

### Paul Rebukes Peter at Syrian Antioch (late 48)

Acts 15:1–2	Galatians 2:11–14
<p>1 And certain men which came down from Judaea taught the brethren, <i>and said</i>, Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved.</p> <p>2 When therefore Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and disputation with them, they determined that Paul and Barnabas, and certain other of them, should go up to Jerusalem unto the apostles and elders about this question.</p>	<p>11 But when Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>13 And the other Jews dissembled likewise with him; insomuch that Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation.</p> <p>14 But when I saw that they walked not uprightly according to the truth of the gospel, I said unto Peter before <i>them</i> 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?</p>

### Paul's Letter to the Galatian Churches – Part 1 (late 48)

Galatians 1:1–4:7

#### Introduction

- 1:1 Paul, 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 churches 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.

#### Reason for the Letter

- 6 I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel:
- 7 Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.

#### Declaration of the Divine Origin of Paul's Gospel

- 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.

#### Autobiographical Detail Supporting Paul's Declaration

- 13 For ye have heard of my conversation in time past in the Jews' religion, how that beyond measure I persecuted the church 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,
- 16 To reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood:
- 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 James the Lord's brother.
- 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;
- 22 And was unknown by face unto the churches of Judaea which were in Christ:
- 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.

#### The Famine Visit (see Acts 11:27–30)

- 2:1 Then fourteen years after I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, and took Titus with *me* also.
- 2 And I went up by revelation, and communicated 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 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;

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.

### **Paul Opposes Peter at Syrian Antioch**

11 But when Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed.

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.

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

14 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?

### **Justification by Faith Apart from Circumcision**

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, 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.

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.

18 For if I build again the things which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor.

19 For I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God.

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.

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

### **The Galatians' Conversion Confirms Justification Apart from Circumcision**

3:1 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?

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

3 Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?

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?

### **Abraham's Conversion Confirms Justification Apart from Circumcision**

6 Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness. [[Gen 15:6](#)]

7 Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham.

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. [[Gen 12:3](#); [18:18](#); [22:18](#)]

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

### **The Unity and Nature of the Law Contradict Justification by Law-keeping**

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. [[Deut 27:26](#)]

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. [[Hab 2:4](#)]

12 And the law is not of faith: but, The man that doeth them shall live in them. [[Lev 18:5](#)]

13 Christ hath redeemed 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: [[Deut 21:23](#)]

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.

#### **The Nature of the Abrahamic Covenant Confirms Justification Apart from Circumcision**

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, or addeth thereto.

16 Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ. [[Gen 22:18](#)]

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, that it should make the promise of none effect.

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

#### **Digression to Discuss the Purpose of the Law**

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. [cf. [Deut 33:2](#)]

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.

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.

24 Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster *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.

#### **Our Spiritual Union with Christ Confirms Justification Apart from Circumcision**

26 For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.

27 For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.

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.

4:1 Now 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.

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

4 But when the fullness 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.

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

*Scripture quotations are from The King James Version (KJV). The KJV is in the public domain.*

#### **Chronological Notes**

1) Identity of the Galatians.

A) Galatians is the only Pauline letter that is not addressed to either an individual or to Christians in a specific city.<sup>1</sup> In the period of late antiquity, "Galatia" was an elastic term reflecting the changing political developments of central Asia Minor (Turkey).<sup>2</sup>

B) Galatia became a Roman province in 25 BC, and the province included people from many ethnic groups, including the "Celts" or "Galatians," who had migrated to Asia Minor by 278 BC. In Paul's day the province was a large area that reached from the Black Sea in the north to the Mediterranean Sea in the south. As time passed, however, the province was reshaped and much of the territory in the south was removed and formed into the new province of Pisidia with Antioch as its capital.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The destination of most of Paul's letters is clear: Rome, Corinth, Ephesus, Colossae, Philippi, Thessalonica, Timothy, Titus and Philemon.

<sup>2</sup> Timothy George, "Galatians," *New American Commentary*, 38.

<sup>3</sup> Ben Witherington, *Grace in Galatia*, 2–5.

C) Commentators in early church history naturally thought Galatians was written to the province as it existed in later Roman history (to the north). But the work of William Ramsay<sup>4</sup> and others has led modern scholars to reexamine this position in light of the earlier dimensions of the province in Paul's day (to the south).<sup>5</sup> This has led to the development of two theories regarding Paul's intended audience:

(1) North Galatia.

(a) Geography: the middle to upper part of central Turkey.

(b) Cities: unknown cities to the north. Perhaps Ancyra (modern capital of Turkey), Pessinus and Tavium.

(c) Missionary Journey: churches founded on the second missionary journey and revisited on the third (Acts 16:6; 18:23).

(2) South Galatia.

(a) Geography: the southern part of central Turkey.

(b) Cities: Pisidian Antioch, Iconium, Lystra and Derbe.

(c) Missionary Journey: churches founded on the first missionary journey (Acts 13:13–14:23).

D) While there are strong arguments for both theories, the south Galatia theory is preferable.<sup>6</sup> Below are some arguments for the south Galatian theory:<sup>7</sup>

(1) We have clear record of the apostle's visit to, and establishment of churches in, the cities of the Roman province of southern Galatia, whereas we have no definite record of such in northern Galatia proper.

(2) Paul repeatedly alludes to Barnabas in Galatians 2 as though he were well known to them. We know Barnabas accompanied Paul on the first missionary journey, but he was not with Paul on his second or any subsequent journey as far as is known.

(3) In Galatians 1, Paul makes a strong case for his independence from the Jerusalem apostles by detailing each visit he made to Jerusalem. If he omitted a visit, he would open himself to the charge that his gospel was influenced by the apostles. Since only two visits are recorded in Galatians (matching Acts 9:26–30 and 11:27–30), the letter must have been written before the Council of Acts 15 and thus must be addressed to the only churches that existed in Galatia at the time (cities in the south).<sup>8</sup>

2) Date.

A) As can be seen from the third argument in favor of the south Galatia theory, the date of the letter and its destination are linked:

(1) If addressed to churches in south Galatia, then the letter was written shortly after Paul's first missionary journey and either prior to or just after the Jerusalem Council of Acts 15. This puts the letter's date at AD 48–50 (Early Date).

(2) If addressed to churches in north Galatia, then the letter was written after Paul's second missionary journey and either prior to or during his third missionary journey. This puts the letter's date at AD 53–58 (Late Date).

<sup>4</sup> William M. Ramsay, *A Historical Commentary on Saint Paul's Epistle to the Galatians*.

<sup>5</sup> Thomas R. Schreiner, "Galatians," *Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament*, 23.

<sup>6</sup> Older commentators favor the north Galatia theory (Lightfoot), while most modern commentators favor the south Galatia Theory (F. F. Bruce).

<sup>7</sup> For more arguments see: Longenecker, *Galatians*, lxiii–lxx; Rainer Riesner, *Paul's Early Period*, 286–291; Schreiner, *Galatians*, 24–29.

<sup>8</sup> Schreiner, 28.

B) Another important factor for dating the letter is the correlation of Paul's visits to Jerusalem recorded in Acts and Galatians.

(1) In Acts, Luke records five visits by Paul to Jerusalem:

- Conversion visit (Acts 9:26–30).
- Famine visit (Acts 11:27–30).
- Jerusalem Council visit (Acts 15:1–29).
- Hasty visit (Acts 18:22).
- Collection visit (Acts 21:15–17).

(2) In Galatians, Paul records only two visits to Jerusalem:

- Conversion visit (Gal 1:18–20). This corresponds with the account in Acts 9:26–30.
- Private Meeting visit (Gal 2:1–10). Now we come to the main difficulty—which visit is this?

(3) Proposed Solutions.

(a) Solution 1: Galatians 2:1–10 is Luke's third visit (Jerusalem Council) recorded in Acts 15:1–29, with the famine visit of Acts 11:27–30 left unmentioned by Paul in Galatians. This is the traditional view that held sway virtually unchallenged until the early twentieth century. This view allows for either an early or late date.

(i) This view has to answer the following questions: Why did Paul fail to mention a visit to Jerusalem in his autobiographical presentation? Why did Paul not mention the decision of the Jerusalem Council of Acts 15 in his letter to the Galatians? Why did Peter feel so pressured by the Jewish circumcision party at Syrian Antioch after the Council had just ruled on the issue?

(b) Solution 2: Galatians 2:1–10 is Luke's second visit (Famine Visit) recorded in Acts 11:27–30, with the Jerusalem Council visit of Acts 15 taking place after Galatians was written. Main proponents include: Ramsay, Bruce, George, Guthrie, Longenecker. This view obviously places an early date on Galatians making it Paul's first epistle (AD 48).

(i) In this view the time spans of Galatians 1:18 and 2:1 are understood to be concurrent rather than consecutive (i.e., three years after conversion and fourteen years after conversion). In my opinion, this solution is the better of the two.<sup>9</sup> See the table below for a summary of the chronology for Galatians:

Galatians	Event	Acts	Event
1:15–17	Paul's Conversion	9:1–25	Paul's Conversion
1:18–20	First Jerusalem Visit	9:26–30	With Barnabas in Jerusalem
2:1–10	Private Meeting Visit	11:27–30	Famine Visit
2:11–14	Dispute in Antioch	15:1–2	Dispute in Antioch
---	Paul writes Galatians	---	---
---	---	15:3–29	Jerusalem Council Visit
---	---	18:22	Hasty Visit
---	---	21:15–17	Collection Visit

<sup>9</sup> Stanley D. Toussaint, "The Chronological Problem of Galatians 2:1–10", *Bibliotheca Sacra* 120.480 (1963): 335–340.