

Outline of the Book of Galatians

The book of Galatians is a vigorous defense of the gospel of grace against the infiltration of legalism. Paul emphasizes the freedom that comes from faith in Christ and the dangers of turning back to a works-based righteousness. Below is an exhaustive outline of Galatians, highlighting the dangers facing believers.

I. Introduction (1:1-10)

- A. Salutation (1:1-5)
 - 1. Paul's apostleship and greeting (1:1-2)
 - 2. Christ's sacrifice and deliverance (1:3-5)
- B. Astonishment and Warning (1:6-10)
 - 1. Paul's astonishment at the Galatians' desertion (1:6-7)
 - 2. Warning against perverting the gospel (1:8-9)
 - 3. Paul's commitment to pleasing God, not man (1:10)

II. Paul's Defense of His Apostleship and Gospel (1:11-2:21)

- A. Divine Origin of Paul's Gospel (1:11-24)
 - 1. Revelation from Jesus Christ (1:11-12)
 - 2. Paul's former life in Judaism (1:13-14)
 - 3. Call and conversion (1:15-17)
 - 4. Early ministry and meeting with Peter (1:18-24)
- B. Affirmation by the Jerusalem Apostles (2:1-10)
 - 1. Visit to Jerusalem and meeting with leaders (2:1-2)
 - 2. Titus not compelled to be circumcised (2:3-5)
 - 3. Recognition of Paul's ministry (2:6-10)
- C. Confrontation with Peter (2:11-14)
 - 1. Peter's hypocrisy in Antioch (2:11-13)
 - 2. Paul's public rebuke of Peter (2:14)
- D. Justification by Faith (2:15-21)
 - 1. Jews justified by faith, not by works (2:15-16)
 - 2. Living by faith in the Son of God (2:17-21)

III. The Doctrine of Justification by Faith (3:1-4:31)

- A. The Galatians' Experience of Faith (3:1-5)
 - 1. Receiving the Spirit by faith (3:1-5)
- B. Abraham's Example of Faith (3:6-14)
 - 1. Abraham's belief counted as righteousness (3:6-9)
 - 2. The curse of the law and Christ's redemption (3:10-14)
- C. The Law and the Promise (3:15-29)
 - 1. The law given after the promise (3:15-18)
 - 2. Purpose of the law (3:19-22)

- 3. Sons of God through faith in Christ (3:23-29)
- D. Heirs According to the Promise (4:1-7)
 - 1. Full rights as sons (4:1-5)
 - 2. Spirit of adoption and heirs (4:6-7)
- E. Paul's Concern for the Galatians (4:8-20)
 - 1. Turning back to weak principles (4:8-11)
 - 2. Paul's personal appeal (4:12-20)
- F. Allegory of Hagar and Sarah (4:21-31)
 - 1. Two covenants represented by Hagar and Sarah (4:21-26)
 - 2. Children of the promise like Isaac (4:27-31)

IV. Practical Application of Christian Liberty (5:1-6:10)

- A. Freedom in Christ (5:1-15)
 - 1. Stand firm in freedom (5:1)
 - 2. Warning against circumcision and legalism (5:2-6)
 - 3. The danger of false teachers (5:7-12)
 - 4. The call to love and serve one another (5:13-15)
- B. Life in the Spirit (5:16-26)
 - 1. Walking by the Spirit vs. gratifying the flesh (5:16-18)
 - 2. Acts of the flesh vs. fruit of the Spirit (5:19-23)
 - 3. Living and keeping in step with the Spirit (5:24-26)
- C. Bearing One Another's Burdens (6:1-10)
 - 1. Restoring a sinning brother (6:1)
 - 2. Bearing burdens and fulfilling the law of Christ (6:2-5)
 - 3. Sharing all good things with instructors (6:6)
 - 4. Sowing and reaping (6:7-8)
 - 5. Encouragement to do good (6:9-10)

V. Conclusion (6:11-18)

- A. Paul's Final Warning and Benediction (6:11-18)
 - 1. Paul's personal note (6:11)
 - 2. Contrast between boasting in the flesh and the cross (6:12-15)
 - 3. Peace and mercy to those who follow this rule (6:16)
 - 4. Paul's closing marks of Jesus (6:17-18)

Dangers Facing the Believer Highlighted in Galatians

1. Deserting the True Gospel (1:6-9):

- **Danger:** Turning to a different gospel, which is no gospel at all.
- **Application:** Hold firmly to the gospel of grace and resist teachings that add works to salvation.

2. Seeking Approval from Man (1:10):

- **Danger:** Compromising the gospel to please people.
- **Application:** Aim to please God above all, staying true to the message of Christ.

3. Legalism and Bondage to the Law (2:16; 3:1-5):

- **Danger:** Reverting to a works-based righteousness, nullifying the grace of Christ.
- **Application:** Understand that justification comes through faith in Jesus Christ, not by observing the law.

4. Hypocrisy in Christian Living (2:11-14):

- **Danger:** Hypocritical behavior that contradicts the truth of the gospel.
- **Application:** Live consistently with the gospel, showing unity and integrity in actions.

5. Turning Back to Weak and Miserable Principles (4:8-11):

- **Danger:** Returning to former ways of life and practices that enslave.
- **Application:** Embrace the freedom in Christ and avoid returning to legalistic or pagan practices.

6. False Teachers and False Doctrine (5:7-12):

- **Danger:** Being led astray by those who pervert the gospel.
- **Application:** Stay vigilant against false teachings and maintain the purity of the gospel.

7. Misusing Christian Liberty (5:13-15):

- **Danger:** Using freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, leading to division and destruction.
- **Application:** Use liberty to serve one another in love, fulfilling the law of Christ.

8. Living by the Flesh (5:16-21):

- **Danger:** Engaging in acts of the sinful nature, which prevent inheriting the kingdom of God.
- **Application:** Walk by the Spirit, producing the fruit of the Spirit, and rejecting the desires of the flesh.

9. Neglecting Community Responsibilities (6:1-10):

- **Danger:** Failing to bear one another's burdens and restore those caught in sin.
- **Application:** Practice mutual care and support within the Christian community, doing good to all.

10. Boasting in the Flesh (6:12-15):

- **Danger:** Seeking to impress others through external religious practices.
- **Application:** Boast only in the cross of Christ, recognizing that new creation in Christ is what counts.

Well-known Passages from Galatians

[Galatians 2:17-21 ESV] But if, in our endeavor to be justified in Christ, we too were found to be sinners, is Christ then a servant of sin? Certainly not! For if I rebuild what I tore down, I prove myself to be a transgressor. For through the law I died to the law, so that I might live to God. I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. I do not nullify the grace of God, for if righteousness were through the law, then Christ died for no purpose.

[Galatians 3:24-29 ESV] So then, the law was our guardian until Christ came, in order that we might be justified by faith. But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a guardian, for in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise.

[Galatians 5:18-23 ESV] But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law. Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.

[Galatians 6:1-5 ESV] Brothers, if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness. Keep watch on yourself, lest you too be tempted. Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ. For if anyone thinks he is something, when he is nothing, he deceives himself. But let each one test his own work, and then his reason to boast will be in himself alone and not in his neighbor. For each will have to bear his own load.

[Galatians 6:6-10 ESV] Let the one who is taught the word share all good things with the one who teaches. Do not be deceived: God is not mocked, for whatever one sows, that will he also reap. For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life. And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up. So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone, and especially to those who are of the household of faith.

Conclusion for Galatians

By understanding these dangers and applying Paul's corrective teachings, believers can maintain their freedom in Christ, live by the Spirit, and foster a community marked by love, truth, and mutual support.