

Every Sunday evening at [Bible Explorer](#) we will explore the question

'What does this book from the Bible mean for us today?'

Information on Galatians (from the internet)

Galatians is one of the four letters of Paul known as the *Hauptbriefe*, which are universally accepted as authentic. It is typically dated c. 54 CE. There is an old debate as to whether Paul's letter was directed to northern Galatia, where the ethnic Galatians lived, or to southern part of the Galatian province, where cities such as Iconium are located. Most historians now think it's the latter.

The epistle to the Galatians shows Paul in conflict with other missionaries. Jewish-Christians from Palestine had visited the congregations of the Galatians after Paul's visit there and taught that Paul's Gospel was incomplete. They persuaded some of the Galatians that salvation required observance of the Torah laws, including circumcision. Paul writes to rebuke and to persuade the Galatians in this letter. Indeed, the letter follows the outline of a Greco-Roman apologetic letter (*The History and Theology*, p. 99): prescript (1:1-5), introduction (1:6-11), narrative (1:12-2:14), proposition (2:15-21), proof (3:1-4:31), exhortation (5:1-6:10), and conclusion (6:11-18). But this is not to say that the argument for justification of faith in Galatians is cut-and-dry; far from it, Paul's epistle to the Galatians is full of passion, anger, and drama.

When was the gospel preached in Galatia?

- Paul's first missionary journey took him to the region of southern Galatia.
- Preaching in Antioch of Pisidia (Acts [13:1-52](#))
- Preaching in Iconium (Acts [14:1-5](#))
- Preaching in the region of Lyconium: Lystra and Derbe (Acts [14:6-21](#))

Who were these believers and what was their background?

- Paul preached in Jewish synagogues to an audience of Jews, proselytes, and "God fearers" (Acts [13:5](#), [14](#), [43](#); and [14:1](#)).
- Paul preached to an entire whole city. He was rejected by the Jews and turned to the Gentiles (Acts [13:44](#), [46-49](#)).
- Paul preached to pagan Gentiles who worshipped false gods using elaborate rituals (Acts [14:11-13](#)).

Brief Summary (Not exhaustive!)

- Paul wrote to correct false teaching that was being adopted: see 1:6-9 and see 1:3-5 for his basic gospel.
- Paul reinforced his own credentials as an apostle.
- God's Spirit living in us is the sign and seal of our belief; through the Spirit the disciples worked miracles (see 3:23-25 for a summary).

- We are equal children of God not slaves. Paul is concerned that the Galatians should not re-enslave themselves to the Law (see 5:1).
- We are to live by the Spirit (see 5:16-26).
- We are to love and disciple each other.

Fruits of the Spirit – ch 5:22-23

- Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.

Langham partnership video

9aday: becoming like Jesus.

John Stott's prayer:

- Heavenly Father, I pray that this day I may live in your presence and please you more and more. Lord Jesus, I pray that this day I may take up my cross and follow you. Holy Spirit, I pray that this day you will fill me with yourself and cause your fruit to ripen in my life.
- We are to cultivate the soil of God's word and nourish our roots so that fruit will grow.
- Will this be enough to make us like Jesus?

What God can do ministries

- Can anger be a gift from God? If we grow the gifts of the Spirit, how can we also be powerful?
- Acts 2 says *Jesus was accredited by God to the disciples because of His miracles wonders and signs*, so how much did He show the fruits of the Spirit, e.g. when he drove the money-lenders out of the temple?
- Do we as modern Christians concentrate too much on the civilised fruits of the Spirit and not enough on the radical nature of Jesus?

Discuss and pray!