaker brother will only be discouraged and the stronger brother will think too much of himself, overlooking his own shortcomings.

7. Reconcile the command to *“Bear one another’s burdens”* with the statement that *“Each one shall bear his own load.”*

“For each one shall bear his own load” (Galatians 6:5) does not contradict *“Bear one another’s burdens”* (Galatians 6:2). While Christians are duty-bound to help each other, we will be held personally accountable in judgment (2nd Corinthians 5:10).

8. What should be shared between teacher and student?

“Let him who is taught the word share in all good things with him who teaches” (Galatians 6:6). Having listed the *“fruit of the Spirit”* (5:22-25) in contrast (5:16-17) to the *“works of the flesh”* (5:19-21), and having told *“spiritual”* people to restore those in *“trespass”* (6:1), Paul is telling the restored brother, *“him who is taught the word,”* to have *“fruit of the Spirit”* in common *“with him who teaches.”* The once wayward soul who is now restored needs to start acting like he’s been restored.

9. What would amount to self-deception and mockery of God?

“Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap” (Galatians 6:7). Believing that consequences do not follow actions is to lie to self and to God.

10. What will be harvested after sowing to the flesh or Spirit, respectively?

“For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life” (Galatians 6:8). Sinful behavior results in death, whereas righteous behavior leads to eternal glory (Romans 8:13).

11. Why must fatigue be overcome?

“And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart” (Galatians 6:9). We have a grand goal to be obtained in the hereafter, but losing heart keeps us from getting there.

12. When opportunity presents, what should be done?

“Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith” (Galatians 6:10). Good is to be done, and the good in context is correcting sinners and getting back to righteous behavior. Any sinners should be corrected, but priority is always placed on fellow believers who stray (Luke 15:4-7).

To regard the good-doing here as anything other than correcting sinners and the subsequent good behavior expected of Christians is to ignore the word *“therefore,”* which directly connects verses 1 and 10.

13. Why is Paul’s penmanship relevant?

“See with what large letters I have written to you with my own hand!” (Galatians 6:11).

GALATIANS: A QUESTION & ANSWER STUDY GUIDE

Several possibilities exist regarding the size of his handwriting, and none are certain, but, given his earlier hint at visual impairment (4:15), it could be that he is acknowledging his physical infirmity (4:13), now on display as he autographs the epistle (cf. 1st Corinthians 16:21; Colossians 4:18; 2nd Thessalonians 3:17), after a scribe did most of the writing heretofore (cf. Romans 16:22; 1st Peter 5:12).

Another consideration is that he is enlarging his writing for emphasis, however, it seems his wording has been emphatic enough throughout the epistle.

14. What was the motive for those who would compel the Galatians to be circumcised?

“As many as desire to make a good showing in the flesh, these would compel you to be circumcised, only that they may not suffer persecution for the cross of Christ. For not even those who are circumcised keep the law, but they

desire to have you circumcised that they may boast in your flesh” (Galatians 6:12-13). They intended to avoid suffering by claiming to be likeminded with the Jews, so they show off that these Christians were circumcised, too. They were trying to please the wrong people.

15. What should a Christian boast about?

“But God forbid that I should boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world” (Galatians 6:14). The rule is that pride is sin (Proverbs 16:18) and the exception is pride in Christ. Other things we can be thankful for, count ourselves blessed concerning, and be pleased about, such as our children or our patriotism, but pride is not right.

16. Is circumcision relevant in Christ?

Not at all. “For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything, but a new creation”

(Galatians 6:15). If it is treated as a necessity, then it is sinful (5:2-3), but if recognized as a matter of indifference (5:6), then it just does not matter.

17. Whom did Paul pronounce peace and mercy upon?

“And as many as walk according to this rule, peace and mercy be upon them, and upon the Israel of God” (Galatians 6:16). Mercy and peace are bestowed on those who live according to the doctrine Paul has been teaching in this epistle, not to anyone else.

18. Identify *“the Israel of God.”*

After specifying that peace and mercy belong to those who are unconcerned about circumcision, Paul is, definitively, not blessing the physical lineage of Jacob who would, mostly, still be imposing circumcision! At present, the Israel of God, rather than the Israel of man, would be the heirs of the promises to Abraham, and Paul has gone

to great lengths in this epistle to prove who those heirs are – those obedient to the gospel (Galatians 3:7-9, 29; 4:28).

19. Why were the brethren to quit harassing the apostle?

“From now on let no one trouble me, for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus” (Galatians 6:17).

Unlike circumcision, which was a mark of descent from Abraham, Paul bore in his body the marks of Jesus, wounds he had actually suffered in persecution (2nd Corinthians 4:10; 6:4-5; 11:23-30), which, Jesus said, would befall His apostles (Luke 11:49).

“Brethren, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen.”