

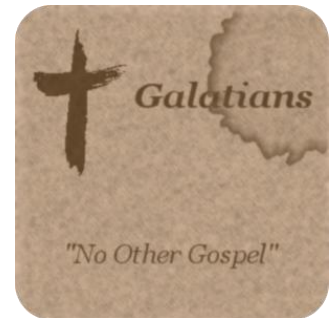
INTRODUCTION TO GALATIANS

Key Verse: 5:1

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

St. Paul wrote this letter sometime around 48-53 A.D. to the Galatian churches in Asia Minor which he had pioneered on his first missionary journey. Word had reached him that the believers there were losing their hold on the true gospel of Jesus Christ.

Paul addresses two major issues facing the believers in Galatia and elsewhere: First, does one have to become a Jew to receive salvation? Second, what does it mean to be free in Christ? So, this letter is about freedom in Christ. There were some Jewish Christians who could not accept the Gentile believers as true brothers. They did not accept world mission from their hearts. They only worried because the Gentiles had not been circumcised and did not keep some of the Old Testament regulations. And they just didn't like people who were different from them. They did not see the amazing grace and mercy of God who was opening the door of salvation for all the people of the whole world. Paul reminds us that we are saved by grace alone, through faith in Jesus alone (2:16).



After laying the foundation that we are saved by faith alone, not by observing the law, Paul teaches us that our Christian freedom means to love and serve one another freely, not to use the freedom to indulge the sinful nature. We are set free from bondage to sin by the blood of Jesus so that we may live lives of faith by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Outline

1. The apostle to the gentiles (1:1-2:21)
2. Faith like Abraham's (3:1-29)
3. Faith based on promise, not law (4:1-31)
4. The secret of real freedom (5:1-6:18)

