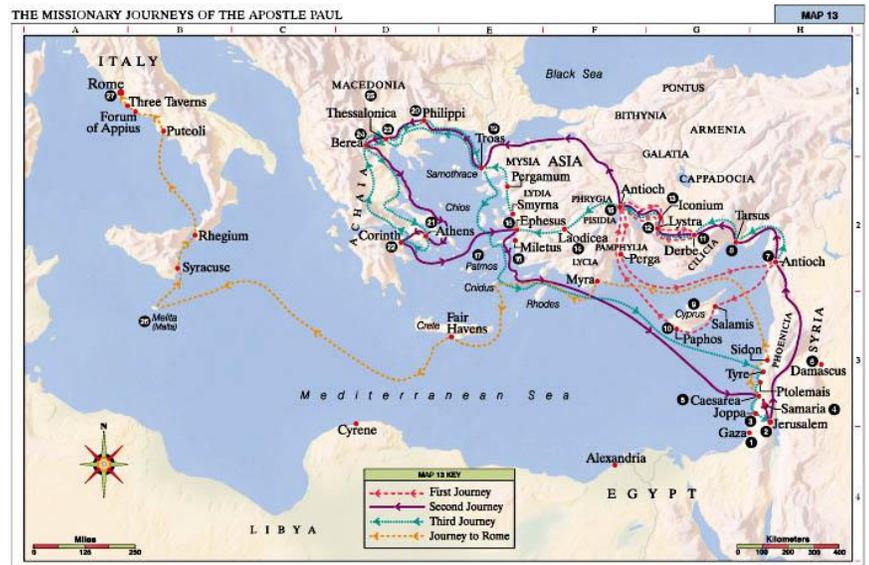




PAULINE EPISTLES



Galatians The Sufficiency of the Cross and Spirit

1. The most passionate, angry, yet caring pastoral letter of Paul's. It concerned the controversy of whether Gentiles must be circumcised. Some of Paul's most powerful and influential texts came from this letter. Luther said it was "his" epistle as it concerned the intersection of freedom and obligation, considered by some as the ***Magna Carta of Christian freedom***. In content, GAL resembles ROM. In tone, it resembles 2 COR 10-13.
2. Important theme: justification by faith rather than works for some, this is the central concern of the letter. Paul claims that absolutely nothing can or should be added to the Gospel of the Crucified Messiah and His liberating Spirit, a Gospel which yields cruciform faith and love.
3. Galatia was at first a territory and then a province of Rome located in north-central Asian Minor (Anatolia - Turkey), populated by a Celtic tribe which migrated there around 300 BC. The provincial capitol was Pisidian Antioch. The province included cities such as Derbe, Lystra, and Iconium, cities which Paul visited. The letter to the Galatians, therefore, was not to one church but to all of the churches Paul founded in this vast territory.
4. Paul first visited Galatia in AD 48 or 49 when he preached with Barnabas in the synagogues of Pisidian Antioch; rejected by the Jews, they turned to the Gentiles until they were driven out of the city at the behest of the Jews. Paul and Barnabas then went to Iconium to preach with "signs and wonders," narrowly escaping stoning. They traveled to Lystra, where they were hailed as Greek gods Zeus and Hermes after Jesus healed a crippled man through them. Paul was stoned nearly to death in Lystra when Jews from Antioch and Iconium incited the crowd and was left for dead outside the city walls; upon the approach of Christian disciples, he stood up, ready to take up his ministry again. They went to Derbe where their preaching was successful and ***they were not persecuted***. In the face of persecution and opposition, Paul and Barnabas retraced their steps from Derbe to Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch, encouraging the Christian churches and appointing leaders.

5. Paul next visited Galatia in AD 49 or 50 after the Jerusalem council decided that circumcision and adherence to the Law of Moses (the 639 laws, not the Ten Commandments) was unnecessary. Paul went with Silas to Tarsus, Derbe, and Lystra. Timothy came on board. Timothy had a Greek father and a Jewish mother; because the local Jews knew of Timothy's mixed heritage, Paul had Timothy circumcised to accommodate these local Jews (probably before the letter was written). These three visited other (unnamed) towns before heading north and west to Greece.
6. Paul visited Galatia a third time, but no specific towns are named.
7. The Christian churches of Galatia experienced persecutions and miraculous deeds.
8. Paul's success in Galatia was more with the pagans than with the Jews. These pagans worshipped deities from the East, from Greece and Rome, and adhered to the imperial cult. On the acropolis of Pisidian Antioch, there remains a temple to the mother goddess Cybele - decorated with the head of a bull, and whose priests castrated themselves - and the remains of a temple dedicated to Augustus Caesar.
9. Paul came to Galatia due to a physical infirmity - illness, perhaps related to his eyes - or because of the "thorn in his flesh". Did he have the stigmata? He "publicly exhibited Christ Crucified" - scars and all - and was well received, like a Divine angel. Many Galatians believed, were baptized, and received the Spirit, who was evidenced by miracles, in prayer to God the Father, and in good works (right living). ***Some persecution accompanied the establishment of these churches*** and there were some moral issues to address.
10. **The Judaizers** - those who advocated living like a Jew, even after having been baptized as a Christian and have received the Spirit - attempted to undermine Paul's evangelization. They may have been Jewish Christians from outside Galatia, perhaps who traveled around to the new communities Paul founded and attempted to bring the new Christians into the practice of Judaism - so as to be better Christians? Or perhaps they thought you had to go through Judaism to arrive at Christianity. Perhaps they were not Jewish Christians, but Jews who sought to convert the Gentile Christians to Judaism. ***Paul saw the Judaizers as false believers in the circumcision faction - the people from James who thought less of Gentile Christians because they did not have the rich patrimony of Judaism behind them.*** They were zealots committed to the Law and the purity of Israel, who wanted Gentile Christians to live like Jews:
 - a. Be circumcised
 - b. Follow the Jewish calendar of feasts and customs
 - c. Follow the whole Law (not just the Ten Commandments)
 - d. This way, Gentiles would ***consummate*** their faith in the Jewish Messiah; they would be part of the ***covenant***, the Chosen People and would embrace the ***Jewish boundary markers*** of circumcision, calendar, and food.
 - e. Otherwise, the Gentile Christians would be ***outside the covenant***, unable to live in ***holiness***.
 - f. Their christology was not centered on Christ as the Crucified and Risen Messiah, but on His teaching of the Law.
 - g. They were Second Temple Jews - ***messianic covenantal nomists*** who believed that the God of Israel was inviting Gentiles to the covenant; entrance into the covenant was gained by faith in the Messiah ***followed by circumcision***; and God expected His covenant people to be ***holy*** by adhering to the entirety of the Law.

- h. Perhaps they found Paul's apostleship dubious; his message deficient; his ministry dangerous (his message of Cross and Spirit without circumcision, calendar, and the Law prompted unnecessary persecution from the Jews and through the Jews, pagan mobs and Roman officials), and his Gospel truncated - a shortcut for the Gentiles to join the Chosen People without coming into the (old) Covenant. They misunderstood Jesus' New Covenant in His Blood.
11. **Opening** (1:1 to 1:5): Paul's letter begins emotionally, with a stern rebuke in place of the customary thanksgiving; he calls the Galatians "foolish"; he is heartbroken over their confusion and feels he has wasted his time with them, that he must evangelize them again from scratch and from a distance.
 12. Paul indirectly but clearly pronounces a double curse on the Judaizers (circumcisers), accuses them of perverting the Gospel and of sorcery; he advises them to castrate themselves (reminiscent of the priests of Cybele - pagans). He charges them as hypocrites, as they fail to keep the Law themselves, and they seek to circumvent the Cross to avoid persecution, replacing the Cross and the Spirit with "flesh" - presumably, the foreskin.
 13. Paul embraces the Cross, rejoices in the Spirit, and welcomes the persecutions. He might be called a **cruciform covenantal charismatic** whose followers fulfill the covenant through cruciform conformity to Christ lead lives of faith and love in the power of the Spirit.
 14. For Paul the truth of the Gospel is at stake.- the Judaizers are not supplementing or correcting the Gospel, they are supplanting it and leading Christians astray. To subjugate yourself under the Old Covenant is to reject the New Covenant in His Blood - and therefore, to cut yourself off from Him, our only salvation.
 15. The letter to the Galatians presupposes persecution when Paul asks them: "Have you suffered so much for nothing?" (GAL 3:4)
 16. Paul tells stories of the Gospel, about himself, about the Galatians, about the Law, about OT characters. Paul was skilled at creatively interpreting early Christian tradition and Scripture and weaving his own experience into that tale. These stories were told for the purpose of keeping the Galatians holding fast to the Gospel of cruciformity, charisms of the Spirit, and embrace of the New Covenant, told in three main divisions:
 - a. Jesus gave Himself for our sins - **in faith (obedience) and love**
 - b. To set us free from the present evil age - **ushered in the Age of the Spirit, the New Covenant**
 - c. According to the will of our God and Father - promises made in the covenants with Adam and Eve, with Noah, with Abraham, and with David. The proto-evangelium promised a Savior; the sign of the covenant with Noah can be seen in the sky as a reminder of God's Presence; Abraham was promised numerous descendants who would stream from all nations to worship the One True God of Israel; and David was promised a kingly line which would last forever.
 17. Paul focused on the Cross and Jesus' freely-embraced salvific death in obedience to the Father's Will, setting us free to live in the realm of the Spirit - all of which the Father promised throughout Scripture. Paul enveloped this message in hard-hitting and passionate words to convince the Galatians to return to the Gospel as he had preached it to them.
 18. Paul asserts the Divine origin of his apostleship (Jesus) and the scriptural precedent for it.
 19. He interprets Jesus' death on the Cross as an act of the Son's fidelity to the Father's Will and of His love for us: a death in **faith and love**.

20. Jesus' death on the Cross inaugurated the promised New Creation and ushered in the Age of the Spirit, where we are adopted as God's children. To return to OT laws would be a return to slavery, to live an anachronism. The Spirit of Christ is the Spirit of the Father and is the Holy Spirit who enables Christians to be crucified with Christ, to **rise with Him to new life of faith and love**, and thereby to fulfill the Law. Since Jesus' death fulfilled God's promises in faithfulness and love, then our death to sin in Baptism and rising to new life in the Spirit to lead lives of faithfulness and love **also** fulfills the demands of the covenant without subscribing to OT laws. Gentiles would be included in the covenant apart from compliance with the laws. To require the Judaification of the Gentile Christians would be a serious mistake: it's about cruciform faith and love, living in the Spirit; inclusion into the covenant as a grace from God with which we cooperate.
21. Key theme of opening chapter: Paul is an Apostle from God, not sent by or made an apostle by humans. He structured it as a chiasm: (a) not from humans; (b) nor through humans; but (b prime) through Jesus Christ and (a prime) from God the Father. Paul asserts that "all the members of God's family" recognize his authority and agree with the Gospel he preaches: the universal Church welcomes Gentiles into the New Covenant without circumcision.
22. Paul's Gospel is Christocentric, and in GAL he links Jesus with God the Father to demonstrate that Jesus' salvific death is the will and the work of the Father in fulfillment of His promises. The ultimate proof of Jesus' connection to the Father is the Resurrection (the Father raised Him from the dead and exalted Him). Paul's grace/peace benediction comes from "Jesus Christ our Lord and God the Father). Paul uses three phrases to identify Jesus, referring to His death, its purpose, and its Divine sanction (see # 16 on the 3 major themes of the letter).
23. The phrase "gave Himself for our sins" is a common NT idiom; Paul uses it with the traditional Jewish emphasis on death as a sacrifice for sins; he then connects it to his second theme "to set us free from the present evil age, another Jewish apocalyptic hope for the end of this age and the beginning of an age of righteousness and justice, marked by the knowledge of God and His Presence throughout the world. **Therefore, the death of Jesus was THE apocalyptic event** as it ushered in the New Age. The present age and the New Age overlap, allowing us to escape this evil age "and the flesh."
24. Jesus' death was:
- Sacrificial
 - Apocalyptic
 - Offering liberation/redeemed us from sin
 - Saves us from our sins/offers forgiveness
 - Unleashed the gift of the Spirit, Who continues Jesus' liberating work
 - Willed and promised by the Father
 - Exalted Jesus to God's right hand (where He was before time began, but which He voluntarily renounced), where He is to be glorified forever
 - Trinitarian - willed/promised by **the Father**, effected by **the Son**, and empowered by **the Spirit**
25. **Gospel of Christ: Justification through Crucifixion (1:6-2:21)**
- Lacks customary thanksgiving at beginning of letter; issues rebuke instead
 - Rehearses the Gospel's origins, progress, and current threatened status due to the Judaizers
 - Presents the content of the Gospel in 2:15-21

26. Apostolic Rebuke, curse, and claim (1:6-10) - begins with "I am astonished" and other negative claims which parody the traditional thanksgiving.
- Rebukes them for deserting the One True God who graciously called them into covenant with Him; they have turned to a false gospel which stirred up confusion and perverts the Gospel of Christ Crucified
 - Paul calls down a double curse on them: "let them be anathema" or "eternally condemned" if they contradict the original Pauline Gospel. His curse targets those who preach any gospel contrary to the one the Galatians received from Paul, even if an "angel" should claim a gospel contrary to that of the Crucified Messiah. Paul is not a people pleaser; he is the **slave (doulos) of Christ**. Paul is absolutely confident of the truth of his message because he received it directly from a revelation (**apokalypsis**) of Jesus. This was a "conversion," a "call," and a "commission" Paul received from the Son of God.
27. Divine origin of Paul's apostleship (1:11-24) - his apostleship is independent of Jerusalem, having been received directly from Jesus. The churches of Judea and the leading apostles in Jerusalem approved of Paul's apostleship, message, and mission.
- He warns the Judaizers that they are tampering with a Divine Gospel - not one made by humans.
 - He narrates his conversion from his earlier life in Judaism to his current life in Christ in the Church. His zeal for the traditions of his ancestors has been transformed to zeal for the Good News. The zeal of Phinehas and Mattathias led them to kill fellow Jews to maintain the purity of Judaism. Elijah's zeal led him to kill 450 priests of Baal.
 - This is not a change of religions but an organic growth - Paul saw Christianity as Judaism fulfilled. His Judaism is not Torah-centric but Christocentric - messianic Judaism. He, who violently persecuted the Church, was willing to suffer on behalf of the Church.
 - Paul calls his conversion a prophetic call and commission to bring God's Good News to the nations (Gentiles). He quotes Jer 1:5 (I appointed you a prophet to the nations) and Isa 49 (Second Isaiah) (I will give you as a light to the nations that My salvation may reach to the ends of the earth.) God's grace reveals the Son not only **to Paul, but in Paul**. He proclaims Christ Crucified with his words and with his life.
 - Three years after Paul's conversion, he conferred with the leading Apostles in Jerusalem. Paul was in Arabia (possibly at Mount Sinai) and in Damascus. He may have been praying, receiving revelations, and/or preaching, but he did not confer with the other Apostles for three years due to his singular experience with the Risen Lord. He knew that his commission was valid.
 - After his meeting with Peter and James, he preached in the cities of Syrian Antioch and Tarsus in Cilicia, developing a reputation as the persecutor-turned-proclaimer. Paul's narration of these events, known already to the Galatians, was to underscore his independence from the apostolic authorities in Jerusalem and their approval of his mission and message, as they recognized the grace of God at work in him.

28. Jerusalem's initial approval of Paul's Gospel (2:1-10) and his meeting with the pillars of the Church 14 years later - Paul met with Peter, James, and John, Jesus' inner circle in Jerusalem. With him, he brought Barnabas (a circumcised Levite) and Titus (an uncircumcised Gentile active in Paul's mission in Greece) as living symbols of the Gospel and the success of his ministry. Paul wanted to explain his message/mission to the Gentiles and ensure apostolic approval of it. He relates this story in GAL to show that as an Apostle himself who had received his commission directly from Jesus, he did not **need** the approval of the pillars of the Church, but **he had it**. His second reason was to contrast his Gospel with that of the Judaizers, who did not have apostolic approval nor carry apostolic weight, as Paul did. The three pillars advised Paul:
- Not to circumcise Titus - admitting Gentiles to the Church without circumcision
 - Approved his evangelistic ministry to the Gentiles as God's grace working through the Spirit - they extended the "right hand of fellowship" to Paul and Barnabas
 - Required Paul and Barnabas to "remember the poor."
29. Betrayal of the Gospel (2:11-14) - Paul, Barnabas, and Peter understood the decision of the Jerusalem Council that Christian converts from Judaism and paganism should have fellowship together - including table fellowship. "People from James," meaning the circumcision faction, convinced Peter and Barnabas that Gentile and Jew converts should not have table fellowship, and that Gentiles should be circumcised and "live like the Jews."
- Paul interprets this change of heart as "cowardly, hypocritical, reprehensible, and **a betrayal of the Gospel.**"
 - Peter was no longer following all of the Jewish customs (laws), so Paul saw Peter as a hypocrite, placing a burden on the Gentile converts which Peter was not bearing himself.
 - Paul would not tolerate opposition to the Gospel of God's unconditional grace for all - including Gentiles - who need not become Jews to become Christians. Paul confronted Peter "to his face." Paul relates the summarization of his Gospel for his Galatian readers of his letter.
30. The Gospel of Christ (2:15-21) - this is the **thesis (propositio) of GAL** - Paul had an original audience (Peter "to his face") and, via the letter, a new audience, the Galatians. This is the densest portion of the Pauline letters and is crucial to understand Paul and his Gospel. **Thesis:** The grace of God, given to all in the death of Jesus, is the means by which sinners who believe (thus sharing in Jesus' death and Resurrection to new life) are justified (made righteous) and find Life. **Justification is by God's grace, but has serious and thorough ethical dimensions as a response from us.**
- Jesus/Christ Jesus/the Son of God appears **nine** times in this portion
 - Justify/justification (**dikaioo and dikaiosyne**) appears **five** times - a **covenantal term** - a legal/judicial/forensic concept associated with the image of **God as Judge** issuing a verdict of "not guilty." A relational, covenantal concept paired with "reconciliation." **Justification is a restoration of right covenantal relations now** with the certain hope of acquittal on the Day of Judgment. Jesus' death on the Cross is the **basis** for our right relationship with God, not anything we do. (Psalm 130:3 - If you, Lord, keep account of sins, Lord, who can stand? 130:7-8 - With the Lord there is mercy; with Him is plenteous redemption. And He will redeem Israel from all its sins.) (Psalm 143:2 - before You, no one can be just.) (Eccl 7:20 - there is no one on earth so just as to do good and never sin,) (Job 4:17 - Can anyone be more in the right than God? Can mortals be more blameless than their Maker?) (Nahum 1:6 - Before His wrath, who can stand firm, and who can face His blazing wrath?) We are not exempt from obedience to the Great

Commandment: love God above all else, and love one another - we are not exempt from good works.

- c. Live, appears **five** times in this portion
 - d. Faith/believe (*pistis and pisteuo*) appears **four** times in this portion - is a **covenantal term** connoting not simply intellectual assent but **personal fidelity** - total commitment from the heart - more akin to **devotion, loyalty, and loving obedience** than “belief,” although belief and trust in God are part of Faith. Jesus’ life, death, and Resurrection rained God’s grace down upon us; we are called to **conform ourselves to His devotion, loyalty, and loving obedience** to the Father.
 - e. Sin/sinner/transgressor appears **four** times in this portion
 - f. Works of the Law (*erga nomou*) appears **three** times - originally misunderstood as **any human effort - obedience or good works** - were useless for our justification. While it is true that apart from Jesus and God’s free gift of grace, no one would have any hope, it is also true that our cooperation with God’s grace is required. Another original misconception with has been corrected is that Paul meant “works” as in anything we do; we understand it now as “works of the Law” - as in the boundary markers of Judaism - circumcision, calendar, and diet.
 - g. Die/crucify appears **three** times in this portion
31. The source of all believers’ justification is **Christ’s death at God’s initiative and as the expression of God’s grace**. Pair of antithetical grounds for justification - Christ’s death vs. works of the Law appears here and in 2:16, where God is the actor (3 times) in that one verse. The **objective ground** of our justification **is the faith, (love, and obedience) of Jesus to the Father’s Will**, achieved in the salvific and sacrificial death of Jesus. Our **required response** is **faith, (love, and obedience)**, which is the **subjective ground** of our justification. This faith response moves us **into Jesus** - (2:20 - it is not I who live, but it is Christ Who lives in me).
32. 2:17-18, Paul links the social situation of Gentiles and Jews in Antioch and Galatia. The Judaizers claimed that if Jews are brought into contact with Gentiles in Christ, the Jews are tainted with sin. Paul counters that by retorting that Christ, then, is a “servant of sin,” and that Paul will not build back up what He had torn down (the temple wall of Jew-Gentile separation). **Paul is adamant about the social implications of this new life/justification in Christ.**
33. Paul uses two images to depict faith:
- a. The response of faith is “death to the law, so that I might live in God.”
 - b. The response of faith identifies so completely with Christ that it is a participation in His death to rise to new life - a ‘co-crucifixion’ **synestauromai** - the perfect tense of the Greek indicates a past act with ongoing consequences. The old life with its old passions is gone; in us is new life - we live in the Risen Christ and share in His life. Christians continue living in “the flesh” (in the body), but not on our own strength. We live **in or by the faith of the Son of God.**
34. Jesus’ death was a unified act of covenant fulfillment of love for God and love for us - faith working through love. Christians live by the faithfulness of Jesus as we conform ourselves to Christ; our earnest devotion to God flows out in sacrificial (cruciform) love for others, made possible by the outpouring of grace from the Holy Spirit.

35. Summary of GAL 1-2: an autobiographical presentation of the essence of the Gospel, each aspect of which is instructive and exemplary.
- a. Paul's apostleship and Gospel are rooted in the Divine call and commission (**apokalypsis**)
 - b. Paul converted from a persecutor into a proclaimer, changing his zeal for the law into zeal for Christ Crucified -
 - i. His faithful love for the Father
 - ii. His salvific and sacrificial death which called God's grace down upon us
 - iii. We participate in His death to the point of **synestauromai** - co-crucifixion
 - iv. Jesus' death is the only means of justification
 - v. God requires a **response of faith and love** from us as we conform to Christ
 - vi. We live in Christ; we are a new creation. We are called to live His faithful love.
 - c. Paul's missionary activity among the Gentiles was unofficially approved by Peter and James and then officially approved by Peter, James, and John - there was agreement that Gentiles need not be circumcised.
 - d. Paul opposed Peter "to his face" when Paul thought Peter hypocritical and a traitor to refrain from table fellowship with Gentiles and requiring them to "live like the Jews."
36. GAL 3:1-4:31 - The Promise of the Father: The Testimony of Scripture - Paul interweaves the experience of the Galatians, their baptism and Confirmation, with his conversion within scriptural interpretations. His **thesis**: the liberating reception of the Spirit has made them adopted children of God; this began and continues in their faith. This outpouring of the Spirit to all the nations is the fulfillment of God's promise to Abraham. Seeking circumcision would be a foolish return to slavery.
37. 3:1-5 - Paul connects the faith which works through love (Jesus' covenantal fulfillment in His faithful love for the Father's Will) with the Galatians' experience of baptism and the outpouring of the Spirit.
- a. Paul rebukes them for even considering placing themselves under the burden of the laws when they have been freed by Jesus and His Spirit, which they received by faith and manifested by the working of signs and wonders (miracles).
 - b. To accept circumcision would be to abandon the Spirit for the flesh - to account humanly-defined status above the grace of God.
 - c. To accept circumcision and the laws is to abandon the Cross - no Cross, no crown
 - d. The Galatians' reception of the Spirit is evidence that they are incorporated into the Body of Christ - the Crucified, Risen Messiah. They are now living in the messianic age as the Gentile recipients of God's promise. Nothing more is needed or possible. To change is to regress.
38. GAL 3:6-14 God's promise to Abraham **Thesis**: "In Christ Jesus, the blessing of Abraham has come to the Gentiles, so that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith." This summarizes Paul's Gospel and the Galatians' experience. Paul focuses on Abraham because:
- a. He was a pagan who converted at the advent/epiphany/theophany of God
 - b. His faith was renowned - GN 15:6 - Abraham's righteousness was based on his faith, this making **faith**, not circumcision, the defining characteristic of Abraham and his children.
 - c. Paul cited GN 12:3 - Abraham's righteousness (based on faith), his descendants, and his blessing would extend to all nations (**ethne**) who believe. For Paul, this was the Gospel announced in advance - faith, righteousness, blessing (of the Spirit).

- d. Prophecies about all nations streaming to Jerusalem, when the Spirit would be poured out, not only on sons and daughters, but on “male and female slaves” (Joel 3:1-2) - presaged Gentiles receiving the Spirit as well as Israelites
 - e. The Judaizers probably focused on him “we are children of Abraham.” In GN 17, Abraham had all members of his household circumcised as a sign of the covenant.
 - f. At stake is the definition of “Abraham’s descendants” - in the flesh, or in faith?
 - g. If Abraham and his descendants had to be circumcised to be part of the covenant, AND if Christians were descendants of Abraham by faith, did Christians have to be circumcised to be part of the covenant?
 - h. That was the OLD Covenant. The NEW Covenant in Jesus’ Blood satisfied the demands under the OLD laws.
 - i. Paul quotes passages from Deut (27:26; 28:58-59; 3:10; 21:23; 3:13) and Habakkuk (2:4 and 3:11) - three main points:
 - i. The Law carries with it a curse rather than a blessing
 - ii. Justification and life derive from **faith**, not the Law
 - iii. Jesus redeemed Jews from the Law’s curse to open the blessing of Abraham (the Spirit) to Jews and Gentiles alike. This point was made using two images:
 - 1. Man hanging on a tree - “cursed by God” DT 21:23 - several texts from the Dead Sea scrolls apply DT 21:23 specifically to crucifixion.
 - 2. Christ was cursed **for us** so that we might be blessed **in Him**
 - 3. Therefore, God’s Divine blessing came through a curse - this is why the Gospel would be a stumbling block for Jews
 - 4. Christ’s Cross inaugurated the Age of the Spirit in which Jews and Gentiles inherit Abraham’s blessing of the Spirit
 - 5. Jews and Gentiles alike are justified by believing the Gospel and are incorporated into His Body; Christians live in Him
39. GAL 3:15-29 The Law and the Promise - Paul answers questions about the Law:
- a. The Law was later in time than the Promise and cannot alter the Promise
 - b. The Law was not opposed to the Promise, but because of sin, could not deliver Life
 - c. The Law had a crucial but temporary role until the Promise was fulfilled.
 - d. All who are “in Christ” are Abraham’s offspring/descendant/seed
40. Paul begins his discussion with **diatheke** - a person’s will OR a covenant - Paul suggests that a will and the promises it contains cannot be canceled by a third party. Since the Law on Sinai arrived 430 years after the Divinely-ratified covenant **diatheke** with Abraham, it cannot void the Abrahamic Promise. The inheritance associated with the Abrahamic **diatheke** - the outpouring of the Spirit upon the Gentiles - comes under the terms of the Abrahamic covenant, not under the terms of the Law.
41. Paul refers to Abraham and his **one descendant - Jesus** (3:16). Therefore, all Christians, who are **in Christ - in whom Christ lives** - are the descendant of Abraham.
42. The Law was (1) later than the covenant; (2) temporary; and (3) limited in scope. It could not alter the Abrahamic **diatheke** because it did not come directly from God; it came through a mediator, Moses. It was intended to function only until Abraham’s descendant (Jesus) arrived. It was added only because of “transgressions” - to reveal and restrain them.

43. Paul does not pit the Law against the Promise. He argues that the Law cannot give Life, which would be given under the Promise; a life-giving power would liberate those under the power of sin. The **faithfulness of Jesus** liberates us from our enslavement to sin and gives us life; **our faith in response** to His brings the benefit - the outpouring of the Spirit - down upon us.
44. The Law as pedagogue (**paidagogos**) - a trusted servant, custodian of the male children, disciplined them, guided them morally, and protected them from harm. By using the term **paidagogos**, Paul highlights the temporary nature of the Law (for children mature) while also teasing out the other aspects: discipline, moral guidance, protection from harm.
45. In Christ, although we become adopted children of God, we have also reached adulthood and no longer need the pedagogue of the Law; we are instructed, guided, and protected by the Spirit.
46. **In Christ and into Christ** dominates 3:26-29. Since Jesus is the one Seed, the descendant of Abraham, all who are **in Him** are heirs according to the Promise. **In Him**, we have responded in faith and have moved via baptism **into Him**. We are clothed with Christ - we identify with His death so as to be conformed to Him in **synestauromai**. Paul's experience of faith, baptism, new garment is one of total attachment to and participation **in Christ**.
47. Since the sole criterion to be a Christian is to be **in Christ in faith and love**, all divisions cease - Jew or Gentile, free or slave, man or woman, rich or poor. These differences no longer matter from a faith perspective; they must not divide the Body of Christ. Our common baptism unites us in a new creation to live in faith, hope, and love.
48. Circumcision involved only males in the covenant. A radical point of Christianity and Paul's letter to the Galatians is that it erased the distinction between male and female. Both sexes were equally Christian. There was no patriarchal preference for males.
49. The fruit of the Spirit remains crucial to the meaning of life in Christ. The division between moral and immoral remained and was a crucial difference. Jesus is the Way, the Truth, and the Light. There is no room for the darkness of sin in the Light. There can be no lie in the Truth. There can be no wandering in the Big Empty, lost, if you are on the Way.
50. GAL 4:1-7 - The Father's Gift of the Son and the Spirit - Paul uses the analogies of inheritance, slavery, and majority/minority status to depict the radical change brought about by the Trinity's inauguration of the New Age.
- Minor children cannot inherit unless the father alters their status - they are on the same plane as slaves, who cannot inherit. Paul uses the term **ta stoicheia** - the elemental spirits - the four elements of earth, fire, water, and wind, but can also mean hostile cosmic spirits and powers which promise life but deliver death, which promise freedom but deliver enslavement.
 - God the Father, on His initiative, has altered our status from slaves to adopted children, and from minors to legal heirs. (This dovetails nicely with his analogy of the Law as pedagogue - minor children have outgrown the need for the pedagogue **and** can now inherit. God did this by sending the Son **and** the Spirit.
 - Jesus: born of a Jewish woman and to manual labor, fully human: Jesus was not fundamentally a teacher but a **Redeemer**. By His death and Resurrection, He has set us free and allowed us to be adopted as children of God, heirs to the Promise.
 - The outpouring of the Spirit is a continuation of the Son's mission to redeem us. The Holy Spirit enables Christians to experience God as our Father. Slavery has ended, and we have all the privileges of adoption (under Roman law, adopted children were treated as biological children).

51. GAL 4:8-20 - Apostolic appeal - Paul makes an impassioned plea to the Galatians not to turn back, not to reject the freedom and the privileges they have as children, not to place themselves under enslavement to the Law. He begs them not to waste his evangelization, likening his work with them to pregnancy and childbirth.
- He urges them to imitate him as he imitates Jesus. He accommodated any community into which he preached. He tells the Gentile Christians to live like Gentile Christians and not like Jews.
 - They should treat him with as much respect as they did when he first came to them, in weakness because of a "thorn in his flesh" - probably as a result of persecution. They treated him as a divine messenger (angel) - even as Christ Himself.
 - Paul urges them to abandon these new "friends" - the Judaizers - and return to the Gospel he preached to them.
52. GAL 4:21-31 - Freedom and slavery: the allegory of Hagar and Sarah - Paul claims that the Law supports the promises of God and the Gospel by interpreting the OT story of Hagar and Sarah: the child of the slave will not inherit the Promise made the Abraham; only the child of the free woman, Sarah, will inherit the Promise.
- Ishmael is the father of "certain" Jews - those who cling to the Law
 - Isaac is the father of "certain" Gentiles - those who are Christians
 - The point is to emphasize the Law and its covenant **as interpreted by the Judaizers** in Galatia
53. Paul draws two conclusions from his allegory: (1) drive out the circumcisers, the children of the slave woman; and (2) recognize and remain in the freedom of Christians
54. Summary of 3-4 Galatians: - Gentile Christians are already descendants of Abraham and heirs to the Promise. There is no need to place themselves under the Law, to "live like Jews" to inherit the Promise. Nothing more is needed and anything added would reverse and annul their freedom.
- The Galatians already possess the Spirit by responding in faith to the Gospel
 - God promised to Abraham and his Seed to bless, justify, and give the Spirit to all Gentiles who respond in faith like He did.
 - The Law came after the Promise and cannot alter or annul it.
 - The Law was temporary; it revealed and restrained sin until the Redeemer came.
 - Jesus' death as a curse was a blessing for us; He redeemed us from enslavement to sin, death, the Law, and hostile cosmic powers.
 - All Christians are equal in the eyes of God and should be treated as such in the community.
 - God sent the Son and the Spirit on a mission; they radically altered our status as slaves to mature, adopted children able to inherit the Promise, the **diatheke**.
55. GAL 5:1-6:10 - The Freedom of the Spirit: the life of faith and love - **Focus:** the ethical implications of Paul's Law-free Gospel of Cross and Spirit. Freedom from the Law does not mean libertine behavior. Paul has to lay out the criteria for Christian ethical behavior. Fidelity to God, love for others, conformity to Christ constitutes **life in the Spirit lived according to the Cross**. Such a life fulfills the Law.
56. GAL 5:1-12: Christ, the Spirit, and circumcision - Paul warns against Gentile circumcision in principle and against the Judaizers personally; and he affirms Jesus and what conformity to Him entails (grace, faith, the Spirit, the virtues, etc.) Paul is absolutely convinced that Jesus and the Spirit are sufficient for justification and righteousness. Jesus, by His death, freed us; we respond in faith and love and are saved; we must remain in the freedom and not slip back into sin or enslave ourselves to circumcision.

57. For Paul, Jesus is everything or nothing. Either God has inaugurated the eschatological Age of the Spirit or He has not. Either ***faith working through love*** is the essence of covenantal existence or it is not. Christians who are circumcised become an anachronism, losing any benefit from Christ and His grace. Circumcision was a gateway into a way of life, but that time has now passed with the coming of the Messiah and the Spirit. All Christians are ***in Christ through faith; hope for future righteousness on the Day of Judgment; and express that faith and hope through love.***
58. Seeking circumcision as a Christian betrays a lack of confidence in the power of grace and faith - it is inappropriate and incompatible with being a Christian.
59. Being circumcised as a Jew (before becoming a Christian) is irrelevant - it doesn't hurt you; it doesn't give you greater status.
60. Paul wants the Judaizers deported. He warns that they will be judged and punished by God (for hurting the young Church) and hopes that Christians who circumcise themselves will ***castrate*** themselves, as the priests of Cybele did.
61. GAL 5:13-15: Freedom, cruciform love, and the fulfillment of the law - For Paul, the Judaizers were attempting to steal the freedom of Christians and return them to slavery. The freedom of Christ and His Spirit was comprehensive: redemption, liberation from false gods and elemental spirits, from sin, from the flesh, from the Law, from the present evil age.
62. Freedom is a communal reality - not an excuse for indulgence or the flesh (concupiscence). The opposite of the flesh is the Spirit of God, the Spirit of the Son. Freedom allows the Spirit to bear fruit in love - radical, sacrificial love - mutual slavery to one another - seeing to the needs of others. Loving our neighbor fulfills the law (Lev 19:18 - you shall love your neighbor as yourself).
63. Verse 15 - "Bite and devour one another carefully lest you consume one another" is a graphic warning of licentiousness rather than charity. Love builds up, it does not tear down; it unites, it doesn't divide.
64. GAL 5:16-26 Walking in the Spirit - Paul uses three images to convey Life in the Spirit - cruciform faith and love:
- a. Walking - within the Spirit's sphere of influence, being led and guided by the Spirit
 - b. Warring - between the Spirit and the flesh (***sarx*** - concupiscence) DT 30: the two ways
 - c. Fruit bearing - the Law produces "works"; the Spirit produces "fruit". Paul's list of vices are covenant violations contrary to the Faith (idolatry) and Love. Those whose actions show these vices do not have the Spirit; they are not ***in Christ***, they are outside the covenant and will not inherit the Kingdom. The Spirit imparts the fruit in its entirety to all believers (in contrast to the gifts, which the Spirit distributes as He Will). Paul's list involves covenant obligations (love is listed first). This fruit bearing, while given by the Spirit, requires our cooperation in cultivating the fruit. This occurs individually but also communally and within relationships.
65. GAL 6:1-10 - The law of Christ in the life of the community - Paul names three concrete areas of responsibility: (1) for self; (2) for others; and (3) for teachers. He then offers an image of this life: sowing in abandon.
66. The first responsibility Christians have is for others:
- a. Restoration - gently and carefully restore those who have sinned - so that they can return to the practice of the Faith and they don't become regular practitioners of works of the flesh
 - b. Burden bearing - concern for others in their temptations, hardships, grief, or loss is faith in action, loving like Jesus loves: the "law of Christ" - not something He issued but the way He lived. It's the covenant "law" of ***faith expressing itself in love.***

67. Second responsibility: self-sufficiency - don't be a burden to others if you can help yourself.
68. Third responsibility - for teachers - to share with the teachers of the community.
69. The image: we reap what we sow - Paul connects this with the "two ways" - sow in the flesh, reap death, which is the way of all flesh. Sow "with abandon" in the Spirit - reap a rich harvest both in this life and the next.
70. GAL 6:11-18 - Summary and final summons - the conclusion, or *rhetorical peroratio*, echoes several parts of the letter and drives home Paul's message: (1) avoid circumcision; and (2) remain focused, with Paul, on the Cross.
71. Paul personally writes in his own hand (to emphasize his passion) a condemnation of the Judaizers, accusing them of pride and hypocritically avoiding the Cross. Circumcision, the Law, and flesh are all in opposition to the Spirit. Circumcision has to do with human values and standards and can be an occasion of boasting, even though it doesn't lead to obedience to the Law. He sees the Judaizers as opposing the Cross and its consequences. Paul's only boast is the Cross - through the Cross, the world has been crucified to Paul and Paul to the world.
 - a. Paul's co-crucifixion *with Christ (synestauroma)*
 - b. Paul's crucifixion *of his flesh*
 - c. Paul's crucifixion *to the world*
72. To die with Christ is to sever all interest in the values and standards of the world. Circumcision or uncircumcision don't matter. The Cross matters in its inauguration of the New Age of the Spirit, which Christians live out in faith expressed through love, looking forward in joyful hope to the Second Coming.
73. Paul closes with a final blessing, a Jewish benediction addressed to the Israel of God - a new creation of all people who together make up Abraham's descendants as God's own children distinguished by the sign of the Cross. Paul literally bears the sign of the Cross - the stigmata - the scars he's received in persecutions from 39 lashes to stoning to beatings with rods, to mob violence. His words and deeds correspond to those of his Master.
74. Summary of GAL 5-6 - the Gospel of Cross, faith, and the Spirit is sufficient to counteract the powers of sin AND are sufficient for justification and righteousness.