



# The Lighthouse

## NEW TESTAMENT NOTES

# Galatians

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## Introduction to the Letter to the Congregations in Galatia

**Author:** The Apostle Paul is the author

**Theme:** Justification before God by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone, without works, is presented as the heart of the gospel, or good news, in this epistle. The enemies of the gospel were the Judaizers which Paul confronted at Antioch and at Jerusalem (Acts 15:1-3,5). The Judaizers did not deny the gospel content (death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ), but denied the sufficiency of the gospel to justify without works.

The problem was a doctrinal issue. They fell from the doctrine of grace in their understanding. Paul believed they were saved but doctrinally “bewitched” (Gal. 3:1). Only if they continued to embrace justification by works does he question their original salvation experience (Gal. 4:8-20).

How do we know that they are in the process of being removed from grace as a theological position unto works rather than being removed from the state of grace (position) or the experience of grace (power) unto a lost condition? Those who deny eternal security argue that the Galatians are in danger of losing their state or experience of grace and thus in the process of becoming lost.

First, we know this because the words “**another gospel**” is placed in direct contrast to the words “**the grace of Christ**” (v. 7). This infers that the phrase “the grace of Christ” is definitive of the true gospel because it is in contrast to the words “another gospel.” Why choose this particular phrase “the grace of Christ” to represent the true gospel? He is defining the true gospel by its primary theological **truth** – “grace.” It should be obvious that the words “another gospel” do not refer to a state or an experience but rather to the primary expression of theological **error**. **That error is** the addition of “justification by works” to the gospel of Christ. Therefore the phrase “the grace of Christ” is intended to express the primary theological truth of the gospel and thus later Paul repeatedly refers to it as “the truth” of the gospel.

*To whom we gave place by subjection, no, not for an hour; that **the truth** of the gospel might continue with you. (Gal 2:5)*

*But when I saw that they walked not uprightly according to **the truth** of the gospel, I said unto Peter before them all, If thou, being a Jew, livest after the manner of Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews? (Gal 2:14)*

*O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey **the truth**, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you? (Gal 3:1)*

*Ye did run well; who did hinder you that ye should not obey **the truth**? (Gal 5:7)*

Second, we know this because in the Greek text, the word translated “grace” is found in what grammarians call the anarthous construct. This simply means that it is without the definite article (what we know in English as the word “the”). Dana and Mantey make this comment upon such a construction in the Greek Grammar:

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*“Sometimes with a noun which the context proves to be definite the article is not used. This places stress upon the qualitative aspect of the noun rather than its mere identity.” - A Manual Grammar of the Greek New Testament, p. 149*

Paul’s grammatical intent is to emphasize the THEOLOGICAL **truth** of grace as the chief characteristic of His gospel. Throughout this epistle it is this “truth” of the gospel that is being contrasted to the chief characteristic of the false gospel – works.

*Knowing that a man is not justified by the **works** of the law, **but** by the **faith** of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the **works** of the law: for by the **works** of the law shall no flesh be justified. (Gal. 2:16)*

*This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the **works** of the law, **or** by the **hearing of faith**? (Gal 3:2)*

*He therefore that ministereth to you the Spirit, and worketh miracles among you, doeth he it by the **works** of the law, **or** by the **hearing of faith**? (Gal 3:5)*

Third, we know this because when Paul identifies the very point of their departure he chooses these words - “**ye have fallen FROM GRACE.**” One cannot fall from “undeserved favor” as that is an oxymoron (grace can never be deserved and to fall would only qualify you for “grace”).

Fourth, we know this because when Paul considers the very error that some were persuading them to add to the gospel, he says, “I do not *frustrate the grace of God*” (Gal. 1:21). It was their theological error of justification by works that frustrated the truth of justification by grace.

Fifth, another reason that we know this is a theological issue rather than experiential is because Paul pinpoints the exact means responsible for their fall or departure from grace. It was in the area of verbal communication that promoted their fall from grace:

*“...**PREACH** any other gospel...than that which we have **PREACHED**...If any man **PREACH**...than that ye have **RECEIVED**...the gospel which was **PREACHED** of me...For I neither **RECEIVED** it...neither was I **TAUGHT** it...that I might **PREACH**...” - Gal. 1:8,9,11,12,16*

*“This **PERSUASION** cometh not of him that calleth you” (Gal. 5:8).*

*“Who hath **bewitched** you.....” - Gal. 3:1*

Many today attempt to define “justification by the works of the Law” to mean that Paul is simply denying that it is necessary to become a Jew through performing the Law of Moses, rather than a denial that one must be justified by “good works.” However, in denying that justification is by “the works of the Law,” Paul is denying that justification is by works altogether. The Mosaic Covenant was the most comprehensive revelation of what God regarded as “good” versus “bad” in all areas of life (moral, religious, civil). No Jew was ever justified

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“under the works of the law” (Jn. 7:19) just as no Gentile was ever justified under the law written upon their conscience, through works (Rom. 2:14-15). God does not justify any sinner by the principle of “works” (see note on Romans 2:27-28), because they have already failed by that principle (Rom. 3:9-21).

Another popular attempt to explain away efforts to teach justification by "the works of the law" is to restrict the term "law" to only the ceremonial and civil law of Moses, while demanding that one must keep the works of the moral law to be justified by God. However, Romans 2:21-22 and James 2:11 demonstrate that God has in mind the moral law or Ten Commandments also. Therefore, the "works" of the law refers to any attempt to obtain justification through works performed in or through your own body.

**Audience:** The theory advanced and defended by Ramsay is that these are the congregations listed in Acts 13-14; 16:6:18:23 in the southern province of the Roman political division of Galatia. The argument is that Paul referred to “Galatians” in the Roman Political division rather than the geoethnic sense used by Luke in Acts 13-14. Southern Galatia would encompass the three geoethnographic regions (Lycaonia in the southeastern part, Pisidia to the west of it and Phrygia to the north of Pisidia). The Galatian congregations were located at Antioch, Iconium, Lystra, and Derbe founded by Paul on his first missionary trip in what is today modern Turkey. This province also consisted of a large population of Celtic people. This may account for the early history of the gospel reaching the ancient Celts, or Britons, long before the Roman Catholic congregation came to Briton in the sixth century.

**Date:** It would appear from the final words in Galatians 6:17-18 that it was written by Paul, from Rome, at the end of his life. Dr. A.T. Robertson comments on the words “*From henceforth*” (Gal. 6:17) are “*The genitive case (as here and #Eph 6:10) means "in respect of the remaining time."*” The final subscript says it was written from Rome (Gal. 6:18). The oldest translation confirms this subscript (Syriac translation). This epistle was written at least 17 years after his conversion (Gal. 2:1). Hence, it could not have been written prior to Acts 21:15 when he visited Jerusalem (Gal. 2:1-2). It was written from Rome during his final imprisonment.

### **Outline:**

#### **A. Introduction – Ch. 1:1-5**

#### **B. Paul’s Gospel – Chs. 1:6-2:10**

#### **C. Paul’s Rebukes – Chs. 2:11-3:4**

1. Peter Rebuked
2. Galatian Congregations Rebuked

#### **D. Paul’s Illustrations – Chs. 3:5-4**

1. Abraham – Ch. 3:5-17
2. The Schoolmaster – Ch. 3:18-26
3. Heirs – Chs. 3:27-4:7
4. Their Conversion – Ch. 4:8-20
5. The Allegory – Ch. 4:21-31

#### **E. Paul’s Exhortations – Chs. 5-6:16**

#### **F. Conclusion – Ch. 6:17-18**

## *The Letter to the Congregations in Galatia*

### **Chapter 1**

**P**aul, an apostle, (not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised him from the dead;)

2 And all the brethren which are with me, unto the congregations of Galatia:

3 Grace be to you and peace from God the Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ,

4 Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father:

5 To whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

6 I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another [Gr. *heteros* – another kind] gospel:

7 Which is not another [Gr. *allos* – the same kind]; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ.<sup>1</sup>

8 But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed [devoted to destruction].

9 As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.<sup>2</sup>

10 For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ.

11 But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man.

12 For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> “**Pervert the gospel**” – Paul’s calls the gospel being preached by the Judaizers a “heteros” gospel (v.6) or a gospel that is different in kind, because there is not a “allos” gospel (v.7); that is, another of the same kind. The fundamental difference is a theological departure from justification by “grace” (v. 6) to justification by works (but called grace). This is the perversion (v. 7 “pervert”) they placed upon the gospel. They did not deny the gospel content but denied its sufficiency apart from “works” to justify the believer. This is still the same major error embraced by the vast majority of Christendom today. They use the same terminology but define their words differently. They use the term “grace” but define it to include “works.”

<sup>2</sup> “**Let him be accursed**” – Paul does not have the power or ability to apply this to anyone. He is merely instructing the Galatians that such are to be regarded and treated as such in their eyes “Let them be.” Paul denies there is any other gospel than what he preached regardless if the preacher is angelic (Moroni the angel of Mormonism) or human or from heaven or from earth. Paul claims this is the same gospel preached by all the prophets (Acts 26:22-23; Rom. 3:24-28; 10:16; Heb. 4:2; 1 Cor. 15:4-5; Gal. 3:8) and the same gospel Abraham believed in (Gal. 3:6-7) and was justified by (Rom. 4:21-25). Peter claimed this was the same gospel preached by all the prophets (Acts 10:43). Jesus claimed there was only one possible right way to God and heaven before the cross (Mt. 7:13-14; Jn. 14:6) and Peter claimed the same thing after the cross (Acts 4:12). The double statement is to emphasize this absolute truth.

<sup>3</sup> “**By the revelation**” – Paul is presenting his apostolic qualifications to have been personally taught the gospel by Jesus Christ like the other twelve. He spent about three years in Arabia being personally taught by Jesus Christ before he came to Jerusalem and communicated with the apostles (vv. 17-19)



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13 For ye have heard of my conversation [manner of life] in time past in the Jews' religion, how that beyond measure I persecuted the congregation of God, and wasted it:

14 And profited in the Jews' religion above many my equals in mine own nation, being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of my fathers.

15 But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace,<sup>4</sup>

16 To reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood:<sup>5</sup>

17 Neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me; but I went into Arabia, and returned again unto Damascus.

18 Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and abode with him fifteen days.

19 But other of the apostles saw I none, save [except] James the Lord's brother.<sup>6</sup>

20 Now the things which I write unto you, behold, before God, I lie not.

21 Afterwards I came into the regions of Syria and Cilicia;<sup>7</sup>

22 And was unknown by face unto the congregations of Judaea which were in Christ:<sup>8</sup>

23 But they had heard only, That he which persecuted us in times past now preacheth the faith which once he destroyed.

24 And they glorified God in me.

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<sup>4</sup> **“When it pleased God”** – Paul likens his new birth to his physical birth in regard to the cause. The call of God to salvation was as effectual as the call of God for his separation from his mother's womb. He did not participate in his new birth any more than he did in his physical birth. Conception was of God and the timing and call from the womb was of God.

<sup>5</sup> **“To reveal His Son in me”** – this is the essence of regeneration. Regeneration is not walking an aisle, saying a prayer, signing a card. All these things may be consequences but regeneration is a revelation of Christ to the soul of man (2 Cor. 4:6). It is the handwriting of God's law upon the tablets of the heart (2 Cor. 3:3-6). It is the washing and renewing of the spirit of man by the Holy Spirit (Tit. 3:5). It is the reversal of the condition described by Paul in Ephesians 4:18. It is completed in conversion to the gospel (1 Thess. 1:4-5; 2 Thess. 2:13-14; I Jn. 5:1). There is no such person as a unregenerated believer or a regenerated unbeliever. **Flesh and blood** refers to man in his unglorified state. Man in his unglorified state cannot enter heaven (1 Cor. 15:50). The understanding by Peter that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of God was not communicated to him by unglorified man but was revealed to him by the Father in heaven (Mt. 16:17).

<sup>6</sup> **“Peter.....James”** – Peter was one of the inner three (Peter, James and John) and could verify the most complete record of Christ's public ministry. James could convey Christ's home life prior to his public ministry. Thus, the whole life of Christ could be confirmed by these two.

<sup>7</sup> **“The regions of Syria and Cilicia”** – Cilicia was the province of Asia Minor where Paul first went after leaving Jerusalem (Tarsus – Acts 9:30) and then he went down to Antioch the capital of Syria (Acts 11:25-26).

<sup>8</sup> **Congregations of Judea”** – Here is absolute proof that Acts 9:31 should read plural “congregations” instead of the singular as advanced by other translations and the universal invisible church theologians.

## Chapter 2

**T**hen fourteen years after I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, and took Titus with me also.<sup>9</sup>

2 And I went up by revelation, and communicated [shared with] unto them that gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but privately to them which were of reputation, lest by any means I should run, or had run, in vain.

3 But neither Titus, who was with me, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised:

4 And that because of false brethren unawares brought in, who came in privily [secretly] to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage:

5 To whom we gave place by subjection, no, not for an hour; that the truth of the gospel might continue with you.

6 But of these who seemed to be somewhat, (whatsoever they were, it maketh no matter to me: God accepteth no man's person:) for they who seemed to be somewhat in conference added nothing to me:

7 But contrariwise, when they saw that the gospel of the uncircumcision was committed unto me, as the gospel of the circumcision was unto Peter;<sup>10</sup>

8 (For he that wrought effectually in Peter to the apostleship of the circumcision, the same was mighty in me toward the Gentiles:)

9 And when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship; that we should go unto the heathen, and they unto the circumcision.

10 Only they would that we should remember the poor; the same which I also was forward to do.

11 But when Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed. [Acts 15:35]

12 For before that certain came from James, he did eat with the Gentiles: but when they were come, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing them which were of the circumcision.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> **“Again to Jerusalem”** – Three years after his conversion (1:18) he visited Jerusalem to see Peter and James and then left and did not return “again” to Jerusalem until after 14 years (Acts 15). At this return he took Barnabas and Titus with him when he brought the offerings of the gentile congregations to the poor at Jerusalem (2 Cor. 8:23; Acts 15). Hence, the book of Galatians could not have been written prior to Acts 15:35.

<sup>10</sup> **“Gospel of uncircumcision...circumcision”** – These are not two different gospels but rather two different audiences for the same gospel (v. 9). The twelve primarily ministered the gospel to a Jewish audience while Paul primarily ministered the gospel to a Gentile audience. The letters written by John and Peter were primarily addressed to Jewish believers. The term “world” used in these letters was understood by the Jew to mean either the world of gentiles or all mankind without distinction of race, class or gender. The Judaizers denied that salvation was for “the world” but only for Jews, and therefore all gentiles must become Jews by circumcision. **Right hand of fellowship** is public token of approval and acceptance as like faith and order

<sup>11</sup> **“Eat with Gentiles”** – Peter understood the words of Christ in Matthew 18:17 “let him be unto thee as a publican or a gentile” to mean that one was not to enter their home and/or fellowship with them over a common meal (Acts

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13 And the other Jews dissembled likewise with him; insomuch that Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation [hypocrisy].

14 But when I saw that they walked [conducted themselves] not uprightly according to the truth of the gospel, I said unto Peter before them all, If thou, being a Jew, livest after the manner of Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?

15 We who are Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles,

16 Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law,<sup>12</sup> but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.<sup>13</sup>

17 But if, while we seek to be justified by Christ, we ourselves also are found sinners, is therefore Christ the minister of sin? God forbid.<sup>14</sup>

18 For if I build again the things which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor.<sup>15</sup>

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10:28). Hence, to “withdraw” (2 Thess. 3:6) and “separate” referred not merely to the congregational service but to social fellowship.

<sup>12</sup> **“The works of the Law”** – Some attempt to interpret this phrase to mean the Mosaic system rather than the moral law and/or commandments of Christ. However, the moral law is included in this phrase as Paul proves later by contrasting “Mount Sinai” with heavenly “Jerusalem” in Galatians 4:24-26, as well as including the moral law in Romans 2:17-19 as no basis for justification of Jews. Submission to circumcision was the “sign” that one’s life was committed to personal obedience of all the Law of Moses. This was the most comprehensive detailed expression of the righteousness of God ever given to man. When Paul denies that one is justified by the “works of the Law” he is denying the most comprehensive form of personal obedience can justify men, thus denying any form of personal obedience can justify men. Furthermore, it is not the righteousness of Christ imparted in regeneration that justifies men but the righteousness of Christ imputed by faith that justifies the “ungodly” (Rom. 4:5) without personal works (Rom. 4:1-6) as there was no Law of Moses when Abraham was justified “without works.” Therefore we are not justified or saved by “works of righteousness” that “we” as Christians have done due to regeneration (Eph. 2:10; Tit. 3:5) but we are justified “freely by grace” (Rom. 3:24) due to God’s mercy rather than due to “according to our works.”

<sup>13</sup> **“But by the faith of Jesus Christ”** – having been justified by faith which has for its sole object Jesus Christ as an aorist tense completed action, is placed in direct contrast to present tense continuous action of justification by “the works” of the law. The objective genitive “faith which has Christ for its object” is the meaning here as Romans 3:24-28 clearly demonstrates. **“No flesh”** (not merely Jew) can be justified by progressive obedience to the Law as violation of one point violates all (James 2:10-11), and the law only magnifies your sins.

<sup>14</sup> **“Is Christ the minister of sin?”** – The Jews argue that those who do not keep the Law are sinners, and it is only by law keeping that one is justified, and therefore not found to be sinners. Therefore, if their argument is correct, that is, if seeking to be justified by faith in Christ without law keeping only proves that we will be found to be sinners, as these Jews argue, then does not that mean Christ is the minister of sin according to our doctrine of justification by faith in Christ without works? Therefore, our doctrine would only promote sin if the Jewish argument was correct.? Paul’s immediate response is “God forbid.” The key is that all who are justified by faith are also regenerated by the Spirit, and therefore, have the life of Christ imparted unto them in regeneration, in addition to having it imputed to them by faith. They are not only justified but regenerated.

<sup>15</sup> **“I make myself a transgressor”** – Paul’s response to this objection is the very reverse. If we “build again” or place ourselves back under the law system for justification, we only promote sin because the law has no power to remove or forgive sin, but only to reveal and condemn sin. In contrast justification by faith completely satisfies the Law’s demands through the Person and work of Christ, and in addition to our justification by faith, we are being



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19 For I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God.<sup>16</sup>

20 I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.<sup>17</sup>

21 I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain.<sup>18</sup>

### Chapter 3

**O** foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched [to be brought under evil influence] you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you?<sup>19</sup>

2 This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?<sup>20</sup>

3 Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?<sup>21</sup>

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transformed by the life of Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit within us also through faith. Hence, to rebuild, or return to the Jewish doctrine of justification is how one will be found to be sinners.

<sup>16</sup> **“That I might live unto God”** – Under the Law system you are “dead” and you will remain “dead” unto God, since the Law condemns you to death as a sinner. However, Christ satisfied all the demands of the Law through his life and death, and it is this truth of the gospel when received by faith places the believer “in Christ” legally and positionally, thus making us “live unto God” instead of being “dead” in sin before God.

<sup>17</sup> **“I am crucified with Christ”** Substitutionary atonement means that when Christ died we died and therefore we are crucified with Christ legally and positionally. That is our standing before God in Christ by faith. **“Christ liveth in me”** – Jesus told his disciples “without me ye can do nothing” and Paul relates that experience as a child of God in Romans 7:14-25. We are created in Christ Jesus “unto good works” (Eph. 2:10). However, we cannot produce those “good works” in our life any more than we could justify ourselves by good works. We must walk as we received Christ – by faith. As we reckon ourselves “dead” to the Law but “alive” to God through justification, we are also enabled to resist sin by yielding to him through faith. We are able to live a life that glorifies God because it is God that worketh in us both to will and to do of His good pleasure (Philip. 2:13).

<sup>18</sup> **“If righteousness comes by the law then Christ is dead in vain”** – Christ’s death was the propitiation/satisfaction of the law’s full demand against sinners (Rom. 3:25; 10:4). If believers must satisfy the Law’s demands, then Christ failed to do so for us, and his death for us is in vain, as it serves no purpose other than providing us an example. However, if a sinless Christ failed to satisfy all the law’s demands for us then sinful Christians can never do so.

<sup>19</sup> **“Should not obey the truth”** – The Greek term translated “obey” is “peitho” and means to be “persuaded” or “convinced of” or be “confident in.”

<sup>20</sup> **“By the works....by the hearing of faith”** – Works are actions that one does, but “hearing” is something that one receives. Faith was in the gospel that was heard rather than in works that one does. Saving faith has for its object the good news of the gospel that was heard (Rom. 3:25-26).

<sup>21</sup> **“Begun in the Spirit...made perfect by the flesh”** – The flesh is external and material while the Spirit is internal and immaterial. Works belong to the external and material sphere while faith belongs to the immaterial and internal

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4 Have ye suffered so many things in vain? if it be yet in vain.

5 He therefore that ministereth to you the Spirit, and worketh miracles among you, doeth he it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?<sup>22</sup>

6 Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted [applied] to him for righteousness.<sup>23</sup>

7 Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham.<sup>24</sup>

8 And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed.<sup>25</sup>

9 So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham.

10 For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.<sup>26</sup>

11 But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, The just shall live by faith.<sup>27</sup>

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sphere of the heart (Rom. 10:10 – “with the heart man believeth”). This denies that “hearing” means external “obedience” or doing external righteous works.

<sup>22</sup> “**Ministereth the Spirit and worketh miracles among you**” – The Greek term translated “ministereth” means “supplieth.” How did they initially receive the Holy Spirit? Did they receive him in connection with the doctrine of justification by faith he preached or by the doctrine of justification preached later to them by the Judaizers? How did they receive the miracles of the Holy Spirit? Paul laid his hands upon all those he constituted into congregations conveying the gifts of the Spirit (Rom. 1:11; Acts 8:17-19; 19:6; 2 Cor. 12:12). Obviously they received the Holy Spirit and miracles under his gospel ministry rather than the Judaizers.

<sup>23</sup> “**Even as Abraham believed**” – Abraham believed the gospel in the Ur of the Chaldee’s. Galatians 3:8 refers to Genesis 12:1 (“had said”) which refers back to this event in Genesis 11:29 before Abraham left for Haran. Genesis 15:1-6 is merely a further revelation of the same promise in Genesis 12:1-3. In both Genesis 12:1 and Genesis 15:6 the perfect tense is used that demands that the completed action was accomplished prior to either Genesis 12:1-3 and Genesis 15:1-6 but continued as a completed state of action right up to both of these points in time. Both Genesis 12:1-3 and Genesis 15:1-6 were reaffirmations of the initial event that occurred in Ur in Genesis 11:29.

<sup>24</sup> “**They which are of faith**” – All genuine children of God are justified “even as” Abraham (see notes on Rom. 4:1-25) or else Abraham could not be set forth as the role model for all who are “of faith.”

<sup>25</sup> “**In thee shall all nations be blessed**” – Paul takes the reader back to Genesis 12:3 where Moses is providing a conversation that took place back in the Ur of the Chaldees (“had said” – Gen. 12:1). This is the gospel promise of the coming “seed” that God had promised to Eve (Gen. 3:15). Noah’s son Shem was still alive when Abraham lived and Shem was 100 years old when Methuselah died. Methuselah was over 200 years old when Adam died. Isaac was 50 years old when Shem died. Abraham understood that this promised “seed” was the promised “Christ” (Gal. 3:16-17; Jn. 8:58).

<sup>26</sup> “**Under the curse**” – Jesus said that none of the Jews kept the law (Jn. 7:19). Hence, “no man is justified by the law in the sight of God” (v. 11) but all who attempt to be justified “under the law” are “under the curse.” The law cannot grant life (v. 21) only death.

<sup>27</sup> “**The Just shall live by faith**” – Here the word “The Just” means “the justified” and “live” has reference to legal life positionally acquired by faith in Christ. The justified live or possess eternal life by faith not by the works of the law. The works of the law are not “of faith” (v. 12). Life by works requires the continual doing of them without error (v. 12b) or as Paul previously says, “Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.”

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12 And the law is not of faith: but, The man that doeth them shall live in them.

13 Christ hath redeemed [**purchased possession**] us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree:<sup>28</sup>

14 That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.

15 Brethren, I speak after the manner of men; Though it be but a man's covenant, yet if it be confirmed, no man disannulleth [**invalidate**], or addeth thereto [**change the terms**].

16 Now to Abraham and his seed [**offspring**] were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ.

17 And this I say, that the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul [**invalidate**], that it should make the promise of none effect.<sup>29</sup>

18 For if the inheritance be of the law, it is no more of promise: but God gave it to Abraham by promise.

19 Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator.

20 Now a mediator is not a mediator of one, but God is one.

21 Is the law then against the promises of God? God forbid: for if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law.<sup>30</sup>

22 But the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe.

23 But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> “**Redeemed us from the curse of the law**” – This cannot apply only to Jews or else they are the only ones redeemed and the only ones under the “curse” of the law. All flesh is under the curse of the law, because the same righteousness demanded by Mosaic Law is demanded by the righteousness witnessed by conscience (Rom. 3:9-15).

<sup>29</sup> “**In Christ**” – Paul’s argument is that the promise made to Abraham was confirmed “in Christ” 430 years before the Law was given and nearly 2000 years before Christ came to earth. All promises of redemption are “in Christ” as there is no salvation at any time outside of Christ. All the elect from Genesis to Revelation were chosen “in him” before the foundation of the world (Eph. 1:4).

<sup>30</sup> “**Law given which could have given life**” – The law cannot approve of any sinner and therefore cannot justify giving eternal life to any sinner. The law can only condemn sin and sinners and show them their need to come to Christ to obtain eternal life.

<sup>31</sup> “**Before faith came we were kept under the law**” – Faith came to Abraham 430 years before the Law was written upon stone and before there was a Mosaic Covenant. However, the law was written upon his conscience (Rom. 2:14-15) acted as a schoolmaster condemning him of sin (Rom. 3:14-15) and led him to Christ when God revealed Christ to him and granted him faith to believe.

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24 Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster [some put in charge of children to train them – Gal. 4:2] to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.

25 But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster.

26 For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.<sup>32</sup>

27 For as many of you as have been immersed into Christ have put on Christ.<sup>33</sup>

28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.

29 And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

### Chapter 4

**N**ow I say, That the heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all;

2 But is under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the father.<sup>34</sup>

3 Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements [elementary principles] of the world:

4 But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law,

5 To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.

6 And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.

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<sup>32</sup> “**Children of God by faith in Christ**” – The Greek word translated “children” is “huios” and not “tekna.” We are “sons” (huios) by adoption as a result of justification but “children” (tekna) by new birth. The Greek term “huios” is the legal term for adoption as well as the term for a son by character. Here Paul introduces the legal right of a child of God as an heir and develops that thought in Galatians 3:22-4:8. Justifying faith in Christ is all about faith in what Christ has provided for the believer not what the believer provides for Christ.

<sup>33</sup> “**Put on Christ**” – The Greek word translated “put on” has to do with clothing of the external body. Internally with the heart man believeth unto righteousness (Rom. 10:10) but externally by immersion the believer publicly and symbolically will “put on Christ”. Only those “in Christ” by faith (v. 26) should “put on Christ” by immersion (v. 27). The rightful legal heir at the appropriate age would “put on” a white robe that declared his right to the inheritance. Immersion in water is declarative of our sonship.

<sup>34</sup> “**Time appointed**” – Paul has in mind the background concerning the ancient custom of appointment of children as heirs to possess their rightful and legal inheritance. In this illustration he is considering both God's own Son, Jesus Christ, and those who are adopted sons, and joint heirs with Christ. At the appointed time, God sent His Son into the world “made under the law to redeem them that were under the law.” The elect of God were heirs by divine purpose before the world began. However, even though they were “children” by promise (Gal. 3:22), it was not until the appointed time after their physical birth into the world that they were appointed and became sons by faith in Christ. Before that time of faith they were under tutors and governors (The Jewish elect under the Mosaic law and Gentile elect under the law written in the conscience). At the appointed time they believed in Christ (see Gal. 3:26; Acts 13:48; 1 Thess. 1:4-5; 2 Thess. 2:13-14) and put on a white toga (immersion in water – Gal. 3:27) to declare they were the rightful heirs.

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7 Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.

8 Howbeit then, when ye knew not God, ye did service unto them which by nature are no gods.

9 But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage?<sup>35</sup>

10 Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years [Jewish ceremonial feasts – Lev. 23; 25].

11 I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain.

12 Brethren, I beseech you, be as I am; for I am as ye are: ye have not injured me at all.

13 Ye know how through infirmity [weaknesses] of the flesh I preached the gospel unto you at the first.

14 And my temptation [trouble] which was in my flesh ye despised not, nor rejected; but received me as an angel of God, even as Christ Jesus.

15 Where is then the blessedness ye spake of? for I bear you record, that, if it had been possible, ye would have plucked out your own eyes, and have given them to me.

16 Am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the truth?

17 They zealously affect you, but not well; yea, they would exclude you, that ye might affect them.

18 But it is good to be zealously affected always in a good thing, and not only when I am present with you.

19 My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you,<sup>36</sup>

20 I desire to be present with you now, and to change my voice; for I stand in doubt of you.

21 Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law, do ye not hear the law?

22 For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a freewoman.

23 But he who was of the bondwoman was born after the flesh; but he of the freewoman was by promise.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> **“Desire again to be in bondage”** – Paul’s argument is that returning to be justified under the law is returning to the previous position as an unqualified heir prior to the appointed age (lost man) that was “under tutors and governors” (vv. 2-3 “in bondage under the elements of the world”). The law is for the lost not for the saved.

<sup>36</sup> **“Formed in you”** – The analogy is of a pregnant mother that is going through birth pangs in the last stages of development when the child is born, or manifested, a fully developed child. Paul claims that he is the one experiencing the “birth pangs” while they are the ones in whom Christ as a metaphorical baby exists but has not taken a fully developed form in their manifest teaching and doctrine. He went through this process with them before in teaching them the truth, and Christ had been manifested publicly in their teaching and doctrine. The analogy does not deny that Christ is in them but only denies he is manifested fully in their doctrine and teaching (v. 21). They have been “bewitched” by false teachers and fallen from the doctrine of grace. Bringing them back to the truth is a laborious exercise on the part of Paul.



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24 Which things are an allegory [use as a figure in addition to its literal meaning]: for these are the two covenants; the one from the mount Sinai, which gendereth [produces] to bondage, which is Agar.

25 For this Agar is mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth [corresponds] to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children.

26 But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all.<sup>38</sup>

27 For it is written, Rejoice, thou barren that bearest not; break forth and cry, thou that travailest not: for the desolate hath many more children than she which hath an husband.

28 Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise.<sup>39</sup>

29 But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now.

30 Nevertheless what saith the scripture? Cast out the bondwoman and her son: for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman.

31 So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman, but of the free.<sup>40</sup>

### Chapter 5

**S**tand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke [harness around the neck of animal for control] of bondage.

2 Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing.

3 For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> “**After the flesh...by promise**” – This principle explains the difference between supernatural and natural birth. See note on Romans 9:6-7.

<sup>38</sup> “**Mother of us all**” – In this allegory, Paul’s point is to demonstrate that justification by faith alone depends solely upon the promise and power of God, without personal performance or assistance from the believer. Abraham assisted God in having a child through Hagar. However, Isaac was born without their assistance. These two women and their children form the basis for an allegory to represent the two covenants, one which includes your participation and performance (Mt. Sinai and Jerusalem below) while the other is all of grace (Jerusalem above). Regenerated Gentiles are of this mother above and are justified without their own participation and assistance through law-keeping. He then changes the analogy to a woman who produces children without a husband, and without birth pangs, to illustrate justification by faith without human assistance (husband), and without personal efforts (birth pangs).

<sup>39</sup> “**We...as Isaac was, are the children of promise**” – (see notes on Rom. 4:16-21; 9:6-11). Our birth and sonship is by the grace of God, without human participation and assistance. God waited until Abraham and Sarah could not participate and assist God in the birth of Isaac as they did in the birth of Ishmael. He waited until there was no other option but to be “... fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform” (Rom. 4:21).

<sup>40</sup> “**We are not children of the bond woman**” – God produces no promised children through law keeping (Jn. 7:19 “none of you”). No one has ever been justified under the Mosaic Law, and never will. No one has ever been justified by keeping the law written upon their conscience, and never will.

<sup>41</sup> “**Debtor to do the whole law**” – Circumcision is the very first initial act performed upon a Jewish baby that signifies that his whole life is dedicated to law keeping. However, that is exactly what justification by any principle

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4 Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace.<sup>42</sup>

5 For we through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith.

6 For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love.<sup>43</sup>

7 Ye did run well; who did hinder [prevent] you that ye should not obey the truth?<sup>44</sup>

8 This persuasion cometh not of him that calleth you.

9 A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump.

10 I have confidence in you through the Lord, that ye will be none otherwise minded: but he that troubleth you shall bear his judgment, whosoever he be.

11 And I, brethren, if I yet preach circumcision, why do I yet suffer persecution? then is the offence of the cross ceased.

12 I would they were even cut off [put to death] which trouble you.

13 For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another.

14 For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.<sup>45</sup>

15 But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another.

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of “works” demands – not a single violation of a single point of the moral law of God (James 2:10-11). They must continue in “*all things written in the law to do them.*” This is an impossible, futile, and self-condemning commitment. So it is for anyone who makes any initial commitment to live a life for the purpose of obtaining justification before God.

<sup>42</sup> “**Fallen from grace**” – They had fallen from the teaching and doctrine of grace by embracing a false gospel and false teaching, and were thus “bewitched” by false teachers.

<sup>43</sup> “**Faith worketh by love**” – We are justified by faith in Christ “without works” (Rom. 4:6), but we are not justified by a faith that does not work. Faith in Christ is manifested by faithfulness to Christ. Don’t confuse the two! The first has to do with what Christ has done for you, while the latter has to do with what you do for Christ. We are justified before God by the former, and justified before men by the latter (James 2:18 “...*shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works.*”).

<sup>44</sup> “**Obey the truth**” – The Greek term translated “obey” is “peitho” and means to “have confidence in” or be “persuaded of.” Look at the next verse “this **persuasion**” (v. 8). The normal Pauline term used for heart obedience to the gospel is “hupkoue.” Paul is not referring to their initial faith in the gospel but rather their removal from that truth doctrinally by the persuasion of false teachers.

<sup>45</sup> “**Fulfilled in one word**” – The whole Mosaic law is fulfilled by the principle of love. The same law in principle is written upon the conscience of all men (Rom. 2:14-15). This is why God can judge the Gentile by the law written on his conscience as he judges the Jew by the law written on stone and skins or parchment. This is the universal basis for judgment in Romans 3:9 that is spelled out in Romans 3:10-21 and includes “every mouth” and “all the world,” so that “no flesh” escapes.

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16 This I say then, Walk [conduct your life] in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust [desires, cravings] of the flesh.<sup>46</sup>

17 For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.

18 But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law.

19 Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness [impure behavior], lasciviousness [moral filthiness or lewdness],

20 Idolatry [worship of false gods], witchcraft [use of drugs and magic arts], hatred, variance [attitude of strife], emulations [fierce indignation], wrath [outburst of anger], strife [actions of strife], seditions [separating into opposing groups], heresies [organized denominational schisms],

21 Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings [partying], and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.

22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering [putting up with abuse], gentleness, goodness, faith,

23 Meekness [self-denying attitude], temperance [self control]: against such there is no law.

24 And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections [passions] and lusts [cravings].

25 If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.

26 Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another.

### Chapter 6

**B**rethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.<sup>47</sup>

2 Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.

3 For if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself.

4 But let every man prove his own work, and then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another.

5 For every man shall bear his own burden.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> “**Walk In the Spirit**” – This admonition would be unnecessary if a saved person could not walk after the flesh (vv. 15, 19-21). We can “live in the Spirit” and yet not “walk in the Spirit” (v. 25). See comments on Romans 7:14 - 8:13.

<sup>47</sup> “**Ye which are spiritual**” – Previously defined in Galatians 5:16-26. In Matthew 18:16 Jesus provides the number of those to take with you in dealing with a brother overtaken in fault but here Paul defines what kind of “ye” should go to that brother and in what kind of attitude.

<sup>48</sup> “**Bear his own burden**” – We have the responsibility to bear the burdens of those in need (v. 2), but our own responsibility for obeying God is a burden no one can bear but ourselves.

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6 Let him that is taught in the word communicate [to share with] unto him that teacheth in all good things.<sup>49</sup>

7 Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.

8 For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.<sup>50</sup>

9 And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.

10 As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.

11 Ye see how large a letter I have written unto you with mine own hand.

12 As many as desire to make a fair shew in the flesh, they constrain you to be circumcised; only lest they should suffer persecution for the cross of Christ.

13 For neither they themselves who are circumcised keep the law; but desire to have you circumcised, that they may glory in your flesh.<sup>51</sup>

14 But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.

15 For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth [accomplishes] any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature.<sup>52</sup>

16 And as many as walk [conduct their life] according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God.<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> “**Communicate unto him that teacheth**” – The term “communicate” translates a Greek term (koinonia) that means to partner with the teacher in providing what is necessary to meet his needs.

<sup>50</sup> “**Soweth to the flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption**” – This is a general principle applicable to the saved and lost alike. Saved persons, whenever they “walk after the flesh,” will suffer the consequences. Death is not simply final separation of the physical body from the spirit or separation of the body and spirit in Gehenna. Death is at work presently in the life of the lost and saved. All the sins listed in Galatians 5:19-21 are the consequences of death at work presently in the lives of lost and saved. When these sins are present in the life of a Christian they separate us from God’s fellowship (not from our relationship).

<sup>51</sup> “**Neither they themselves who are circumcised keep the law**” – Jesus said the same thing in John 7:19. Hyper-dispensationalists who deny that salvation by grace preceded the day of Pentecost (some even say Acts 10) are forced to believe that previous saints were justified by keeping the law. However, the scriptures deny that any “flesh,” at any time, was justified by keeping the law (Rom. 3:19-20).

<sup>52</sup> “**But a new creature**” – The presence or absence of such external rites accomplish or profit nothing in regard to the “new creature.” Abraham was justified by faith “without works” before God (imputed righteousness and non-imputation of sin – Rom. 4:1, 5-8), before he submitted to the external divine rite of circumcision. Outward ceremonial rites have their value as external symbols that are designed to signify or symbolize certain truths, but are worthless to save anyone literally. Circumcision was an outward external sign (Rom. 4:11) designed to symbolize the new birth. Actual regeneration consists in a creative act of God that takes place internally “without,” and thus before (Rom. 4:11) the believer submits to any external rite.

<sup>53</sup> “**Upon them...and upon the Israel of God**” – The promised children of Abraham consists of both saved Jews and Gentiles. The Gentile promised children are identified as “upon them” who do not regard circumcision as

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17 From henceforth let no man trouble me: for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus.<sup>54</sup>

18 Brethren, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen. [To the Galatians written from Rome.]

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essential for justification before God. The Jewish promised children are identified as “the Israel of God” who also does not regard circumcision as essential to be justified before God.

<sup>54</sup> “**Henceforth let no man trouble me**” – This indicates the letter was written near the end of Paul’s life or in Rome as the subscript following verse 18 indicates.



