Galatians to Colossians

Lenny D'Ambrosia

| DATE | BOOK | KEY THOUGHT | CONTENT | KEY LESSONS | JESUS IN THE BOOKS OF THE BIBLE |
|------------|--------------------------------|--|---------|---|------------------------------------|
| | New Testament | | | | |
| | Pauline Epistles | | | | |
| 49 - 50 AD | Galatians 6 Chapters | The new law of Grace is better than the Old Law | | Hold on to the liberty (Freedom) of relationships (trust and love) | Jesus is our very life |

OUTLINE OF GALATIANS

- 1. The gospel under attack in Galatia (Ga. 1: 1-10)
- 2. History of the Old Law vs. grace debate (Ga. 1: 11-2: 21)
- 3. Salvation via faith vs. salvation via works (Ga. 3)
- 4. Slavery vs. sons and heirs of God (Ga. 4)
- 5. Sinful flesh vs. the Holy Spirit (Ga. 5)
- 6. How to do good in Christian community (Ga. 6)

Chapters 1-2 – Paul defends against accusations that he is not a true apostle by explaining his spiritual experience with the gospel and what his life was like before his conversion.

Chapters 3-4 – a group of Jewish Christians convinced many people that faith in Jesus isn't enough. They taught that believers also had to be converted to the Jewish religion and observe all Jewish traditions.

Chapters 5-6 – Paul teaches how to walk by the Spirit. The fruit of the spirit is included in this discussion.

Judaizers, those who sought to make living under the Mosaic Law a requirement of the Christian faith, had gained an influence in the Galatian churches.

The truth of justification by faith rather than by human works was being denied by the <u>Judaizers</u>—legalistic Jews who insisted that Christians must keep the Mosaic Law. In particular, the Judaizers insisted on <u>circumcision</u> as a requirement for Gentiles who wished to be saved. In other words, convert to Judaism *first*, and then you are eligible to become a Christian.

When Paul learned that this heresy was being taught to the Galatian churches, he composed an epistle to emphasize our liberty in Christ and to counter the perversion of the gospel that the Judaizers promoted.

GALATIANS The Law is a tutor that taught us two things:

1. God is holy and expects His people to be holy.

2. We cannot live up to His standards. The Law makes it clear that we need a savior.

The fact that we are justified by grace through faith means we have spiritual freedom.

We are not under bondage to the dictates of the Old Testament Law. Paul soundly condemns anyone who would denigrate the grace of God and attempt to change the gospel (<u>Ga. 1: 8–10</u>).

He gives his apostolic credentials (Ga. 1: 11-2: 14) and emphasizes that righteousness comes through Christ, not the works of the Law (Ga. 2: 21).

The Galatians must stand fast in their freedom and not be "entangled again with a yoke of bondage (that is, the Mosaic law)" (Ga. 5: 1).

Christian freedom is not an excuse to gratify our sinful nature; rather, our freedom is an opportunity to love one another (<u>Ga. 5: 13; 6: 7–10</u>).

The Christian life is to be lived in the power of the Spirit, not the flesh (Ga. 5: 16-21).

The <u>flesh</u> has been crucified with Christ (<u>Ga. 2: 20</u>); as a consequence, the Spirit will bear <u>His fruit</u> in the life of the believer (<u>Ga. 5: 22–23</u>).

In the end, the issue is not whether a person is circumcised but whether he is a "new creation" (Ga. 6: 15).

Salvation is the work of the Spirit, and we must be born again.

Old Law rites, such as circumcision, are of no value in the realm of the Spirit.

Deeds of the Flesh

Ga. 5: 19-21

19 Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are: immorality, impurity, sensuality,

20 idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions,

21 envying, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these, of which I forewarn you, just as I have forewarned you, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

Fruit of the Spirit

Ga. 5: 22-23

22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,

23 gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.

Galatians explains the believer's new relationship with God.

- We're freed from sin.
- We're freed from the Law.
- We're adopted as children of God.
- We're counted as spiritual children of Abraham, whether we're Jews or Gentiles.
- We're all empowered by the Holy Spirit to do good works, something sin prevented us from doing.
- Christ's death is important, and Paul won't let anyone forget it.

1. There Is Only One Gospel

One of the problems the Galatian church faced was this group of Judaizers that was attempting to redefine or add something to the gospel.

You need to know and be certain that the work Christ did on the cross is allsufficient for your salvation. There is nothing else needed for your salvation.

If anyone attempts to add anything to the Gospel, then they are no longer preaching the gospel. If they are not preaching the true gospel, they are not preaching the gospel at all.

Ga. 1: 6-8

6 I am amazed that you are so quickly deserting Him who called you by the grace of Christ, for a different gospel;

7 which is *really* not another; only there are some who are disturbing you and want to distort the gospel of Christ.

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!

2. Don't Be Afraid to Confront Leaders When They Are Wrong.

Peter wouldn't eat with the Gentiles anymore. He was afraid of criticism from those people who insisted on the necessity of circumcision. As a result, other Jewish believers followed Peter's hypocrisy, and even Barnabas was led astray by their hypocrisy.

Paul had no issue confronting him when he was wrong. You have the same right. You should never be intimidated by a person's title. If they are wrong, they are wrong. It doesn't matter if they are pastor, bishop, minister, evangelist, whatever the title, don't be afraid to confront those who are wrong according to Biblical standards.

Ga. 2: 11-13

11 But when Cephas came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face, because he stood condemned.

12 For prior to the coming of certain men from James, he used to eat with the Gentiles; but when they came, he *began* to withdraw and hold himself aloof, fearing the party of the circumcision.

13 The rest of the Jews joined him in hypocrisy, with the result that even Barnabas was carried away by their hypocrisy.

3. You Cannot Live by the Law and by **Faith** at the Same Time

The struggle of the Galatian church was the confusion caused by the Judaizers.

One thing you must remember is that you cannot live by the Law and by faith at the same time. They are opposites of each other.

Your salvation is a work of grace through faith and your walk with God after that is a continuing work of grace through faith.

Ga. 3: 1-3

1 You foolish Galatians, who has bewitched you, before whose eyes Jesus Christ was publicly portrayed as crucified?
2 This is the only thing I want to find out from you: did you receive the Spirit by the works of the Law, or by hearing with faith?
3 Are you so foolish? Having begun by the Spirit, are you now being perfected by the flesh?

4. Christians Must Live by Faith. Ga. 3: 11 11 Now that no one is justified by the Law before God is evident; for, "The righteous man shall live by faith."

Any compromise with the Old Law or the mixture of human effort and the grace of God for salvation leads to heresy. If we could be saved through the keeping of the Law, then Jesus did not need to die.

Ga. 2: 21

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

Trying to save ourselves nullifies grace.

5. Your Traditions May Be Killing You

If you were honest about your condition before you were saved, you would recognize that you were a slave to different things. After you were saved, you became a different type of slave. You shifted your allegiance from slavery to sin, to slavery to righteousness.

How many people are caught up in church traditions or other traditions and do things with no knowledge or understanding of why they do them? This was also one of the major lessons from Galatians, trying to set you free from earthly tradition.

Ga. 4: 8-9

8 However at that time, when you did not know God, you were slaves to those which by nature are no gods.

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?

False teaching brought to the Galatian churches by the Judaizers was extremely difficult to root out. Similar situations even exist today.

Christians must walk a fine line. On one hand, we do not want to fall into the legalism that the Galatians struggled with, but on the other, Christians cannot just live as if anything goes.

The Christian's commitment to Christ is based on the free gift of grace through faith. Paul articulated that in Galatians. It also results in a life of walking by the Spirit.

Use Paul's words in Galatians as an encouragement to pursue a life of holiness, not by your own strength, but by the knowledge of God's empowering grace in your life.

| DATE | BOOK New Testament | KEY THOUGHT | CONTENT | KEY LESSONS | JESUS IN THE BOOKS OF THE BIBLE |
|------------|--------------------------------|-------------|--|-------------|---------------------------------------|
| | Daulius Frietlas | | | | |
| | Pauline Epistles | | | | |
| 60 - 62 AD | Ephesians 6 Chapters | The Church | The believer's relationship to Jesus and how the church is to function are described. | nrangrad ta | Jesus secures the unity of the church |

Outline of Ephesians

- Eph. 1 God's Plan and Spiritual Blessings
- Eph. 2 Life and Reconciliation in Christ
- Eph. 3 You Need to be Rooted in Christ's Love
- Eph. 4: 1 5: 20 Your Identity in Christ and Your Behavior
- Eph. 5: 21 6: 9 Living God's Way in Your Relationships

Eph. 6: 10 – 24 – Spiritual Attacks and the Armor of God

Chapters 1-3 - Paul encourages believers, calling them "adopted sons" of God.

God's plan to save those who believe on His Son existed before the foundation of the world.

Paul explains the purpose of God's wisdom in revealing the mystery of Christ (Eph. 3: 10).

Chapters 4-5 – Paul encourages them to walk in a manner worthy of their calling. He shares principles regarding our present existence.

Chapter 6 – Paul encourages the saints to put on the full armor of God. He presents principles concerning our daily struggle.

The Book of Ephesians emphasizes the connection between sound doctrine and right practices in the Christian life.

Ephesians deals with topics at the very core of what it means to be a Christian, both in faith and in practice, regardless of any problem we encounter.

Paul expected that the Christians follow certain practices in their relationships within the church, in the home and in the world. In order to live out God's will for us in our lives, we need to follow his teachings.

The book of Ephesians hits on a wide range of moral and ethical behaviors, designed to ensure believers are living up to our heavenly calling. As we continue in our faith from day to day, month to month, and year to year, the temptation to get comfortable will always exist. Paul presented the gift of God in Christ and the benefits we receive so clearly.

Spiritual growth in our Christian life occurs in the church with other believers. Our Christian "walk" is to be characterized by unity, holiness, love, wisdom and perseverance is spiritual warfare.

Maturity yields benefits in believers' moral lives. Increased maturity benefits the church, leading us as Christians to present a more consistent witness to the working of God in our lives as well as protecting us from the harmful divisions and quarrels that have plagued so many churches throughout history.

In the book of Ephesians, Paul provides teaching on salvation, reconciliation, the nature of God's family, and Christian identity.

Paul's goal for all of this teaching was to encourage and energize believers in their faith.

Paul's writing remains relevant today, because even thousands of years later, believers still need encouragement in their faith. His teachings continue to provide believers assurance in their faith and confidence in their inclusion in God's family.

The truths of the Gospel haven't changed and therefore Paul's teachings still help us get to know God better, to better understand what He has done for us, and to better understand the implications these truths have for how we live our lives.

Paul's wisdom provides guidance for living faithfully in both the physical and spiritual realm. He understands the devil is at work and teaches believers how to fortify their faith against the devil's threats so they can confidently trust that God is in total control. This gives Christians strength to persevere.

1. Ephesians reminds us of our ultimate hope.

Paul calls believers to know this only true hope: being found in Christ. In Christ we have redemption, forgiveness, and a glorious inheritance – we are adopted into the family of God so that we might gain access to the rich spiritual blessings only found in the heavenly places. Only in Christ can we find the ultimate solution to our problems and the source of eternal joy.

Eph. 1: 7-12

7 In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace

8 which He lavished on us. In all wisdom and insight

9 He made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His kind intention which He purposed in Him

10 with a view to an administration suitable to the fullness of the times, *that is*, the summing up of all things in Christ, things in the heavens and things on the earth. In Him 11 also we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to His purpose who works all things after the counsel of His will,

12 to the end that we who were the first to hope in Christ would be to the praise of His glory.

2. Ephesians reminds us of the root of all our problems.

People who are spiritually dead in their trespasses and sins are physically alive and free to roam this world.

Eph. 2: 1-2

1 And you were dead in your trespasses and sins,
2 in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience.

The problems in this world which can bother or even enrage us only exist because they are deeply rooted in our sins. Only God's grace can resurrect us, making us alive together with Christ. 27

3. Ephesians reminds us of the source of our unity.

Our hearts grieve over the division in our country and the world. Dividing lines are constantly drawn based upon race, sex, economic status, and political party affiliation. Even in the church, personal opinions and preferences continue to build dividing walls.

Ephesians reminds us that the church family can only be united because we have one Father. Paul implores believers to show tolerance for one another in love, being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

Eph. 4: 2-6

2 with all humility and gentleness, with patience, showing tolerance for one another in love,

3 being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

4 There is one body and one Spirit, just as also you were called in one hope of your calling;

5 one Lord, one faith, one baptism,

6 one God and Father of all who is over all and through all and in all.

4. Ephesians reminds us that the home encourages change.

Paul reminds us that our marriages should be public displays of the faithful and sacrificial love Christ has for the Church.

Eph. 5: 22-23

22 Wives, be subject to your own husbands, as to the Lord.
23 For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the church, He Himself being the Savior of the body.

Paul charges us that the gospel should dramatically impact how we treat our children and parents.

Eph. 6: 1-4

1 Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right.

2 Honor your father and mother (which is the first commandment with a promise),

3 so that it may be well with you, and that you may live long on the earth.
 4 Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.

4. Ephesians reminds us that the home encourages change.

Paul also declares to believers that the workplace is no place to take a break from living a godly life.

Eph. 6: 5-9

5 Slaves, be obedient to those who are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in the sincerity of your heart, as to Christ;

- 6 not by way of eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but as slaves of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart.
- 7 With good will render service, as to the Lord, and not to men,
 8 knowing that whatever good thing each one does, this he will receive back from the Lord, whether slave or free.
- **9** And masters, do the same things to them, and give up threatening, knowing that both their Master and yours is in heaven, and there is no partiality with Him.

The gospel transforms all of our relationships, starting in the heart and then the home. 30

5. Ephesians reminds us of our true enemy.

Satan wants nothing more than to distract and occupy us with the scrimmages of preferences and politics so that we are too busy for battle against sin and darkness. Paul calls us to know our enemy, put on our spiritual armor, stand guard, and persist in prayer to the Lord of Hosts.

Eph, 6: 12-18

12 For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual *forces* of wickedness in the heavenly *places*.

13 Therefore, take up the full armor of God, so that you will be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm.

14 Stand firm therefore, having girded your loins with truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness,

15 and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace;

16 in addition to all, taking up the shield of faith with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one.

17 And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

18 With all prayer and petition pray at all times in the Spirit, and with this in view, be on the alert with all perseverance and petition for all the saints,

Ephesians reminds us that the gospel is far from merely a theological treatise or a ticket to heaven that we can put in our back pocket; rather, it is a new walk of life and transforms relationships.

If we are saved by grace, we need to be walking in love.

Keep living the redeemed life in the power of the Spirit.

Be encouraged by studying and applying the book of Ephesians. 32

PHILIPPIANS

| DATE | BOOK | KEY THOUGHT | CONTENT | KEY LESSONS | JESUS IN THE BOOKS OF THE BIBLE |
|------------|----------------------------------|------------------|---|--|------------------------------------|
| | New Testament | | | | |
| | Pauline Epistles | | | | |
| 60 - 62 AD | Philippians 4 Chapters | Be like Jesus | This is a challenge to Christians to think, behave and have the attitude of Christ. | Being completely devoted to Christ is joy. | Jesus is the joy of our life |

Outline of Philippians

Introduction, 1:1-7

- I. Christ the Christian's Life: Rejoicing while Suffering, 1:8-30
- II. Christ the Christian's Pattern: Rejoicing in Lowly Service, 2:1-30
- III. Christ the Object of the Christian's Faith, Desire, and Expectation, 3:1-21
- IV. Christ the Christian's Strength: Rejoicing Through Anxiety, 4:1-9
- Conclusion, 4:10-23



PHILIPPIANS

Philippians is a letter of thanks to the saints for supporting his ministry and comfort while he is in prison.

Paul warns the saints at Philippi that they had to suffer, just as he is suffering and as Jesus suffered. But whatever they endure will be worth the price. The reward is eternity with Christ.

PHILIPPIANS

Philippians can be called "Resources Through Suffering."

It was written during Paul's imprisonment in Rome, about thirty years after Christ's ascension and about ten years after Paul first preached at Philippi.

Phil. 2: 5-11



Paul was Nero's prisoner, yet the epistle fairly shouts with triumph, the words "joy" and "rejoice" appearing frequently.

(<u>Phil. 1: 4, 18, 25, 26; 2:2, 28; Phil. 3: 1, 4:1, 4, 10</u>).

Christian experience is the outworking, whatever our circumstances may be, of the life, nature, and mind of Christ living in them (Phil. 1: 6, 11; 2: 5, 13).

Philippians reaches its pinnacle at Phil. 2: 5-11 with the glorious and profound declaration regarding the humiliation and exaltation of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Philippians is one of Paul's most personal letters, and as such it has several personal applications to believers. Written during his imprisonment in Rome, Paul exhorts the Philippians to follow his example and be "encouraged to speak the word of God more courageously and fearlessly" during times of persecution.

Phil. 1: 14

All Christians have experienced, at one time or another, the animosity of unbelievers against the gospel of Christ. This is to be expected. Jesus said that the world hated Him and it will hate His followers as well.

Jn. 15: 18

Paul exhorts us to persevere in the face of persecution, to "stand firm in one spirit, contending as one man for the faith of the gospel".

Phil. 1: 27

The book of Philippians shows Christians are to be united in humility. Christians are united with Christ and need to strive to be united to one another in the same way.

Another application of the book Philippians is that of the joy and rejoicing which are found throughout his letter. He rejoices that Christ is being proclaimed (1: 8).

Paul rejoices in his persecution (2: 18); he exhorts others to rejoice in the Lord (3: 1); and he refers to the Philippian brothers as his "joy and crown" (4:1).

He sums up with this exhortation to believers: "Rejoice in the Lord always; again, I say Rejoice" (4: 4-7).

PHILIPPIANS The book of Philippians is about Christ:

- 1. In the life of a Christian
- 2. In the mind of a Christian
- 3. As the goal of the Christian
- 4. As the strength of the Christian
- 5. As the Christian's joy through suffering.

LESSONS FROM PHILIPPIANS 1. Love

The power of love to help us grow is expressed eloquently and profoundly.

With love abounding and growth in knowledge and discernment, we are purified and can see the things that are consistent with the Kingdom of God and his values and character.

A prayer for more love is appropriate for all of us to express regularly. We truly need more of God's love flowing through our lives.

Phil. 1: 9-11

LESSONS FROM PHILIPPIANS 2. Humility

One of the greatest problems in the church today is the problem of pride. Christians simply think too highly of ourselves. Christians believe they have all the answers and talk as if our opinions are sacred gospel. Christians resist repentance (change) because they don't think they have done anything wrong. Repentance is necessary for growth and doesn't necessarily reflect sin is essential for healthy living.

Phil. 2: 5-8

LESSONS FROM PHILIPPIANS 3. Priority

We tend to cling too tenaciously to things that do not matter. We lean towards the temporal instead of the eternal. It is the way we think and act.

It is wise of us when we repent of these attitudes and embrace Jesus. The things of God will last eternally. All the glory and wealth of this world fades away.

LESSONS FROM PHILIPPIANS Phil.3: 7-11

LESSONS FROM PHILIPPIANS 4. Thought Life

- Christians are besieged by negativity every day. There is constant division and discord. There is suffering and uncertainty, bad news and pessimistic outlooks.
- Give thanks. Discipline your mind to turn to the positive instead of the destructive!
- Phil. 4: 8

LESSONS FROM PHILIPPIANS

5. Sufficiency

When Christians are following Jesus, they have confidence that He will see them through their most difficult days. His presence strengthens Christians to face their greatest challenges.

Phil. 4: 11-13



6. Rejoice

So much about Philippians is about rejoicing. Paul was in prison when he wrote this, yet he could rejoice. Christians are to find a reason to rejoice!

Phil. 3: 1

Christians have much to be thankful for in their lives.

The pace and the pressure of life often squeeze the joy from them.

Desperate, Christians often search for joy in all kinds of ways—acquiring possessions, visiting places, or seeing people. None of these can provide lasting joy. 50

Paul knew, as did the Philippians, that true joy comes only through humble faith in the saving work of Jesus Christ, joining ourselves in harmony with His followers, and serving others in the name of Christ. This was the life experienced by the Philippian believers, and it is a life available to us today.

Allow the joy you find in Christ to keep you from useless quarrels and divisions and to instead guide you into harmonious relationships with God's people. 51

52

53

| DATE | BOOK New Testament Pauline Epistles | KEY THOUGHT | CONTENT | KEY LESSONS | JESUS IN THE BOOKS OF THE BIBLE |
|------------|--|----------------|---|-------------------------------|--|
| 60 - 62 AD | Colossians 4 Chapters | Christ is | The preeminence of Christ is presented. All believers are challenged to submit to Jesus. | Set your mind on Christ | Jesus holds the supreme position in all things |

In Colossians Paul defends the authority of Jesus and warn against the spiritual practices which are not of God.

Paul teaches the people about love. If Christians put on the love of Christ they will stop getting distracted by false doctrines.

Paul encourages the Colossian saints how to live at home, how to manage family matters and how to get along with other believers on Christ.

Col. 1: 16

16 For by Him all things were created, *both* in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things have been created through Him and for Him.

Col. 2: 9-10

9 For in Him all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form,

10 and in Him you have been made complete, and He is the head over all rule and authority; 56

Col. 3: 12-14

12 So, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience;

13 bearing with one another, and forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you.

14 Beyond all these things *put on* love, which is the perfect bond of unity.

Col 3: 17

17 Whatever you do in word or deed, *do* all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to God the Father.

The Book of Colossians contains doctrinal instruction about the deity of Christ and false philosophies (1:15-2:23), as well as practical exhortations regarding Christian conduct, including friends and speech (3:1-4:18).

As with all the early churches, the issue of Jewish legalism in Colosse was of great concern to Paul. So radical was the concept of salvation by grace apart from works that those steeped in Old Testament law found it very difficult to grasp.

There was a continual movement among the legalists to add certain requirements from the law to this new faith. Primary among them was the requirement of circumcision which was still practiced among some of the Jewish converts.

COLOSSIANS Paul countered this error in Colossians 2:11-15 in which he declares that circumcision of the flesh was no longer necessary because Christ had come. His was a circumcision of the heart, not the flesh, making the ceremonial rites of the Old Testament law no longer necessary (Deut.10:16, 30:6; Jer.4:4, 9:26; Acts7:51 Romans 2:29).

Paul addresses many areas, the basic application for us today is the total and complete sufficiency of Christ in our lives, both for our salvation and our sanctification. We must know and understand the gospel so as not to be led astray by subtle forms of legalism and heresy. We must be on guard for any deviation that would diminish the centrality of Christ as Lord and Savior. 60

Christianity is a family, a way of life, and a relationship—not a religion. Good deeds, astrology, occultism and horoscopes do not show us God's ways. Only Christ does. His will is revealed in His word, His love letter to us; we must get to know it!