

# **SOLID TRUTH** *for Slippery Times*

*An Inductive Journey Through Galatians*

by

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**Leader's Guide**

# *Galatians:* **SOLID TRUTH** *for Slippery Times*

This Bible study series is designed to flex with your life and give you the option to go as deep as you desire each week. If you're just starting out and feeling a little overwhelmed, stick with the main text and don't think twice about the sidebar assignments. But if you're looking for a challenge, take the sidebar prompts, roll up your sleeves, and dig to your heart's content! As you move along through the study, think of the sidebars and *Digging Deeper* boxes as the elastic that will help this study fit you perfectly.

Did you know that a little flexibility can bring a lot of joy? When a study has the ability to flex to meet you, an amazing thing happens. Guilt starts to melt away and pursuing God through His Word takes on a new sense of joy. What was once a hard obligation becomes a sweet opportunity to commune with God.

So whether you're new to the Book or have been studying it for years, this joy-based study will flex to meet you where you are and push you as far as you care to go . . . and maybe even one step further!

Life has a way of ebbing and flowing and this study is designed to ebb and flow right along with it!

**Enjoy!**

## Contents

WEEK ONE	
<b>A Misplaced Zeal and a Twisted Gospel . . . . .</b>	<b>2</b>
WEEK TWO	
<b>A Cross at the Heart of the True Gospel . . . . .</b>	<b>14</b>
WEEK THREE	
<b>It's Always Been Faith . . . . .</b>	<b>22</b>
WEEK FOUR	
<b>Slave or Son . . . . .</b>	<b>30</b>
WEEK FIVE	
<b>Set Free for Freedom . . . . .</b>	<b>36</b>
WEEK SIX	
<b>Don't Grow Weary! . . . . .</b>	<b>41</b>

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### **Solid Truth for Slippery Times**

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# Week One

## A Misplaced Zeal and a Twisted Gospel

### BEFORE CLASS

#### Hot Topics:

A different and distorted gospel. What do you do if someone has another message and they sound really sincere about it? And how does keeping people “happy” play into all of this? Paul says there is one true Gospel that has been fully revealed that not even he or an angel can change.

Authority is another hot topic in Galatians 1. Paul’s authority as an apostle is a key issue in his defense of the true Gospel. How is the authority of the Gospel established today in a world of so many different voices and opinions?

#### Class-at-a-Glance

Segments	2 Hour Class	1 Hour Class	Topic
Segment 1:	45 min.	10 min.	Class Basics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introductions</li> <li>• Ground Rules</li> <li>• How to Use this Study</li> </ul>
Segment 2:	15 min.	10 min.	Get Them Talking
Segment 3:	15 min.	10 min.	Inductive Study Basics
Segment 4:	15 min.	10 min.	Galatians 1:1-5 Galatians 1:6-10
Segment 5:	15 min.	10 min.	Galatians 1:11-14, Acts 9:1-16
Segment 6	15 min.	10 min.	Galatians 1:15-24

#### Inductive Focus: Key Words

Key words help unlock the meaning of biblical texts. They are typically repeated and point toward the main focus of a passage. In studying inductively, MARKING key words is a practice that can help people to see main concepts on the page.

Throughout this study, one key word we’ll be watching for constantly is *gospel*.

Help your students learn to explore key words and to MARK pronouns and synonyms of key words also.

**BEFORE YOU START****HOW TO LEAD THIS STUDY:****The Basics**

Well here you are! You've either been called, appointed, or dragged into leading a Bible study. Regardless, here is some good news – *Sweeter than Chocolate!* is designed to be flexible to both students and teachers alike, to give newer teachers the help they need, and to give more seasoned teachers wings to grow their gifting. With this in mind, please use the Leader's Guide to help you to prepare to lead a *Sweeter than Chocolate!* group. Always remember that it's a guide, not a strict set of step-by-step rules and edicts.

Although presented as a 6-week study with weekly homework, *Sweeter than Chocolate!* can be used over a longer duration of time with "homework" sections done either at home or during class time. If class time is limited, as is often the case for Sunday School, leaders may choose to work through smaller portions of a lesson together. Thus, it is possible for this 6-week Bible study to flex and expand to fill a 12-week session or even more depending how deep you and your students decide to go.

For those who have ample time and are running a 6-week study, consider adding an additional week or two for a technology day or a guest speaker on a topic of interest. That person could be a pastor, local Bible professor, or someone well-versed on a particular topic in the text. With the advance of technology, it's now possible to bring in people from other parts of the country or the world to talk to your class via tools like Skype. This is a way to mix things up and keep the class on their toes by bringing in additional material. It also gives you the flexibility to match the class length to the needs of things like, say, the church calendar. Hey, it's reality!

Some of you who are reading this Leader Guide are thrilled to be leading, because you have the spiritual gift of teaching. You may find that you don't even use this guide – that's fine! If God has gifted you to teach and you like doing your own research and prep, that is great!! Praise God! Go entrust to the faithful who will be able to teach others also! Others of you, undoubtedly, have been dragged in kicking and screaming. (That was me for a few years while I was still resisting my gifting!) Somebody had to lead and you were drafted. It is my deep hope that you will find help in this guide to make your leading experience not only less traumatic, but filled with great joy!

Small groups or Sunday School classes may decide to simply talk through the questions that are in the lesson, but study groups will benefit by bringing in some additional talk points and material.

\* Skype is a free service that allows you to use the internet to video conference in guest speakers or those who just want to listen in to your class. Learn more at [www.skype.com](http://www.skype.com).

## About the Leader Guide

This leader guide is a basic outline, a road map of one way to go in a class discussion. Just like there are many ways from Chicago to Chattanooga, there are different ways to run a class.

Student pages on the left will orient you to where you are in the lesson. Some post-40s like me won't be able to read them, but they give us visual clues nonetheless. Each week we'll suggest a time frame for running the class one or two hours. You'll find additional background information and some suggested discussion questions. Always be watching for opportunities to help your students move from Observation and Interpretation to Application. We want them to learn the truths of Scripture not so they can win at Bible trivia, but that their thinking will be renewed and their actions will more and more reflect the One they belong to (Romans 12:1-2).

For the sake of space, typically only suggested discussion questions are listed. Also, when possible we'll leave space for you to fill in your own thoughts so you don't have to go flipping back and forth between the student book and the leader guide. Finally, you may look at the material and think, "There is no way that I can cover all this in the allotted time!" If that's the case, you can pick and choose from the elements to craft your lesson.

## Inductive Focus

Each week we'll focus on one facet of inductive study to help students build their skills and confidence in the inductive process.

## Starting on Time

One way to start on time every week is to read through the week's main text(s) at the beginning of class. With Galatians that will be easy as we'll cover one chapter each week. In doing this you will reinforce the importance of continually being in the text of Scripture itself. As odd as it may sound, when we study deeply the temptation to stray away from the text and toward commentaries can be intense. By reading the text every week and starting promptly (even if it is just you and your most prompt student!), you will reinforce the importance of the text and gain the added bonus of training stragglers to arrive on time.

**START CLASS HERE****SEGMENT #1: CLASS BASICS****Introductions and Ground Rules**

- **Introduce yourself**
- **Have class introduce themselves**
- **Set boundaries**

Make sure to allocate adequate time the first week of class for general introductions and ground rules. If you're teaching men or a mixed group, estimate based on the size of your class. If you're teaching women, take the time you think this will require and double it. Asking everyone to share their name and respond to a specific question will help keep things moving. If you ask for "a little bit about yourself," you're sure to get more than a little bit! Start out by introducing yourself in a concise manner to set the tone. Feel free to use an icebreaker game or other ideas you have to help people connect.

You'll also want to establish ground rules during Week One. The time to set effective boundaries in any relationship is the first meeting. A boundary can always be relaxed, but it is very difficult to establish or strengthen one if you do not set it properly at the start. This applies both to how you will lead your class discussions as well as how you will allow your class to interact with you throughout the week. Depending on your situation, you may ask them to contact you primarily by e-mail and make certain times of the day off-limits. My classes know I rarely answer the phone when my kids are home from school. That is my boundary. When they are home, my primary job is being their mom. Your class will respect this and perhaps even learn the importance of proper boundaries in their own lives from your example.

Let your class know that it is your job as the teacher/facilitator to keep the discussion on track and that you may from time to time have to reel a person in, stop a rabbit trail, or discontinue until after class an interesting, but off-topic discussion. Also let them know that you do not have all the answers. No one has all the answers, even those who have studied a lifetime. While acknowledging your limitations may seem uncomfortable at first, you'll find it is freeing for everyone! If someone asks a question you can't answer, either look into it further yourself or (preferably) assign it to the questioner for further study. This will draw out future teachers – who come back with it answered and prepared to share. Assigning questions also helps people begin discerning what makes a germane question.

Encouraging your class to ask questions and helping them to learn how to ask right questions is a huge part of your job as a teacher. Still, as important as questions are, more questions can be asked than we have biblical answers for. Sometimes you will simply have to answer with an honest, "I don't know."

**CROWD BREAKER**

In the book of Hebrews, we're told that Abraham "when he was called . . . went out, not knowing where he was going."

Where is the most interesting place God has had you live so far?

## HOW TO USE THIS STUDY

### Basics of the *Chocolate* study guide and philosophy

- **WEEKLY STUDY material**
- **FYI boxes**
- **ONE STEP FURTHER and other sidebar boxes**
- **DIGGING DEEPER boxes**

While the study is self-explanatory, reinforce its flexibility with your students. Direct them to the “How to use this study” page of their books and encourage them to find a level of study that brings joy and not guilt. They can do more one week, less the next; they can mix and match and find the fit that is right. You may have students who are overburdened and overbooked. Piling on and guiltting them with a ton of homework will not fix the problem. Rather, help them find the joy and sweetness of God’s Word and ask His Spirit to begin healing through the power of the Word. Take some time to do the “How to use the study” page (prior to Week One) with them and let them know you believe in them and their ability to use this material.

Take special care in stressing the flexibility to long-time Precept-Upon-Precept students as many have a finish-every-question-at-all-cost mentality. Such discipline in studying God’s Word is beautiful. The every-last-question mind set, however, can throw people off with the *Chocolate* series. Because the material is designed to flex to very advanced students, the volume of material can overwhelm people who force themselves through every question and sidebar. Assure your class that most students won’t finish every question every week by design. Some weeks they will, but probably not every week. If every student finished every week, the study would not be flexing to meet the needs of the most advanced students. The goal in allowing the material to flex is not to have people study less; it is to have each person take the next appropriate step from where they currently are and to study and apply more as they are continually drawn into deeper relationship with Jesus.

## **SEGMENT #2: INDUCTIVE STUDY BASICS**

### **Observation | Interpretation | Application**

If your students are unfamiliar with inductive Bible study, be sure to take some time to give them the basics. They will catch up and catch on as we go, but giving them an overview will help put them in context! You'll want to impress on your students that inductive Bible study simply means the Bible is our main source of truth. Before looking for insights from people and commentaries about the Bible, we get into the Word of God itself. We go to the primary source and learn to discover truth for ourselves. Inductive Bible study involves three basic components: observation, interpretation, and application.

### **1 Observation**

This is a very interactive process, well worth the time because the truths you discover for yourself will be accurate and profound. It begins by asking the five W and H questions.

*Who is speaking? Who is this about? Who are the main characters? Who is the author speaking to?*

*What subjects and/or events are covered in the chapter? What do you learn about the people, the events, and the teachings from the text? What instructions are given?*

*When did or will the events recorded occur?*

*Where did or will this happen? Where was it said?*

*Why is something said? Why will an event occur? Why this time, person, and/or place?*

*How will it happen? How will it be done? How is it illustrated?*

Careful observation leads to interpretation – discovering what the text means.

One important part of observing the text involves identifying key words. A key word helps to “unlock” the meaning of the text. It is vital to understanding the text and is often repeated.

### **2 Interpretation**

The more you observe, the greater you'll understand God's Word. Since Scripture is the best interpreter of Scripture we'll be looking at contexts and cross-references to help us understand God's message that was communicated to the original audience. Observation and interpretation lead to application.

While the focus of our study will be Paul's letter to the Galatian church, we're also going to do a lot of cross-referencing especially in the book of Acts as we see how Galatians fits in with Paul's missionary journeys.

### **3 Application**

After we've observed the text and discovered the meaning, we need to think and live accordingly. Although the text of Scripture has one interpretation – what God



inspired the author to write to his original readers – we can have numerous applications. The result is a transformed life – the more you and I are in the Word of God and adjusting our thinking and behavior to its precepts for life, the more we are changed into the likeness of Jesus Christ! He is the living Word of God who became flesh, the Savior of the world, our coming King of kings!

It is exciting to learn and know about the faith of others. It is transforming to live what we have learned!

### **SEGMENT #3: Overview**

*[pages 1–5]*

#### **Discussion Question:**

*How did the translations you read compare with the paraphrase?*

*Who wrote Galatians? Who did he write to?*

*What is the genre?*

*Why does the author write?*

### **SEGMENT #4: Galatians 1:1-5, 6-10, 11-14**

*[page 8–17]*

- Key Talk Points:**
- There is one true Gospel.
  - The true Gospel comes from Jesus Christ, not people.
  - Anyone preaching a “gospel” contrary is to be accursed.
  - Paul’s authority is from Jesus Christ, not from people.

**Context/Comments:**

**Galatians 1:1-5** Paul sets forth his apostleship immediately and says that it is from Jesus Christ and God the Father, not from men. Paul will continue to press his authority throughout Galatians in order to defend the Gospel he preaches as the true Gospel and show his opposition to be false. It's important to help your students see that he is not pushing authority for authority's sake, he is not trying to "lord over" the Galatians, and he is fired up about defending the Gospel, the treasure, that has been entrusted to him.

The opening verses answer two *Who?* questions. Paul wrote this letter to "the churches of Galatia." Unlike many of his letters addressed to churches in specific cities, Galatians went to more than one church in the region (Galatia).

You may want to consult a commentary to read up on the possibilities of where the region was. While it is not crystal clear if the churches were in the north or the south, the geographic destination does not change the content and meaning of the letter. Personally, I lean toward the "Southern Galatian" theory which holds that the "churches of Galatia" may have included assemblies in the cities of Derbe, Lystra, Iconium, and Pisidian Antioch. Again, this is not something to belabor, but it is important to be aware of since your students will discover the discussion in a commentary.

Right from the start, Paul preaches the truth of the Gospel:

- God the Father raised Jesus Christ from the dead (v. 1)
- Jesus is the Lord (v. 3)
- Jesus is the Christ (the Messiah, the Anointed One) (v. 3)
  - Jesus' name (Hebrew: Joshua) means "[the] LORD [is] salvation"
  - "Christ" (Hebrew: Messiah) refers to his anointing from God
- Jesus gave himself for our sins to rescue us from this present evil age (v. 4)
- This was according to the will of God the Father (v. 4)

**Sample Discussion Questions:**

*Who wrote Galatians?*

*Who was he writing to? How do the recipients differ from those addressed in some of Paul's other letters?*

*Why does Paul assert his apostleship?*

*What elements of the Gospel show up in the first five verses of the letter?*

**Galatians 1:6-10** While Paul includes facts about the true Gospel in his opening words to the churches, he wastes no time in getting to the point of his letter in verses 6-10: the introduction of a different gospel (*heteros euaggelion*) contrary (*para*) to the one the church had received.

Paul clarifies himself in verse 7 saying that the different gospel “is *really* not another” but rather a distortion of the true Gospel. This was not a slow slip from truth but rather a change in thinking instigated by troublemakers within the walls—those who were “disturbing” the church and wanted to “distort” (*metastrepho*) the Gospel, to change it into something else (see Acts 2:20’s use of the verb). The Greek word translated “disturbing” (*tarasso*) means to agitate, trouble, stir up.

The Gospel the church had already received from Paul was authoritative because, as Paul asserted, it came from Jesus Christ. *Anyone* preaching a gospel contrary to this one is *anathema*, (accursed), whether Paul himself or even “an angel from heaven.”

In an age of itchy ears which seek truth in a variety of suspect places, let this sink in with your class. The revealed Gospel is authoritative; it is complete and sufficient.

God will not send an angel from heaven with a contrary gospel but Scripture does tell us that Satan masquerades as an angel of light (2 Corinthians 11:14). Those who open the door to extra-biblical voices do so to their own peril.

In verse 10 it appears that Paul is defending himself against charges that he tailors his message to suit different audiences. His response is clear: bond-servants of Christ seek God’s favor alone.

### **Sample Discussion Questions:**

*Are there false gospels in the church today? How can you spot one?*

*What defines the true Gospel?*

*How can a man-pleasing bent affect truth? What can we learn from Paul’s example that we can apply?*

**Galatians 1:11-14** Paul grounds his authority and the authority of his Gospel in a revelation of Jesus Christ. Neither his apostleship nor the Gospel he preaches are of human origin. Both came from God and thus matched completely the Gospel the original apostles declared (though Paul did not receive it from them).

Paul, formerly a super-Jew, was an extremely unlikely messenger for the Gospel. In fact, he uses Greek superlatives three times to describe his over-the-top anti-Christian behavior:

- “used to persecute the church of God *beyond measure* [*kata hyperbole*]”
- “was advancing in Judaism *beyond* [*hyper*] many of my contemporaries”
- was “being *more extremely zealous* [*perissoteros zelotes*]”

In Paul’s *hyperbole* (beyond measure), *hyper* (beyond), and *perissoteros* (more extremely), in which he describes his Judaism, the reader sees the change the revelation of Jesus Christ caused in Paul’s life. Once a persecuting enemy, he is now a brother in the Gospel. His former “more-than” life in Judaism was not changed by any man but by God Himself.

### Sample Discussion Questions:

*Compare Paul’s life before and after Christ. What things changed? Did any characteristics remain the same? If so, what?*

*How can we determine whether zeal is godly or ungodly? Explain.*

## SEGMENT #5: Acts 9:1-16

*[page 20-22]*

- Key Talk Point:**
- God saves Paul in spite of himself.
  - Paul’s vision authenticated by Ananias’ vision.

**Context/Comments:** While Paul makes passing reference to his conversion and then discusses his early life in Christ in Galatians 1:15-24, Acts gives far more detail about his conversion. Luke’s Acts account corroborates Paul’s autobiographical information in Galatians with startling detail. Paul describes himself as “persecuting the church of God beyond measure” and Luke paints details like “breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord.”

In the midst of Saul’s persecuting folly, Jesus appears to him on the road to Damascus where he is going to capture Christians to “bring them bound to Jerusalem.”

Although his traveling companions hear only a voice, Saul sees a light flashing around him, falls to the ground, and hears a voice asking “Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?”

Saul’s encounter with Jesus does not stand in isolation. It is confirmed three days later. Blinded by the encounter, Saul is led to Damascus where he has a vision and information about a man named Ananias. God also gives Ananias a vision and information about Saul and tells him exactly where to go to find and heal this infamous persecutor who is now “a chosen instrument” of God for the sake of the Gospel.

**Sample Discussion Questions:**

*Describe the events of Acts 9:1-16.*

*How does this add to the information in Galatians?*

*How is Paul's vision confirmed?*

*Does the description of Paul's conversion match or deviate from the way we typically talk about conversion today? Explain. Consider specifically how his life changed.*

**SEGMENT #6: Galatians 1:15-24**

*[page 24-26]*

- Key Talk Points:**
- God saves Paul according to His timetable.
  - Remember that *God* is the Savior; we are mere witnesses.

**Context/Comments:**

This section of the text may rock some views on salvation. Clearly the Bible teaches that Jesus' followers are to be witnesses to Him, that they are to be ready to give a defense of the hope that dwells within them, and that they are to make disciples. God calls believers to an integral part of the advancement of His kingdom. Still, the work of salvation is His and His alone. Paul says that God set him apart from his mother's womb and called him through grace; and so it is with each one who comes to Him. Not only this but also the time of salvation belongs to God. Each of us comes when God chooses to reveal His Son in us. To rush the process is to interfere with a work only God does. Kay Arthur has referred to it as trying to pull a baby prematurely from the womb. God births His children according to His timetable.

It is also significant that Paul did not immediately go and hang out in the Christian epicenter of Jerusalem and Judea (the region that Jerusalem is located in). Eventually, after three years, he spent about two weeks with Peter (Cephas) in Jerusalem and met James, but the Gospel, his conversion, and his apostleship all came from Christ alone. He preached the message God gave him, not man, and people in the

churches didn't even recognize his face. Still, his conversion and preaching caused his fellow brothers and sisters in the faith to give glory to God.

**Summary of Paul's Post-Conversion Travels**

- Damascus Road to Arabia back to Damascus.
- Three years later up to Jerusalem
  - with Peter for 15 days
  - met James
- Then to regions of Syria and Cilicia.

**Sample Discussion Questions:**

*Is it significant that Paul did not go to Jerusalem and Judea immediately after his conversion? Why or why not?*

*Can the timing of Paul's conversion bring comfort and peace to those in Christ who are struggling with "a past"? If so, how?*

*What impact does the difference in timing between Paul's being set apart (remember, from his mother's womb) and having the Son revealed in him (on the road to Damascus) have on your thinking in evangelism? Will it change any of your approaches?*

**Wrap-Up Questions:**

*What is your key take-away point this week?*

*How will you live it out?*

# Week Two

## A Cross at the Heart of the True Gospel

### BEFORE CLASS

#### Hot Topics:

What constitutes the true Gospel? In Paul's day, false brethren tried to bring bondage and even Peter and Barnabas were affected. Circumcision was the issue of their day, but what of ours? Do people or even whole church's today add to the Gospel? How can we identify a compromised Gospel? In what ways is the Gospel compromised today? How can we stand for the true Gospel? Where does the power to live for God come from?

#### Class-at-a-Glance

Segments	2 Hour Class	1 Hour Class	Topic
Segment 1:	10 min. 20 min.	OMIT 10 min.	Review basic concepts
Segment 2:	15 min.	10 min.	Inductive Focus
Segment 3:	15 min.	10 min.	Galatians 2:1-10
Optional Break	15 min.	OMIT	
Segment 4:	20 min.	15 min.	Galatians 2:11-14
Segment 5:	25 min.	15 min.	Galatians 2:15-21

#### Inductive Focus: Asking Questions

*Who? What? When? Where? Why? and How?* At the heart of inductive study sit these six questions. Indeed, these questions are the heart of biblical exegesis, drawing the meaning out of the text of Scripture. The questions help us focus on the author's intended message.

Once you begin the question-asking process, it becomes clear that not every question can be asked of every verse while other verses require the same type of question be asked more than once. We'll hone in on this more closely in the lesson plan helping your students see that asking questions is a fluid process in which one question answered often points to necessary follow-up questions.

It is like having a conversation. You don't ask canned questions that don't work in context, you ask questions appropriate to the conversation that will yield as much information as possible.

Although it will take some time to begin thinking in terms of questions, assure your students that they will probably be reading with this in mind before they know it.

**START CLASS HERE****SEGMENT #1: Review****Review Basic Concepts**

A little review each week will cement the basics and give your class the framework for a lifetime of study. Although we'll focus on specific inductive tools each week, keeping the basic components of OBSERVATION, INTERPRETATION, and APPLICATION in front of your class consistently will equip them for a lifetime of handling God's Word. And always, always remind them that the goal is transformation! We don't learn for the sake of learning; we learn because God uses His Word to transform us and conform us more and more into the image of His Son. Familiarity with the basics will give your students confidence as they work through their homework and begin applying and living the texts.

**Review Questions:**

*What are the components of inductive Bible study?*

*What is **Observation** and why is it important? What question does it answer?*

*How is **Interpretation** different from **Observation**?*

*What do we need for proper **Application**?*

Application needs to be grounded in the single intended meaning of the text, its interpretation.

Be aware at this point that you can run into two distinct problems:

1. Some people do not want to apply. They seek knowledge only and bristle at application.
2. Others want to apply the text without dealing first with what God said to the original hearers. They want to know "What this means to me" before "What God said."



It is important for you to continually guide your class toward application that comes from the text. When discussions veer toward speculation or issues that do not promote life-change, redirect them to consider what the Author intends.

For those who gravitate toward opinion-based comments and ungrounded applications, gently direct them with such questions as, “Where do you see that in the text?” Continually point them to the text and appropriate application. It may take some repetitions, but they will learn. Always be gentle in your approach remembering Proverbs 16:21b that the “sweetness of speech increases persuasiveness.”

### **Galatians 1 Review Questions:**

*Where did Paul's apostleship, authority, and Gospel come from? Why was this important?*

*How did Paul's life change? Why did it change? What can we apply from this in our lives?*

*What is your biggest takeaway from Galatians 1?*

### **SEGMENT #2: Inductive Focus: Asking Questions – 5 Ws and H;** *[pages 29-31]*

- Key Talk Points:**
- Address 5 W and H questions (*Who? What? When? Where? Why? and How?*) to the text.
  - Ask logical questions and follow-ups.

### **Context/Comments and Practice:**

Lead your students through some very basic 5W and H questions with follow-ups on Galatians 2.

**Who** are the main characters in the chapter?

**What** are the main topics of the chapter?

**When** do the events take place?

*Do they all take place at the same time? If not, where is the shift?*

**Where** do the events take place?

*Again, do they all take place in the same location? If not, where else?*

**Why** does Paul go up to Jerusalem?

*Who does he see when he is there?*

*What do they agree on?*

*How is Titus significant?*

**Why** does Paul confront Peter?

**How** does false teaching enter the church at Antioch?

*Who does it affect?*

*How is it dealt with and resolved?*

### **SEGMENT #3: Galatians 2:1-10—Paul Travels to Jerusalem (Jerusalem Council or Relief Trip)**

*[pages 34–37]*

- Key Talk Points:**
- Paul submits to legitimate Church authority.
  - Paul will not yield to false brethren “for even an hour.”

#### **Context/Comments:**

Galatians 2 starts off with “Then” that introduces one of the bigger “timing” questions in the New Testament. Paul says that “after an interval of fourteen years” he went to Jerusalem with Barnabas and Titus. The fact that Paul is still traveling with Barnabas places the trip prior to his second missionary journey. The question is this: Does Galatians 2:1-10 parallel Acts 11:27-30 (the relief trip) or Acts 15 (the Jerusalem Council)? Unless your students have taken the time to engage the Digging Deeper section on pages 32–33, don’t belabor this point. The timing is interesting but the issue at hand is the truth of the Gospel. Again Paul makes it clear that he is not bowing to man. He goes to Jerusalem at God’s prompting—“because of a revelation.” He was not summoned by human authorities. Nonetheless, he submits his Gospel to those of “reputation” (the Apostles) and brings with him Titus, his young, uncircumcised Greek disciple.

The Apostles confirm Paul’s Gospel and do not compel Titus to be circumcised. Though “false brethren” try to add circumcision to the Gospel, Paul will have none of it. Rather, he and his contingent stand on the simple truth of the Gospel, not only for themselves but also for the Galatians. As the second half of Galatians 2 will show, truth can be eroded even in those who have once stood firm.

The outcome of the meeting—whether the event in Acts 11 or Acts 15—is unity with respect to the Gospel as James, Peter, and John extend the right hand of fellowship to Paul and Barnabas and affirm them in their work of evangelizing the Gentiles.

**Summary of Key Points in Galatians 2:1-10**

- Timing
  - after 14 years
  - with Barnabas and Titus (places this prior to his second missionary journey)
- Reason
  - a revelation from God, not summoned by believers
  - submitted the Gospel in private
- Titus accepted without being circumcised
- Judaizers
  - false brethren
  - snuck in
- Truth of the Gospel
  - Paul entrusted with the Gospel to the uncircumcised.
  - Paul did not yield to the Judaizers “for even an hour.”
- Results of Jerusalem Meeting
  - James, Peter, and John agreed with Barnabas and Paul
    - James, Peter and John to go to the circumcised
    - Paul and Barnabas to go to the uncircumcised
    - The church to remember the poor

**Sample Discussion Questions:**

*What is significant about the decision with respect to Titus? What bearing does this have on the Gospel message?*

*What makes “false brethren” false? What do they do? How do they behave? What is their “gospel”?*

*How does Paul handle a twisted gospel? How does this inform our behavior to face gospel twisting today?*

**OPTIONAL BREAK****SEGMENT #4: Galatians 2:11-14—Paul Confronts Peter***[pages 38-43]*

- Key Talk Points:**
- Truth is not defined by man.
  - If men are plumb lines, God's truth is negated.

**Context/Comments:**

In Galatians 2:11-21 the setting shifts from Jerusalem to Antioch and the rot among the false brethren in verse 4 has begun to infect both Peter and Barnabas. Let's take this sticky section verse by verse.

**2:11**—While Paul, Barnabas, Peter, and James stood united in their beliefs in Jerusalem, contrasting behaviors are attributed to them at Antioch. Paul actively opposes Peter “to his face, because he stood condemned.” There is no back-room dealing or whispering when salvation is the topic.

**2:12**—Peter “stood condemned” because he folded to the views of Judaizers that demanded circumcision and strict adherence to the Mosaic Law. When these men came to Antioch, Peter changed his behavior: formerly eating with Gentiles he stopped when “certain men from James” arrived.

We can't make assumptions about James' view based on this text. The men “from James” may not have been sent by him. In any case, their insistence on law-keeping perverted the true Gospel and Peter was intimidated enough to withdraw from his normal fellowship with Gentile brothers.

**2:13**—When leaders veer, others often follow. Such was the case with Peter and his fellow Jewish believers at Antioch. When Peter stopped eating with the Gentiles, the other stopped, too . . . even Paul's associate Barnabas was “carried away.”

**2:14**—Paul confronted Peter because his behavior denied the truth of the Gospel they preached. It was hypocrisy for Peter to compel Gentiles to live like Jews—to be circumcised and follow the Mosaic Law—when he as a Jew was living like the Gentiles. His walk negated his talk in a very public way. In fact, it was the impetus for an entire group of people to retreat from the straightforwardness of the Gospel. It was in the presence of this very group (“in the presence of all”) that Paul called Peter out since he wasn't the only one sinning.

**Sample Discussion Questions:**

*What did Peter do that was wrong in Paul's eyes? How did it compare with what the Judaizers were teaching?*

*What did Paul do about the problem? How was it resolved? Is there any hint of bad blood continuing?*

*How do you “know when to hold ‘em? When to fold ‘em?” Use Galatians, but feel free to support your answer from elsewhere in the Word.*

### **Summary of the Conflict with Peter at Syrian Antioch**

- Peter was provoked by “men from James”
- Peter shrunk back, held himself aloof, feared party of circumcision
- Others joined in his hypocrisy
- Even Barnabas was carried away.
- Action was not in accord with the Gospel.
- Paul called out Peter in front of everyone because everyone, it seems, was involved.
- If we can work our way to God, Christ died needlessly.
- KEY TRUTH: Man is justified by faith, not by works of the Law

### **SEGMENT #5: Galatians 2:15-21**

*[pages 45-47]*

- Key Talk Points:**
- The Law has never and will never save.
  - Christians are justified through faith in Christ Jesus.
  - The power to live comes not from Law-based behavior but from the power of Christ who lives within.

#### **Context/Comments:**

Paul declares the simple truth of the Gospel: Not even Jews can be justified by the works of the Law. Justification comes through faith in Christ Jesus alone. The Law can't justify anyone, not even a Law-abiding Jew.

The Law doesn't fix. The Law doesn't save. The Law doesn't give life. The Law shows every man to be a sinner and *that's* its job! When we see our sin and believe in Christ Jesus we die to that Law and live to God because of Christ who lives in us.

There is perhaps no greater description of the Christian life than Galatians 2:20 and no better explanation of why works cannot save than Galatians 2:21.

**Galatians 2:20**

*"I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me."*

Greek grammar may fall on deaf ears, but the perfect passive of *systauroo* ("I have been crucified") carries significant theological weight. The perfect tense indicates a past action with results up to the present. The passive voice means the subject is receiving the action. Thus, when Christ died on the cross, those in Him were crucified also. We live now as those alive from the dead because Christ lives in us. The power for Christian living will never come from another program, method or any other man-made strategy. The power to live the Christian life comes from Christ who lives within!

**Galatians 2:21**

*"I do not nullify the grace of God, for if righteousness comes through the Law, then Christ died needlessly."*

To assert that it's possible to work one's way to God is to say there is no need for the cross.

**Sample Discussion Questions:**

*What is the purpose of the Law? What can the Law never do?*

*Why do you think people are drawn toward legalism? Why is ritual-based salvation attractive? What is legalism attractive to?*

*How does living by the Law differ from living by faith?*

*How are you living your life today—by the Law or by the power of Christ within?  
How do you know? How would you explain this to someone?*

**Wrap-Up Questions:**

*What is your key take-away point this week?*

*How will you live it out?*

# Week Three

## It's Always Been Faith

### BEFORE CLASS

#### Hot Topics:

How are we sanctified? Christian churches, denominations, publishers and organizations all seek to answer the question with products and programs, but Paul says the way Christians are perfected in their faith is the same way they are saved in the first place: by hearing with faith. So how do we practically submit to God in faith without succumbing to legalism and striving according to our flesh? How does one go about living a “crucified” life?

#### Class-at-a-Glance

Segments	2 Hour Class	1 Hour Class	Topic
Segment 1:	10 min. 5 min.	OMIT 10 min.	Review
Segment 2:	15 min.	10 min.	Inductive Focus: Cross-Referencing
Segment 3:	15 min.	10 min.	Galatians 3:1-5
Optional Break	15 min.	OMIT	
Segment 4:	30 min.	15 min.	Galatians 3:6-14–Cross-Referencing
Segment 5:	30 min.	15 min.	Galatians 3:15-29

### Inductive Focus: Cross-Referencing

Cross-referencing is simply reading what the Bible says about similar topics in different locations. There was a day when finding cross-references in the Scriptures depended on your flat-out knowing the Book backward and forward or relying on someone to point you where you needed to go. Over the years, scholars have written books full of cross-references, others have compiled concordances, and slowly but surely we have gained access to more and more tools which ease the once cumbersome task of cross-referencing.

Cross-referencing helps us gain a better understanding of the broader text of Scripture.

Often we rely on other people's cross-references. This is okay if they're reliable sources but it keeps us dependent on them to, well, cut the steak for us.

We'll look at the specifics of cross-referencing in this lesson!

**START CLASS HERE**

**SEGMENT #1: Review**

**Review Basic Concepts**

**Review Questions:**

*What are the components of inductive Bible study?*

*How do they function together?*

*What risks do we run if we don't correctly observe the text? (Misinterpretation and misapplication)*

*What risk do we run if we don't apply personally?*

*Briefly summarize Galatians 1.*

*Briefly summarize Galatians 2.*

**SEGMENT #2: Inductive Study Focus on Cross-Referencing**

While this study and most other studies include cross-references, it is important to equip your class to find them "for themselves."

Before we jump into the *how* of cross-referencing, we need to ask the *why*. Two basic assumptions underlie the reason we pay close attention to cross-referencing Scripture. First is the belief that the entire Bible is true. Paul tells us in 2 Timothy 3:16-17 that, "All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof,



for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work." The related presupposition is that because the whole Bible is true, Scripture interprets Scripture. We don't need to go to external sources, although they can be helpful at times. The best commentary on Scripture is Scripture itself.

So how do we go about cross-referencing? Just like you can take more than one route between cities, there are different ways to go about cross-referencing. I'm going to describe three basic ones that I use and compare them to travel so hopefully you'll get a better feel for the differences between them.

**Get them from someone else.** Most Bible studies and many study Bibles give you cross-references. This is like letting someone give you a car ride. You trust that the driver will take you to the right place. If you have a sense of where you're going, you can usually sniff out a mistake, but you are largely at the mercy of whoever has the information, just like the passenger is at the mercy of whoever has the keys. Is this a bad thing? No. It is one way we learn.

The better the source, the better off you'll be. Also, the more you do this, the more familiar you will become with the biblical material and the better able you will be to handle the text yourself as time goes on. It's easy to get stuck here, though, so be careful that you don't find yourself forever needing someone else to tell you where to look. The risk here, obviously, is that the driver takes you way off course. So if you're taking a ride in this car, choose your driver carefully.

**Use books/technology.** While I welcome cross-referencing help from teachers and commentators, I often use concordance searches with Logos Bible Software to help me locate references in Scripture. Simply searching on the name "Moses" in a concordance will bring you to every mention of Moses in the Word of God. You can even search on the root of a Hebrew or Greek word by using the corresponding Strong's number. I compare this to driving in a new town with a GPS. You get exactly where you're going, but you're not always positive of your surroundings. When you cross-reference like this, it's important to pay attention to the contexts, the textual surroundings, so that you handle the text appropriately.

There are many free online concordances on websites such as [www.blueletterbible.org](http://www.blueletterbible.org), [www.studylight.com](http://www.studylight.com), [www.crosswalk.com](http://www.crosswalk.com), and others. While technology is pretty reliable for returning accurate results, you still need to stay awake because programs are programmed by fallible human beings. Ever try to get to a Dairy Queen with your GPS and end up in the middle of a field? The same thing happens from time to time with electronic concordances. Enough said?

**Reading with synthesis in mind.** The final way that I find cross-references is simply through reading the Bible with the big picture in mind. Obviously this doesn't happen overnight. Over time, however, as you start understanding how God's redemption fits together, you begin to become aware of places where one author of Scripture quotes or alludes to another and you begin to pick up on common themes in the text. This is when the fun really starts!!

Again, it takes some time but reading with the big picture in mind is the best hands-on approach to cross-referencing you'll find. It is like strapping on a backpack and

walking to your destination with only a compass in hand. Hard work? Yes, but satisfaction when you arrive like you can't imagine, and confidence from discovering truth for yourself!

This week, we saw a number of Old Testament quotes in the middle verses of Galatians 3. We'll investigate some of those as we move through our lesson.

### **SEGMENT #3: Galatians 3:1-5**

*[pages 54-56]*

**Key Talk Point:**

- We are saved and sanctified by hearing with faith.
- Trying to be perfected by the flesh is foolishness.

**Context/Comments:** Having just recounted his confrontation with Peter in Antioch, Paul takes the gloves off with the Galatians twice calling them "foolish" (Greek: *anotetos*, literally without mind). Then after asking who has "bewitched" them, he follows up with a series of questions he expects them to be able to answer:

*Q: Did you receive the Spirit by works of the Law or by hearing with faith?*

A. By hearing with faith.

*Q. Having begun by the Spirit, are you now being perfected by the flesh?*

A. No one is perfected by the flesh . . . although some sure try to be.

*Q. Did you suffer so many things in vain?*

A. Of course not!

*Q. Does He who provides you with the Spirit ... do it by works of the Law, or by hearing with faith?*

A. By hearing with faith!

With blow after blow of truth, Paul drives home that not only is salvation by faith, but so is sanctification. We begin by the Spirit and are perfected by the same Spirit not by ritual laws like circumcision *then* or a product, program, or check-it-off-the-list system *now*.

#### **Sample Discussion Questions:**

*How does Galatians 2:20 tie with Paul's argument in Galatians 3:1-5?*

*How do people today try to perfect themselves by the flesh?*

*How does Paul contrast the flesh and the Spirit? How would you explain the difference? Can you tell in your own life if you are walking by the flesh or by the Spirit? Explain.*

## **OPTIONAL BREAK**

### **SEGMENT #4: Galatians 3:6-14**

*[pages 58-61]*

- Key Talk Points:**
- Abraham believed God and it was reckoned to him as righteousness.
  - The Law is not of faith.
  - The righteous man shall live by faith.

**Context/Comments:** Paul learned the Gospel directly by revelation from Jesus, but the declaration of Gospel truth pre-dates all the Apostles. It occurs in the first book of the Old Testament and has always included a Gentile mission.

As he does in Romans, Paul harkens back to Abraham who lived before the Law to show that righteousness has always been by faith and that the example of Abraham was, in a sense, God showing a preview of the Gospel that would go not only to the Jews but also to all who believe.

Indeed all the nations have been blessed in Abraham, because Christ descended from him.

The blessing of all the nations in Abraham because of Christ contrasts with the Law which demands sinless obedience. No one has or can be justified by the Law. The only way for man to be declared righteous and to live righteously is by faith through the power of the promised Spirit.

In this section, you'll want to take your students to some of the cross-references from the Old Testament:

**Galatians 3:6**

*Even so Abraham BELIEVED GOD, AND IT WAS RECKONED TO HIM AS RIGHTEOUSNESS.*

**Quotes from Genesis 15:6**

*Then he believed in the LORD; and He reckoned it to him as righteousness.*

**Galatians 3:8**

*The Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, "ALL THE NATIONS WILL BE BLESSED IN YOU."*

**Quotes from Genesis 12:3** (see also 18:18 and 22:18)

*"And I will bless those who bless you,  
And the one who curses you I will curse.  
And in you all the families of the earth will be blessed."*

**Galatians 3:10**

*For as many as are of the works of the Law are under a curse; for it is written, "CURSED IS EVERYONE WHO DOES NOT ABIDE BY ALL THINGS WRITTEN IN THE BOOK OF THE LAW, TO PERFORM THEM."*

**Quotes from Deuteronomy 27:26**

*'Cursed is he who does not confirm the words of this law by doing them.' And all the people shall say, 'Amen.'*

**Galatians 3:11**

*Now that no one is justified by the Law before God is evident; for, "THE RIGHTEOUS MAN SHALL LIVE BY FAITH."*

**Quotes from Habakkuk 2:4**

*"Behold, as for the proud one,  
His soul is not right within him;  
But the righteous will live by his faith."*

**Galatians 3:12**

*However, the Law is not of faith; on the contrary, "HE WHO PRACTICES THEM SHALL LIVE BY THEM."*

**Quotes from Leviticus 18:5**

*'So you shall keep My statutes and My judgments, by which a man may live if he does them; I am the LORD.'*

**Galatians 3:13**

*Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law, having become a curse for us—for it is written, “CURSED IS EVERYONE WHO HANGS ON A TREE” . . .*

**Quotes from Deuteronomy 21:23**

*. . . his corpse shall not hang all night on the tree, but you shall surely bury him on the same day (for he who is hanged is accursed of God), so that you do not defile your land which the LORD your God gives you as an inheritance.*

**Sample Discussion Questions:**

*Read Genesis 12:3, 18:18 and 22:18. How do God's dealings with Abraham compare with His dealings with people today? Explain.*

*Read Habakkuk 4:2, Romans 1:17, Hebrews 10:38. What do we learn in each of these cross-references about the righteous living by faith?*

*Has righteousness ever come through the Law? Explain. Can it come through the Law? Why/why not?*

*How does your answer square with your behavior? Is your power for living coming from Christ within you or are you walking in the flesh?*

**SEGMENT #5: Galatians 3:15-29**

*[pages 63-67]*

- Key Talk Points:**
- God's ways do not change.
  - The Law cannot give life.
  - The Law leads people to Christ to be justified by faith.

**Context/Comments:** Paul goes to great lengths to show that God does not change the how of salvation. He has not moved from justification by Law to justification by faith, not at all. God's salvation has always been based on promise and faith. God made a covenant with Abraham, a promise 430 years before He gave the Law to Moses. Beginning in Genesis 12, He promised Abraham a land (Israel) and a seed (Christ).

The Law was not a change of plans. It did not shift the basis for inheritance from promise to conformity to ritual. If human covenants are binding, how much more covenants made by a holy and perfect God? "Why then was the Law added?" Paul asks. "Because of transgression," he answers. The Law increased sin and guilt so that people would be led to faith in Christ's death and righteousness for salvation.

The Law does not give life. It *never* gave life. The Law shows people their need of a Savior.

It is key here that Abraham, to whom God first commanded circumcision, was not justified by circumcision. Rather his faith was reckoned as righteousness (Genesis 15:6 and Romans 4:3).

**Sample Discussion Questions:**

*Describe God's covenant with Abraham and the nature of a covenant.*

*When did the Law come relative to Abraham?*

*What was the function of the Law?*

*Compare the Law and faith. How do the two relate?*

*What are the benefits of those "in Christ"? How are you living in the reality of these benefits?*

**Wrap-Up Questions:**

*What are your biggest takeaways this week?*

*How is truth you're learning changing the way you think and act?*

# Week Four

## Slave or Son

### BEFORE CLASS

#### Hot Topics:

What does it mean to move from a life of slavery to a life of sonship and what do we do when we see sons taken captive again to slavery? What truths can we speak to correct them? What did Paul say? What engagement can we expect when we attempt to set captives free?

#### Class-at-a-Glance

Segments	2 Hour Class	1 Hour Class	Topic
Segment 1:	15 min. 15 min.	OMIT 10 min.	Review
Segment 2:	15 min.	10 min.	Inductive Focus: Context
Segment 3:	15 min.	10 min.	Galatians 4:1-7
Optional Break	15 min.	OMIT	
Segment 4:	15 min.	10 min.	Galatians 4:8-11
Segment 5:	15 min.	10 min.	Galatians 4:12-16, Galatians 4:17-20
Segment 6:	15 min.	10 min.	Galatians 4:21-31

#### Inductive Focus: Context

Context is the setting in which something dwells. We make sense of words by understanding what is around them. The word *bank*, for instance, can have several meanings but we can't know which is correct until we have context. Bank means something very different when I say "I deposited money in the bank" from what it means when I add "On the way, I got my car stuck in a [snow] bank." Just as context helps us understand the meaning of a word in a sentence, it also helps us make sense of a sentence within a paragraph, a chapter within a book, etc.

**START CLASS HERE**

**SEGMENT #1: Review**

**Review Basic Concepts**

**Review Questions:**

*What are the components of inductive Bible study?*

*What is the most important thing you've learned or been reminded of up to this point?*

*Briefly summarize Galatians 1.*

*Briefly summarize Galatians 2.*

*Briefly summarize Galatians 3.*

**SEGMENT #2: Inductive Focus: Context**

It's not uncommon to find scriptural words torn from their contexts to make a point. Whether it's soap-boxing your issue of choice or cherry-picking feel-good texts, divorcing verses from their greater contexts is common and sometimes dangerous, as we've seen in Paul's strong condemnation of justification by the Law. Because of this, encourage your students to *always* pay attention to greater context even if a text seems clear enough on its own and whether they are studying for themselves or listening to teaching or preaching.



**SEGMENT #3: Galatians 4:1-7***[pages 75-78]***Key Talk Point:** • No longer slaves but sons!

**Context/Comments:** At the end of Galatians 3, Paul talks about “heirs” and “sons” in Christ, baptism into Christ, and oneness in Christ. Those “in Christ” are Abraham’s descendants. He continues this line of thinking in Galatians 4:1-7.

Having called the Law a tutor to lead us to Christ, Paul offers another illustration: the child-heir and the slave. Although a child heir owns everything, he is kept “under guardians and managers until the date set by the father.” In these illustrations, he is showing how the Law actually enslaves (v. 3) until the proper time—in this case until “the fullness of the time” when Jesus came to redeem those under the Law.

Unlike the Son born into the Father’s house, slaves to sin are redeemed by Christ and then adopted to receive a relationship with His Father and become co-heirs to His inheritance .

**Sample Discussion Questions:**

*How are slaves and sons different? How are natural and adopted sons similar?*

*According to Paul, how do people become sons of God?*

*What power does God give to His sons? What has he sent forth into their hearts?*

*What characterizes the behavior of sons (who are no longer slaves)? Do you have any of these characteristics? If not, what makes you think you’re a son? Is it possible for sons to slip back into slavery? Permanently? What did Paul say about this?*

**OPTIONAL BREAK**

**SEGMENT #4: Galatians 4:8-11***[pages 80-82]***Key Talk Point:** • Don't turn back to slavery.**Context/Comments:** Time phrases are significant to note throughout Galatians 4. In verse 8 Paul uses time phrases to highlight the change between slavery and sonship.**At that time (in slavery), you:**

- Did not know God.
- Were slaves to “no gods.”
- Were enslaved to weak and worthless elemental things (Greek: *stoicheia*). “Elemental things” likely refers to ways people tried to work their way to God, including but not limited to law-keeping as an achievement path to God. This extends the argument to Gentiles who had their own kind of merit system.

**But now (as sons), you:**

- Have come to know God; rather to be known by God.

Though the Galatians were free in Christ, though they were sons, Paul saw their eyes turning back to Egypt. Like the Exodus generation that had been freed from bondage and longed to return to the familiar, these sons were again observing “days and months and seasons and years.” Galatian Gentiles were being persuaded that it was necessary to add Jewish rituals to faith in order to be saved. Paul is dumbfounded by this because the Law couldn't save the Jews, much less the Gentiles. Its purpose, as he has already shown, is to be a school master to lead people to Christ so they can be saved by faith.

The Judaizers were having success with even Peter and Barnabas. As the leaders, so went the followers.

**Sample Discussion Questions:**

*What were the Galatians turning back to? Do we do similar things? Explain.*

*What did you learn about elemental things? What are some examples?*

*Do “Christians” today try to enslave others? How can you stand against this kind of behavior?*

**SEGMENT #5: Galatians 4:12-16, Galatians 4:17-20***[pages 82-86]*

- Key Talk Points:**
- Fellowship with people can give a platform to speak.
  - But truth can still make you an enemy.

**Context/Comments:****Galatians 4:12-16**

Paul begs (Greek: *deoma*) the Galatian believers to accept his view of the Law. It's clear that Paul loves these people—the concern in his voice is palpable. Although Paul alludes to good times with the Galatians, we don't know the specifics but his warm relationship with these people is clear.

Still, he will not suppress truth in the interest of false unity. Unity is crucial—Jesus prays for it but for a unity of truth not truthless peace.

If Paul wanted unity for the sake of unity, he would not have written this doctrinaire letter to the Galatians. He would not have confronted Peter. He wouldn't have bothered to warn Timothy about ear-ticklers to come. Jude would have written about the common salvation (what he wanted to write about) instead of urging his readers to contend earnestly for “the faith that was once for all delivered to the saints” (v. 3).

Paul was bold enough to rock the boat in the interest of truth.

**Galatians 4:17-20**

Religious slave masters look desirable at first glance as they woo their victims—Judaizers “eagerly sought” (Greek: *ze/oo*) the Galatians. They wooed them, but not for their good. Rather they sought to have them under their influence and control alone. Instead of cultivating loyalty to Christ, they wanted loyalty to themselves. When so-called ministries tout themselves more than the One they claim to serve, let that be a red flag to you! Paul was *for* the Galatians so much that he referred to them as his “children,” but the Judaizers were trying to knock out his godly influence.

**Sample Discussion Questions:**

*Compare Paul's heart for the Galatians with the Judaizers' designs for them.*

*What kind of modern-day “Judaizers” have you observed? What modern tactics do they use to add to the Gospel for control and similar abuse?*

*What can we learn from Paul's example?*

## **SEGMENT #6: Galatians 4:21-31**

*[pages 86-89]*

- Key Talk Points:**
- Paul uses the Law to teach the Gospel.
  - Jewish and Gentile believers are children of the free woman.

**Context/Comments:** In Galatians 4:21-31 Paul turns the conventional way of Jewish thinking on its head by illustrating the freedom of the Gospel and the slavery of the Law in two Old Testament characters who lived long before God gave Moses the Law. In any illustration with Sarah and Hagar, Jews would see Sarah as the hero and naturally associate themselves with her. After all, the Jewish people were born not from the Egyptian slave girl, but from Abraham's free wife. Paul upends this view by associating the Jews with Hagar, Mount Sinai, "the present" Jerusalem, the Old Covenant and slavery, but calling Sarah the free woman who has free children. She is tied with the "Jerusalem above" and the New Covenant of Jesus Christ.

### **Sample Discussion Questions:**

*How does Paul use the Old Testament to argue with the Judaizers?*

*What risks are associated with truth telling in a truth-hating society?*

*How can we deal with legalism today? How can we tell if we are trying to control people like they were?*

### **Wrap-Up Questions:**

*What are your biggest takeaways this week?*

*How are these truths changing the way you're thinking and acting?*

# Week Five

## Set Free for Freedom

### BEFORE CLASS

#### Hot Topics:

How do we live in freedom when others chase with slavery's yoke? What modern "Judaizers" troll for God's people today? What kinds of leaven today threaten the centrality of the cross? How does walking by the Spirit keep God's people from carrying out the desires of the flesh?

#### Class-at-a-Glance

Segments	2 Hour Class	1 Hour Class	Topic
Segment 1:	15 min. 15 min.	OMIT 10 min.	Review basic concepts Overview
Segment 2:	15 min.	10 min.	Inductive Focus: Word Studies
Segment 3:	20 min.	10 min.	Galatians 5:1-6
Optional Break	15 min.	OMIT	
Segment 4:	20 min.	15 min.	Galatians 5:7-12
Segment 5:	20 min.	15 min.	Galatians 5:13-26

### Inductive Focus: Word Studies

There are word studies and then there are word studies. Many people believe the way to do a word study on a Greek or Hebrew word is to look it up in a Bible dictionary and if you really want to go over the top, you look it up in two of them! While this is part of doing a thorough word study, it leaves out some critical steps for students who want to discover truth for themselves.

Studying a biblical word first involves identifying the word in the original language (Greek for the New Testament and Hebrew for the Old Testament\*) and looking at how the word is used throughout the rest of the Bible. As you look for the meaning, you'll want to give more weight to uses of the word in the immediate context and then elsewhere by the same author.

After investigating how the word and others in its family are used you can check in Bible dictionaries and word study books to compare your findings.

Jumping to a word study book before doing your own concordance work is similar to reading a commentary before studying the text of Scripture for yourself.

We'll look at this more closely as we move through our lesson.

\*With rare exceptions of pinches of Aramaic (like in Daniel!).

*Galatians*  
Solid Truth for Slippery Times  
LEADER'S GUIDE

**START CLASS HERE**

**SEGMENT #1: Review**

**Review Basic Concepts**

**Review Questions:**

*What are the components of inductive Bible study?*

*What is **Observation** and why is it important? What question will this answer?*

*What is the biggest takeaway **Application** you have had thus far?*

**SEGMENT #2: Inductive Focus: Word Studies**

Doing a word study from scratch involves identifying the word in its original language and seeing how it and its roots are used throughout the Word of God. When looking at usage, pay closest attention when the same word is used in the text and context you're looking at, then move to the chapter, the book, the author, and the Old or New Testament. In the case of a term from the Greek New Testament, you can check its use in the *LXX* (Greek OT).

Once you've done your own research, compare your findings with your word study reference books and commentaries. For a listing of helpful word study tools, see the Appendix of the *Solid Truth* workbook.

This week your students had a **One Step Further** word study on *peitho*, a verb with a root (*pei*) that appears three times in Galatians 5:7-12.

**Note:** If you have access to a computer, Internet, and projection equipment, this is a great time to show your students how to run concordance searches online.

**SEGMENT #3: Galatians 5:1-6***[pages 95-98]*

- Key Talk Points:**
- Keep standing firm.
  - Don't be subject to a yoke of slavery.

**Context/Comments:**

Paul has been holding forth the true Gospel against a false gospel that adds external requirements to faith in Jesus Christ and in Galatians 4 he goes back to Old Testament Scriptures to prove the validity of this Gospel of promise. In Galatians 5 he moves from argument to exhortation and instruction. From here forward his focus is applying truth.

He leads with the bedrock truth that "Christ has set us free" and follows with two imperatives (one positive, one negative) to apply this truth:

1. Keep standing firm.
2. Don't be subject again to a yoke of slavery.

Don't go back to what never worked in the first place. This is crystal clear in Romans 8:3-4: *"For what the Law could not do, weak as it was through the flesh, God did: sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and as an offering for sin, He condemned sin in the flesh, so that the requirement of the Law might be fulfilled in us, who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit."*

They needed neither to go back to paganism nor to add the rules of Judaism. They needed the pure Gospel alone, not a syncretistic one that inevitably is false.

Paul makes it clear that if people want to "go the Law route," they must keep the whole Law. There is, however, no fulfilling the Law apart from Christ and being in Him. He is the only one who fulfilled it and the only source of power for righteous living. There is no path to the Father through the Law; the only way to the Father is through the Son (John 14:6).

Circumcision not only doesn't help; it also actually obligates a person to keep the entire Law which, again, is impossible.

**Sample Discussion Questions:**

*What are the commands in this section?*

*What kinds of slavery were the Galatians subjecting themselves to?*

*What yokes of slavery call to us?*

*Is syncretism a problem in the church today? Explain.*

*What can “over-achieving” net you on this one?*

What does Christian freedom do in everyday life?

## **OPTIONAL BREAK**

### **SEGMENT #4: Galatians 5:7-12**

*[pages 100-103]*

- Key Talk Points:**
- A little leaven leavens the whole lump of dough.
  - It doesn't take much false teaching to spread and spread quickly.

**Context/Comments:** As Paul continues his pastoral tone toward his readers, his righteous anger aimed at the trouble-makers takes a graphic turn. The believers had been running well but were hindered (Greek: *enkopto*, literally to cut down or strike). They had listened to wrong voices and allowed the leaven of false teaching to affect the entire church. Now Paul says that he wishes those who have been telling other men to be circumcised would lop their entire organ off! The heart of the Gospel is the stumbling block of the cross, not circumcision and the Law.

#### **Sample Discussion Questions:**

*Does it stand to reason that we will run into people today who try to hinder others from running well? Why?*

*What is leaven and how does it work?*

*If you were trying to bring false doctrine into a church, how would you do it?*

*How do you guard against leaven? How do you identify it?*



## **SEGMENT #5: Galatians 5:13-26**

*[pages 105-109]*

- Key Talk Points:**
- Walk by the Spirit.
  - Flesh and the Spirit are in opposition.

**Context/Comments:** A reasonable concern is that freedom without the restraint of the Law will lead to lawless behavior, but that is not the case for those who are truly free, for those in whom Christ dwells. But the question is: *How do you live rightly if you're not checking off boxes of "right"s?*

Paul says there are two fundamental ways that people walk: by the Spirit or by the flesh. If you walk by the Spirit, you won't do the deeds of the flesh.

Paul lists the deeds (plural) of the flesh and says that those practicing (Greek *prasso*: present active participle) them will not inherit the kingdom of God. The present tense indicates not an isolated act, but a lifestyle that shows the condition of the heart.

By contrast, the nine-fold fruit (singular) of the Spirit includes: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. As Christians, we live by the Spirit and we are commanded to walk by the Spirit.

### **Discussion Questions:**

*How do you guard against antinomian views like "There is no law so we can do whatever we want!" or "Let's sin so that grace may abound!"?*

*What characterizes the deeds of the flesh? Are any of these more of a threat—to our culture, to the church, to you—than others? Explain.*

*Have you noticed the fruit of the Spirit in your life? In the lives of others in your realm of influence?*

### **Wrap-Up Questions:**

*What have been your biggest takeaways this week?*

*How is the truth you're learning changing the way you're thinking and acting?*

# Week Six

## Don't Grow Weary!

### BEFORE CLASS

#### Hot Topics:

How do we live well with others? Galatians 6 has much to say about the “one another” in our lives. And what about persevering in good? Do you ever grow weary of doing good? Are you ever “full of yourself”? Paul addresses these real-life issues as he closes his letter.

#### Class-at-a-Glance

<i>Segments</i>	<i>2 Hour Class</i>	<i>1 Hour Class</i>	<i>Topic</i>
Segment 1:	15 min.	OMIT 10 min.	Review
Segment 2:	30 min.	15 min.	Key Verses
Optional Break	15 min.	OMIT	
Segment 3:	20 min.	10 min.	Galatians 6:1-10
Segment 4:	20 min.	15 min.	
Segment 5:	20 min.	10 min.	Galatians 6:11-18

#### Inductive Focus: Application

Application is always grounded in careful observation and accurate interpretation of a scripture. It always comes out of what the original authors intended to say to their readers.

Sometimes application is believing a truth; other times it's obeying commands like the one to imitate the godly thoughts and actions of others and avoid the ungodly ones.

Application is not an add-on to study. It is the heart of why we study. Through it God conforms us more and more into the image of His Son.

As we bring our study to a close, we'll want to focus on review and application. How can we intentionally live the truths we have learned in Galatians?

**START CLASS HERE**

**SEGMENT #1: Review**

**Review Basic Concepts**

*What are the basic components of Inductive Bible study?*

*Which one did you progress in most during this class? Why?*

*How are you doing with applying what you are learning?*

**Review Questions:**

Briefly summarize:

*Galatians 1*

*Galatians 2*

*Galatians 3*

*Galatians 4*

*Galatians 5*

*Galatians 6*

**SEGMENT #2: Themes and Key Verse**

A great way to remember the content of a particular book of the Bible is to identify a theme or chapter title for each along with a key verse for each. A theme should be memorable and use key words from the text.

Take some time to discuss with your class the Key Verses they identified (for those who did the **One Step Further** on page 114) and the themes they think are appropriate to each chapter. Remember, you'll have some differences of opinion on this. As you discuss use questions and comments as needed to help your students key in on the most important topics and verses.

**THEME / KEY VERSE**

I've put a number of different themes and key verses below that help me remember the content and flow of Galatians. Remember, you may pick other themes/verses and so will your students.

**Galatians 1: Different Gospel/Gospel Contrary**

1:8 – *But even if we, or an angel from heaven, should preach to you a gospel contrary to what we have preached to you, he is to be accursed!*

**Galatians 2: Justified by Faith**

2:16 – *nevertheless knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the Law but through faith in Christ Jesus, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, so that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the Law; since by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified.*

2:20 – *"I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me."*

**Galatians 3: Example of Abraham; Law/Faith; Tutor**

3:18 – *For if the inheritance is based on law, it is no longer based on a promise; but God has granted it to Abraham by means of a promise.*

3:24-25 – *Therefore the Law has become our tutor to lead us to Christ, so that we may be justified by faith. But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor.*

**Galatians 4: Sons and Slaves; Adoption; Bondwoman and Free Woman**

4:4-5 – *But when the fullness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law, so that He might redeem those who were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption as sons.*

4:9 – *But now that you have come to know God, or rather to be known by God, how is it that you turn back again to the weak and worthless elemental things, to which you desire to be enslaved all over again?*

**Galatians 5: Set Free for Freedom; Deeds of the Flesh Versus the Fruit of the Spirit**

5:16 – *But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh.*

5:19 – *“Now the deeds of the flesh are . . . .”*

5:20 – *“But the fruit of the Spirit is . . . .”*

**Galatians 6: Don't Lose Heart**

6:9 – *Let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due time we will reap if we do not grow weary.*

**OPTIONAL BREAK****SEGMENT #3: Galatians 6:1-10**

*[pages 115-119]*

**Key Talk Points:**

- Live well with your brothers and sisters in Christ.
- Don't grow weary in doing good.

**Context/Comments:** With Christ in us we now have the ability to obey, but even among true brothers and sister in the faith, not everyone is going to do this all the time. Because of this, Paul exhorts his “brethren,” those who are “spiritual” (i.e. being led by the Spirit), to restore the trespasser “in a spirit of gentleness [Greek: *prautes*]” which he has just noted in the previous chapter as part of the 9-fold fruit of the Spirit. While the English word has soft connotations, the Greek suggests a proper response. Spiros Zodiatos concludes from Aristotle’s middle of extremes (anger, no anger) that *prautes* is “getting angry at the right time, in the right measure, and for the right reason.”<sup>1</sup> F. Hauck and S. Schulz state that *prautes* “enables the Christian to correct the erring brother without arrogance, impatience, or anger.”<sup>2</sup>

As we’ve seen already in this letter, Paul has not been soft on error. But his goal has always been correction and restoration. He was amazed that some Galatians had turned away from the Gospel. He called them “foolish,” feared he labored in vain, was perplexed by them, but he also called them “brethren” and “my own children” whom he determined to labor for until “Christ was formed in [them]” (4:19).

Paul’s imperative addresses believers and their interactions with one another. First let’s look at the interaction commands:

<sup>1</sup> Zodiatos, Spiros. *The Complete Word Study Dictionary: New Testament*. Chattanooga, TN: AMG Publishers, 2000, p. 1210.

<sup>2</sup> Kittel, Gerhard, Geoffrey W. Bromiley, and Gerhard Friedrich, eds. *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1964–, Volume VI, p. 650.

**“ONE ANOTHER” COMMANDS**

- Restore (mend) in a spirit of gentleness – the idea is to fix, restore, not beat up or beat down
- Bear burdens – Not just put up with, but grab the other end of the log.

While Judaizers wanted to lay burdens on believers, Paul orders the opposite since in bearing one another's burdens we fulfill the law of Christ. Christians are not “law-less.” The Law is written on their hearts (Jeremiah 31:33) and they follow God out of love, not because of external compulsions.

**“MYSELF” COMMANDS**

- Examine your own work – this implies that it's not your business to evaluate everyone else. We are what we are by the grace of Christ.
- Do not be deceived.
- Don't lose heart in doing good.

Paul word plays when he says literally “Let us not do bad in doing good.” The danger here is growing weary (Greek: *ekluo*) but Paul reminds his readers that if they do not grow weary they will reap in due time.

If you have time, have your students cross-reference Hebrews 12:1-3 where we're told how to avoid becoming weary. We do it by fixing our eyes on Jesus: “For consider Him who has endured such hostility by sinners against Himself, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart” (12:3).

**Sample Discussion Questions:**

*What responsibilities do we have to the brethren?*

*Having studied Galatians 6 are there any alterations you need to make in your interactions with the “one another”s in your life?*

*Have you been growing weary in doing good? If so, why? How can Paul's teachings in Galatians help realign your thinking to truth?*

## **SEGMENT #4: Galatians 6:11-18**

*[pages 121-124]*

**Key Talk Points:** • Boast only in the cross!

**Context/Comments:** Down to his final comments, Paul continues to warn about Judaizers who try to compel (Greek: *anankazo*) circumcision. (See also Galatians 2:3 and 2:14.)

They want to make a “good showing in the flesh” and as Paul has just warned in Galatians 5 the flesh wars against the Spirit. While Judaizers want to boast in flesh, Paul’s only boast is in the cross. He lives the Galatians 2:20 life.

### **Final Wrap-Up Questions:**

*How did Paul define the crucified life? What characterized it for him? Are people living it today? In the United States? Around the world?*

*What has been your biggest takeaway from studying Galatians? How is it changing the way you think and act? How will you remember it and live it out?*

*What’s your next step in the Word as this study is coming to a close?*