Galatians

Expectations

1. Read book of Galatians
2. Memorize some key Scriptures (Gal2:19-20)

 Goals

1. Gain background knowledge of Book of Galatians
2. Discuss and articulate the central themes in Galatians
3. Understand the historical context of the book and its importance to the development of Christianity
4. Grow closer to God because of this understanding

AUTHOR: There can be no doubt that Paul is the author of this book. Not only is it reflective of the ideas and themes that are common in Pauline theology (ex: righteousness by grace through faith in Christ, the flesh versus the Spirit, not by works of the law, etc.) but Paul clearly states his authorship (Gal1:1) and shares his personal testimony. The primitive church accepted Paul as the author of Galatians. Scholars agree that it is one of Paul’s earliest writings.

PURPOSE: Paul is writing to exhort the young church not to forget the original and only gospel that Paul taught them. (Gal1:6-8) Paul goes on to explain why the gospel he taught them did not need any additions in order to save them.

DATE: The date for its penning has been hotly debated over the centuries. Some place the date after Paul’s first missionary journey to the Galatian region (Acts14) and before the Jerusalem council (Acts15:1-15). This is called the South Galatian view. This view holds that Paul wrote Galatians before or shortly after the First Jerusalem Council, possibly on his way to it, and that it was written to churches he had presumably planted during either his time in Tarsus (he would have traveled a short distance, since Tarsus is in Cilicia next to the Galatian region) after his first visit to Jerusalem as a Christian, or during his first missionary journey, when he traveled throughout southern Galatia. If it was written to the believers in South Galatia, it would likely have been written in 49 A.D. Some place the date of the book at a later date after Paul’s second missionary journey to the Galatian region. (Acts15:36, 16:1-6) The North Galatian view holds that the epistle was written very soon after Paul's second visit to Galatia (Acts 18:23). In this view, the visit to Jerusalem, mentioned in Galatians 2:1-10, identical with that of Acts 15, which is spoken of as a thing of the past. Consequently, the epistle seems to have been written after the Council of Jerusalem. The similarity between this epistle and the epistle to the Romans has led to the conclusion that they were both written at roughly the same time, during Paul's stay in Macedonia in roughly 56–57A.D. Therefore, it is debated as to whether this book was written in the late 40s A.D. or later in the 50s A.D.



OUTLINE:

1. Greetings and One Gospel (1:1-10)
2. Paul’s Testimony (1:11-2:16)
3. Saved by Faith in Christ not the Law (2:17-5:12)
4. Freedom in the Spirit vs living by the Flesh (5:13-26)
5. Christian counsel (6:1-10)
6. Farewell (6:11-18)

THEMES: The Law is Dead, The True Gospel, Living by the Spirit

CHAPTER 1

V1 Paul makes it very clear that his apostleship did not come about by

 human commission. This plays a central role in the rest of the epistle.

V2 Paul sends the letter to the churches of Galatia. Where were the

 churches of Galatia? (Iconium, Lystra, Derbe, Pisidian Antioch-

 Acts13:14-14:25)



V3-10 Paul usually expresses thanksgiving to God following a salutation

 (See Rom1:8, 1Cor1:4, 2Cor1:3, Eph1:3, Phil1:3, Col1:3, 1Thes1:2,

 2Thes1:3, Philemon4, 1Tim1:12, 2Tim1:3). Galatians and Titus are

 the exceptions. This lack of thanksgiving in Galatians is possibly

 due to the urgency Paul felt for the Galatians’ abandonment of the

 “free” Gospel. No one would think of calling this “gospel” a

 gospel at all because it just led back to bondage to the law.

V11-17 Paul begins to defend his version of the Gospel. Paul calls his

 version of the Gospel the “revelation from Jesus Christ (v.12).”

 What is Paul referring to? Let us go to Acts7:57-8:3; Acts9:1-30.

 The Damascus road experience was directly from Jesus. In other

 places, Paul says that what he received from Christ (1Cor11:23,

 1Cor15:8) he passed on to others. He also states in other places

 that what he teaches is consistent in every church (1Cor4:17).

**Paul knew what it was like to be under the bondage of the law. For he was an ex-pharisee and had tried to live by the law. Following the law was what blinded him to the arrival of the Messiah and caused him to persecute the church! There is no way that Paul was going to allow the law to be the basis for drawing close to God. Paul’s conversion was completely based on grace. For was it not the law that got Paul into trouble with Jesus? If Paul was able to convert based on grace outside of the law, then so would the Gentiles.**

What were the judaizers teaching? Acts15:1-5

The Council at Jerusalem

[**1**](http://biblehub.com/acts/15-1.htm)Certain people came down from Judea to Antioch and were teaching the believers: “Unless you are circumcised, according to the custom taught by Moses, you cannot be saved.” [**2**](http://biblehub.com/acts/15-2.htm)This brought Paul and Barnabas into sharp dispute and debate with them. So Paul and Barnabas were appointed, along with some other believers, to go up to Jerusalem to see the apostles and elders about this question. [**3**](http://biblehub.com/acts/15-3.htm)The church sent them on their way, and as they traveled through Phoenicia and Samaria, they told how the Gentiles had been converted. This news made all the believers very glad. [**4**](http://biblehub.com/acts/15-4.htm)When they came to Jerusalem, they were welcomed by the church and the apostles and elders, to whom they reported everything God had done through them. [**5**](http://biblehub.com/acts/15-5.htm)Then some of the believers who belonged to the party of the Pharisees stood up and said, “The Gentiles must be circumcised and required to keep the law of Moses.”

How did the elders respond to the judaizers teaching? Acts15:22-27

The Council’s Letter to Gentile Believers

[**22**](http://biblehub.com/acts/15-22.htm)Then the apostles and elders, with the whole church, decided to choose some of their own men and send them to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas. They chose Judas (called Barsabbas) and Silas, men who were leaders among the believers. [**23**](http://biblehub.com/acts/15-23.htm)With them they sent the following letter:

The apostles and elders, your brothers,

To the Gentile believers in Antioch, Syria and Cilicia:

Greetings.

[**24**](http://biblehub.com/acts/15-24.htm)We have heard that some went out from us without our authorization and disturbed you, troubling your minds by what they said. [**25**](http://biblehub.com/acts/15-25.htm)So we all agreed to choose some men and send them to you with our dear friends Barnabas and Paul— [**26**](http://biblehub.com/acts/15-26.htm)men who have risked their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. [**27**](http://biblehub.com/acts/15-27.htm)Therefore we are sending Judas and Silas to confirm by word of mouth what we are writing. [**28**](http://biblehub.com/acts/15-28.htm)It seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us not to burden you with anything beyond the following requirements: [**29**](http://biblehub.com/acts/15-29.htm)You are to abstain from food sacrificed to idols, from blood, from the meat of strangled animals and from sexual immorality. You will do well to avoid these things.

Farewell.

Recall that Paul was a Pharisee by training (Phil3:5ff, Acts23:6; 26:5)

What was Pharisee training like? “Pharisee” means set apart. Paul possibly meant this in the Isaiah49:1-6 sense.

Oral Law of Pharisee was the tradition that was a product of rabbinic teaching. Pharisee were trained in that they studied a lot and spend time learning the oral tradition of the teachers. The idea was that the oral tradition came from Moses and was the teaching about how to follow the Torah.

Sadducees used only the Torah. They were also born into the ranks of this group. They were of the priestly lineage. Acts22:3, 1Cor14:12, Tit2:14, 1Pet3:13 Zealots for the Law, Phil3:5, Acts23:6, Acts26:5

V15-17 The language of Paul, that he was chosen from his mother’s womb (at birth), is reminiscent of the O.T. prophets like Jeremiah (Jer1:5) and Isaiah (Is49:1-6). Acts 13:47 Paul and Barnabas use this very Scripture to describe their mission. This was assuredly inspired by his Damascus road experience (2Cor11:32). Christ shined not only in front but also inside of Paul—like a sudden flash of genius, not just an outward but also an inward experience as well. For Paul, the outward and inward experience coincided.

“Paul speaks in 2 Cor4:4 of ‘seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God,’ and goes on to say that God ‘has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ’ (2Cor4:6), his choice of words was probably based on his Damascus road vision. If so, he saw ‘Jesus our Lord’ then in the form which identified him not only as the Son of God but also as the image of God, the reflexion of the divine glory.” (Bruce, 1982, p.93) Paul said that ‘he [Christ] let himself be seen (1Cor15:5-8).

This reminds me of Hebrews1:3a Jesus as the radiance of God’s glory.

For comparison we can see Isaiah cleaned and commissioned at the same time (Is6:1-9) during his vision. Ezekiel (Ezekiel 1:4) saw the divine glory in a vision in the form of a son of man (Ez1:26).

Paul’s commission as an apostle is tied up in having seen the Lord 1Cor9:1

V17. 2Cor11:32-33, Acts 9:3, Acts 22:6, 26:12f

I did not go up to Jerusalem to see those who were apostles before I was, but I went into Arabia. Later I returned to Damascus.

Arabia – The Nabataean kingdom founded in the 2nd century BC with its capital at Petra. The Nabataean king at the time of Paul’s conversion was Aretas IV (9 BC - AD 40). Aretas IV was at odds with Herod Antipas, tetrarch of Galilee and Peraea (4 BC – AD 39) because of the insult offered his family some years earlier when Antipas divorced Aretas’ daughter so as to be free to marry Herodias (Josephus., Ant. 18.109-115). (Bruce, 1982, p96).

V18-24. Acts9:26-30



CHAPTER 2

V1-10. This passage has been correlated to various events in the Book of Acts (11:30,

 Acts15:1ff, Acts18:22). Paul is saying that this gospel is essentially the same gospel

 that Peter and the others were preaching (1Cor15:3-7)

V10. Paul was in the habit of gathering funds for relief of the saints in need in Jerusalem.

 (Acts24:17, 1Cor16:1-3, 2Cor16:1, 2Cor8:4, 2Cor9:1, Rom15:26)

V11-14 When did this confrontation between Peter and Paul take place in Antioch? Scholars

 are not sure, however, it would seem to make sense that it took place before the

 Jerusalem council (Acts15) because Peter’s withdrawal of fellowship would have

 been contrary to his decision during the Jerusalem council.

Some scholars have theorized that the desire to have Gentile Christians circumcised may have been prompted by various motivations:

1. An honest desire by brothers who were Pharisees to have Gentile Christians saved.

Acts15:1-5

1. A desire on the part of some brothers to avoid persecution. During the mid-forties there was a revival of militancy among Jewish freedom fighters, adherents of the “fourth philosophy,” as Josephus calls it (Wars 2.118: Ant. 18.23). Repressive action was taken against them by Tiberius Julius Alexander, procurator of Judaea (c. AD46-48), who crucified two of their leaders, Jacob and Simon, sons of that Judas the Galilaean who led the revolt against the provincial census of AD 6 (Jos. Ant. 20.102). In the eyes of such militants, Jews who fraternized with Gentiles and adopted Gentile ways were traitors. This could have led to reprisals. (Bruce, 1982, p.130).
2. An attempt to not make a stumbling block for Jewish Christians who were practicing the tradition of their forefathers. These believing Jews may have been put off by rumors that Paul was teaching Jewish converts not to follow Jewish tradition. (Acts 21:15-25)
3. An attempt to not make a stumbling block for nonbelieving Jews who might be interested in the gospel but would have been off put by Paul insisting that Gentiles were not to be circumcised.
4. Maybe there were real dangers from false brethren (2Cor11:26, Gal2:4).

V15-21. Even Barnabas had been led astray. Remember that Barnabas was instrumental in helping convert Gentile Christians along-side Paul. This would have struck Paul as Barnabas being hypocritical. Imagine how it would have negatively impacted the Gentile Christians in all of the churches in which Barnabas had preached. (Acts11:22, 12:25, 13:1, 14:12, etc)

Both Jews and Gentiles are justified by faith.

V16 Romans3:20- 28 are similar verses: Paul is not against the law. He is against the idea that performance of the law will win acceptance before God for salvation: legalism. He already tried that and it failed him. (Phil3:1-9)

This completely agrees with what Peter said: Acts15:9-11

V19-21 Why? Because in Christ a man has died to the law (Romans7:6)

Chapter 3

V1. “foolish Galatians”

ἀνόητοι [anoētoi](http://biblehub.com/greek/anoe_toi_453.htm) - unintelligent; by implication, sensual -- fool(-ish), unwise. not understood, unintelligible; (from [1](http://biblehub.com/greek/1.htm) */A* "without" and [3539](http://biblehub.com/greek/3539.htm) */noiéō*, "to think") – properly, non-thinking, i.e. not "reasoning through" a matter (with proper logic); unmindful, which describes acting in a "mindless, dense" way ("just plain stupid").
 Gone from maturity to immaturity

Who has bewitched you-bewitched, as in “Their new behaviour was so strange, so completely at odds with the liberating message which they had previously accepted, that it appeared as if someone had put a spell on them.” (Bruce, 1982, p.148)

V2-5. “Flesh” here is not simply the body, in which circumcision is carried out, but human nature in its unregenerated weakness, relying on such inadequate resources as were available before the coming of faith, having no access as yet to the power of the Spirit.

It is like coming to a gun fight with a knife. Like trying to break a rock with a marshmellow hammer.

V6. Abraham believed God “and it was reckoned to him as righteousness.” (Gen15:6, Rom4:3, Hab2:4, Rom1:17)

V6-9. The history of salvation begins with Abraham, to whom the gospel was preached in advance (v8), ad reaches climax in Christ. The promise made to Abraham is fulfilled in Christ. The promise is that Abraham would bless all the nations through his offspring. Men and women of faith, therefore, are Abraham’s true children. (Gen12:2-3, Gen22:18)

The Galatians were being urged to become children of Abraham by adoption (since they were not his children by natural birth), and this, they were told, involved circumcision. This was the practice that occurred when proselytes from paganism were converting to Judaism. Paul’s argument is that believing the gospel results in having received God’s gift of righteousness so they were Abraham’s children already in the only sense that mattered in God’s sight. (Gen15:6, Gen18:18, Gen26:4Acts3:25-26, Rom4:9, Rom9:33, Rom11:8, Rom11:26).

V10-14 As many as are legalist, refusing to accept the righteous status God has made available in Christ and insisting on thinking that they can earn their own righteous status by their fulfillment of the law’s demand. (Dt27:26)

There were 2 schools of thought among the pharisaic schools:

School of Shammai- it reckoned that 99% achievement of the law was failure

School of Hillel- it reckoned that 51% achievement of the law was a passing grade to enter the world to come (School that Gamaliel –Paul’s teacher- was a part of)

Paul ended up rejecting both. In the final analysis, Paul concludes that no amount of law following would attain the righteousness that leads to life. (Phil3:2-9, Ps143:1-2, Hab2:4)

Notice that the argument never goes to defending the use of ritual sacrifices under the law. Why? Even the circumcision group knew that Christ had come as the *hilasterion* (the propitiation for sin). The only other occurrence of the Greek **hilasterion** in the New Testament is in Hebrews 9:5, where the NASB translates it as "mercy seat". For many Christians it has the **meaning** of "that which expiates or propitiates" or "the gift which procures propitiation". All who took on Christ knew that the sacrificial system had become obsolete. (Heb8:13, Heb9:22-28, Heb10:10-14).

The covenant of curses for hanging on a tree is from Dt27:26, Dt21:22-23.

However, the curse has been annulled by Jesus. There is an exchange of a curse for a blessing. This is an example of what is called the gospel interchange. We receive the blessing because Christ endured the curse, and because we are “in Christ,” we can be identified with the one true descendant of Abraham. This can only happen through the resurrection. God himself has vindicated his Son as righteous and those who have faith in Him are also reckoned as righteous and live.

Abraham by faith received justification and the promise of blessing-now that Christ has accomplished his redemptive work, Abraham’s children likewise by faith, receive justification and the promised blessing-the gift of the Holy Spirit.

V15-18 Paul strengthens his argument by drawing from judicial practice. If the readers in Galatia insist on appealing to the law, they should consider that the divine promise was made long before (430 years according to Ex12:40) the giving of the law and therefore cannot modify or annul the promise.

This idea is based in legal practices in ancient law. Some theologians/historians believe it was ancient Greek, some think it was ancient Roman and some think it was ancient Jewish tradition. The practice basically was that once a will was made, it could not be altered or modified in any way, not even by the testator, unless the permission had been expressly written into it. The irrevocable character was attached to a will especially where the inheritance of sons was concerned-above all, in particular importance, of adopted sons (Bruce, 1982, p.170-172).

V19-22 What was the purpose of the law? To increase sin! (Romans5:20, 1Cor15:56). The law as a means of justification and life in terms of Lev18:5 has been superceded by faith (Hab2:4)It proved on the contrary to lead to death (2Cor3:6). The law cannot by itself give life, but it served God’s purpose of showing the bankruptcy of human effort-it shows man and women their need for grace. God’s hope is that man will turn to Christ in faith. The law then drives people to flee condemnation and seek refuge in the promise through faith. The law is a prison house (Rom3:9, Rom7:14)

V23-25 The law is a suppressor and restrainer of mankind, it kept the Gentiles out of the privileges of the people of God and kept Israel in bondage.

V24. The guardian (NIV), schoolmaster (KJV), tutor (NASB), trainer (BLB): [paidagōgos](http://biblehub.com/greek/paidago_gos_3807.htm) παιδαγωγὸς

 Definition: a boy's guardian or tutor, a slave who had charge of the life and morals of the boys of a family, not strictly a teacher. "a child under development by strict instruction" – properly, a *legally appointed overseer*, authorized to train (bring) up a child by administering discipline, chastisement, and instruction, i.e. doing what was necessary to promote *development*.

παιδαγωγός, παιδαγωγου, ὁ (from παῖς, and ἀγωγός a leader, an escort, a guide and guardian of boys. Among the Greeks and Romans the name was applied to trustworthy slaves who were charged with the duty of supervising the life and morals of boys belonging to the better class. The boys were not allowed so much as to step out of the house without them before arriving at the age of manhood. The name carries with it an idea of severity (as of a stern censor and enforcer of morals) in [1 Corinthians 4:15](http://biblehub.com/interlinear/1_corinthians/4-15.htm), where the father is distinguished from the tutor as one whose discipline is usually milder, and in [Galatians 3:24](http://biblehub.com/interlinear/galatians/3-24.htm)f where the Mosaic law is likened to a tutor because it arouses the consciousness of sin, and is called παιδαγωγός εἰς Χριστόν, i. e. preparing the soul for Christ, because those who have learned by experience with the law that they are not and cannot be commended to God by their works, welcome the more eagerly the hope of salvation offered them through the death and resurrection of Christ, the Son of God. (Thayer’s)

From [pais](http://biblehub.com/strongs/greek/3816.htm) and a reduplicated form of [ago](http://biblehub.com/strongs/greek/71.htm); a boy-leader, i.e. A servant whose office it was to take the children to school; (by implication, (figuratively) a tutor ("paedagogue")) -- instructor, schoolmaster. (Strong’s)

The personal slave-attendant accompanied the free-born boy wherever he went, from the time he left his nurse’s care. It was his duty to teach the boy good manners (with the use of a birch if necessary) take him to school (carrying his satchel and other effects), wait for him there, in the waiting room or the classroom itself. After class the tutor would take the boy home and test his memory by making him recite the lesson he had learned. During the boy’s minority the tutor imposed a necessary restraint on his liberty until he came of age after which he could be trusted to use his liberty wisely.

As the slave-attendant kept the boy under his control until he came of age, so the law kept the people of God in control until, with the coming of faith, they attained their spiritual maturity in Christ.

V26-29. Jews and non-Jews are sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus and Abraham’s offspring, heirs according to the promise. As adopted sons and daughters, Gentiles, women and slaves get equal status or better than equal status. In Roman law, adopted sons had especially protected rights.

# Adoption in ancient Rome from Wikipedia:



Possibly the most famous Roman adoptee, [Augustus](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Augustus) first Emperor of the Roman Empire

In [ancient Rome](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ancient_Rome), [adoption](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Adoption) of boys was a fairly common procedure, particularly in the upper [senatorial](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roman_senate) class. The need for a male [heir](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Heir) and the expense of raising [children](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Children_of_Ancient_Rome) and the Roman inheritance rules (Falcidia lex) strictly demanding [legitimes](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Legitime) were strong incentives to have at least one son, but not too many children. Adoption, the obvious solution, also served to cement ties between families, thus fostering and reinforcing alliances. Adoption of girls, however, was much less common.

In the [Imperial period](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roman_Empire), the system also acted as a mechanism for ensuring a smooth [succession](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Order_of_succession), the [emperor](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roman_emperor) taking his chosen successor as his adopted son.

## Causes

As Rome was ruled by a select number of powerful families, every senator's duty was to produce sons to inherit the estate, family name and political tradition. However, a large family was an expensive luxury. Daughters had to be provided with a suitable [dowry](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dowry) and sons had to be pushed through the political stages of the [*cursus honorum*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cursus_honorum).

The higher the political status of a family, the higher was the cost. Roman families therefore typically restricted their families to three children. Sometimes not having enough children proved to be a wrong choice, as infants could die and the lack of male births was always a risk.

For families with too many sons and the ones with no boys at all, adoption was the only solution. Even the wealthy [Lucius Aemilius Paullus Macedonicus](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lucius_Aemilius_Paullus_Macedonicus) did not hesitate in giving his two oldest boys up for adoption, one to the [Cornelii Scipiones](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Scipio_%28cognomen%29) ([Scipio Aemilianus](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Scipio_Aemilianus), the conqueror of [Carthage](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Carthage) during the [Third Punic War](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Third_Punic_War)) the other to [Quintus Fabius Maximus Cunctator](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fabius_Maximus).

## Practice

In [Roman law](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roman_law), the power to give children in adoption was one of the recognized powers of the [*paterfamilias*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paterfamilias). The adopted boy would usually be the oldest, the one with proven health and abilities. Adoption was an expensive agreement for the childless family and quality had to be ensured. Adoption was agreed between families by the mother giving the boy they wanted to adopt (for the most part) equal status, often political allies and/or with blood connections. A [plebeian](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Plebeian) adopted by a [patrician](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Patrician_%28ancient_Rome%29) would become a patrician, and vice versa; however, at least in [Republican](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roman_Republic) times, this required the consent of the [Senate](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roman_Senate). A large sum of money was exchanged between the parties and the boy assumed the adoptive father's name and a [*cognomen*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cognomen) that indicated his original family (see [Roman naming convention](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roman_naming_convention)). Adoption was neither secretive nor considered to be shameful; the adopted boy was not even expected to cut ties to his original family. Like a marriage contract, adoption was a way to reinforce interfamily ties and political alliances. The adopted child was often in a privileged situation, enjoying both original and adoptive family connections. Almost every politically famous Roman family used it.

[Augustus](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Augustus), the first [emperor](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roman_emperor) of the [Roman Empire](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roman_Empire), is possibly the most famous example of adoption in Ancient Rome. Born into relative obscurity under the name "Gaius Octavius," he was adopted into the [Julii Caesares](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Julii_Caesares) by testament of his maternal great-uncle, the [Roman dictator](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roman_dictator) [Julius Caesar](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Julius_Caesar). Although Octavius changed his name to "Gaius Julius Caesar," in accordance with Roman naming practices concerning adoption, he did not use the name "Octavianus" but preferred to emphasize his new status as an official [Julian](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Julia_%28gens%29) instead of reminding the public of his relatively humble origin as an [Octavian](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Octavia_%28gens%29). Nevertheless, after his adoption, historians refer to him as "Octavian" from 44 BC until 27 BC when he obtained the name "Augustus."

V28. There was a common Jewish practice in which men performed morning prayers thanking God for not being a Gentile, a slave or a woman. This practice was based on the idea that certain privileges were not given to Gentiles, slaves and women in Jewish tradition. Paul is saying that all of those barriers were demolished in Christ. None of those barriers exist in Christ because anyone who is in Christ gets all the rights of being adopted sons and daughters. All who are in Christ are seated on the throne with Jesus (Eph2:6) and have access to the inheritance (Eph2:12-18). There are no second class citizens in Christ (Eph2:19-21).

From [JewishEncyclopedia.com](http://www.jewishencyclopedia.com/)*The unedited full-text of the 1906 Jewish Encyclopedia*

Inheritance (“yerusbah,” “nahalah”). By: [Joseph Jacobs](http://www.jewishencyclopedia.com/contribs/551), [Julius H. Greenstone](http://www.jewishencyclopedia.com/contribs/463)

Biblical Data:

Among the early Hebrews, as well as among many other nations of antiquity, custom decided that the next of kin should enter upon the possession of the estate of a deceased person. The first-born son usually assumed the headship of the family, and succeeded to the control of the family property. When there were no sons, the dying man would appoint a trusted friend as his heir, sometimes to the exclusion of a near relative. Thus, Abraham, when he despaired of having children himself, was about to appoint his slave Eliezer as his heir, although his nephew Lot was living (Gen. xv. 3). Even when there were children, it was within the right of the father to prefer one child to another in the disposition of his property. Sarah, not wishing Ishmael to share in the inheritance with her son Isaac, prevailed upon Abraham to drive Hagar and her son out of her house (Gen. xxi. 10); and Abraham later sent away his children by concubines, with presents, so that they should not interfere in the inheritance of Isaac (Gen. xxv. 6). Jacob, however, as it appears, made no distinction between the sons of his wives and those of his concubines (Gen. xlix.), and included his grandsons Ephraim and Manassch among his heirs (Gen. xlviii. 5, 6). There could have been no question in those days of a widow inheriting from her husband, since she was regarded as part of the property which went over to the heirs, as is shown by the stories of Ruth, Absalom (II Sam. xvi. 21, 22), Adonijah, and Abishag (I Kings ii. 22; [see Levirate Marriage](http://www.jewishencyclopedia.com/articles/9859-levirate-marriage)). Nor could there have been a question about daughters inheriting from their father, since daughters were given in marriage either by their father, or by their brothers or other relatives after the father's death, thus becoming the property of the family into which they married. An exceptional case is mentioned: Job gave his daughters a share in his estate equal to that of their brothers (Job xlii. 15).

Case of Zelophehad.

As a result of the question raised by the daughters of Zelophehad, the following general rules of inheritance were laid down by Moses: "If a man die, and have no son, then ye shall cause his inheritance to pass unto his daughter. And if he have no daughter, then ye shall give his inheritance unto his brethren. And if he have no brethren, then ye shall give his inheritance unto his father's brethren. And if his father have no brethren, then ye shall give his inheritance unto his kinsman that is next to him of his family, and he shall possess it" (Num26:8-11). Brief though this law is, it allows sufficient latitude for legitimate interpretation by the phrase, "unto his kinsman that is next to him." According to this provision, there are four degrees of hereditary succession—that of the son, the daughter, the brother, and the father's brother. In the case of the daughter, it is stated that when she becomes the heir of her father's estate, she shall marry in her own clan.

What is Biblical Baptism?

Died & Buried-Rom6:3

Buried & Resurrected-Col2:12

New Life-Rom6:4

In Christ-Rom6:3, Gal3:27

Clothed with Christ-Gal3:26

Circumcised of heart-Rom2:29, Col2:9-15

Get Spirit-Acts2:38

Forgiven-Acts2:38

Saved-1Peter2:21

Pledge-1Peter2:21

Commanded-Mt28:18-20

Calling on Jesus-Acts22:14-16

Baptized into Christ-1Cor1:24

1Cor12:13-into one body

How do you get into Christ?

### To Be in Christ One Must First Come into Christ

#### In order for one to be in a place (or relationship) there must be some point in life in which he comes into that place (or relationship).

Prior to that time, he was ***not*** there and afterwards he ***is*** there. At what point in one’s life does he come into Christ?

Romans 6:3 — Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death?

Galatians 3:27 — For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.

You cannot ***be*** in Christ until you ***come into*** Him, and you come into Him at the point of baptism.

Baptism must be preceded by hearing the gospel and believing in Jesus, repenting of sins, and confessing Jesus (Mark 16:15,16; Acts 2:38; Rom. 10:9,10). Without these, baptism would not be Scriptural nor valid. But when one has done these things and then is baptized, then he comes into Christ.

#### A person takes several steps toward Christ, but there is one step that puts him into Christ.

Compare this to the ark in Noah’s day. To be saved, Noah and his family had to be in the ark. There were many steps that prepared them to enter the ark. They had to believe God’s commands and obey them by building the ark. But they were not safe from the flood until the time when they entered the ark. All the preparation was essential, but there was a point at which the preparation was completed and they entered the ark. Without that step and prior to that point they were still outside the place of safety.

The same would be true of entering the city of refuge, Rahab’s house, etc. There was a specific action and a specific point in which people came into the place of safety. Before that they may have been preparing themselves, but they were not safe till they entered the place God commanded.

So there are several steps that precede baptism and are all essential to prepare one to receive the blessings in Christ. But baptism is the completion of the procedure and puts one into Christ. ([www.gospelway.com](http://www.gospelway.com))

Chapter 4

V1-2. In Gal3:22-26, Paul uses the analogy of a prison-warden and a slave attendant, to describe the law. Now he uses the comparison of the guardians and trustees appointed to take care of a minor and his property. The heir is underaged, that is, he cannot inherit the property due him until he is mature enough. The age at which he can inherit the property is given by the father. Of course, here the father is God. God sets the age at which the son can inherit the property. The minor, or “infant” in a legal sense, is not given his freedom. Paul says that he is no different than a slave, that he is not his own master. The patrimony is legally his, but he has no power to do anything with it. Nothing will belong to the minor until the age of maturity—when the age of faith appears. The stewards, trustees or guardians of course is the Law. It places restrictions on the child until the child would become mature in the faith—the age of freedom.

In Roman law the heir, until he came of age at fourteen (14), was under the control of a tutor, nominated by the father in his will; then, until he reached the age of twenty-five (25), he was under a curator.

# Curator

#### Article by George Long, M.A., Fellow of Trinity College on pp374‑376 of

#### William Smith, D.C.L., LL.D.: [A Dictionary of Greek and Roman Antiquities, John Murray, London, 1875.](http://penelope.uchicago.edu/Thayer/E/Roman/Texts/secondary/SMIGRA/home.html)

**CURA′TOR.** Up to the time of pubertas, every Roman citizen, as a general rule, was incapable of doing any legal act, or entering into any contract which might be injurious to him. The time when pubertas was attained, was a matter of dispute; some fixed it at the commencement of the age of procreation, and some at the age of fourteen [(Gaius, I.169)](http://www.thelatinlibrary.com/gaius1.html#169). In all transactions by the [impubes](http://penelope.uchicago.edu/Thayer/E/Roman/Texts/secondary/SMIGRA%2A/Impubes.html), it was necessary for the auctoritas of the tutor to be interposed. [[Auctoritas](http://penelope.uchicago.edu/Thayer/E/Roman/Texts/secondary/SMIGRA%2A/Auctoritas.html); [Tutor.]](http://penelope.uchicago.edu/Thayer/E/Roman/Texts/secondary/SMIGRA%2A/Tutor.html) With the age of puberty, the youth attained the capacity for contracting marriage and becoming a paterfamilias: he was liable to military service, and entitled to vote in the comitia; and consistently with this, he was freed from the control of a tutor. Females who had attained the age of puberty became subject to another kind of tutela. [[Tutela.]](http://penelope.uchicago.edu/Thayer/E/Roman/Texts/secondary/SMIGRA%2A/Tutor.html#tutela)

With the attainment of the age of puberty by a Roman youth, every legal capacity was acquired which depended on age only, with the exception of the capacity for public offices, and there was no rule about age, even as to public offices, before the passing of the lex Villia. [[Aediles.]](http://penelope.uchicago.edu/Thayer/E/Roman/Texts/secondary/SMIGRA%2A/Aediles.html#lex_Villia) It was, however, a matter of necessity to give some legal protection to young persons who, owing to their tender age, were liable to be overreached; and consistently with the development of Roman jurisprudence, this object was effected without interfering with the old principle of full legal capacity being attained with the age of puberty. This was accomplished by the lex Plaetoria (the true name of the lex, as Savigny has shown), the date of which is not known, though it is certain that the law existed when Plautus wrote (*Pseudolus*, I.3.69). This law established a distinction of age, which was of great practical importance, by forming the citizens into two classes, those above and those below twenty-five years of age (minores viginti quinque annis), whence a person under the last-mentioned age was sometimes simply called minor. The object of the lex was to protect persons under p375twenty-five years of age against all fraud ([dolus](http://penelope.uchicago.edu/Thayer/E/Roman/Texts/secondary/SMIGRA%2A/Culpa.html)). The person who was guilty of such a fraud was liable to a judicium publicum (Cic. *De Nat. Deor.* III.3) though the offence was such as in the case of a person of full age would only have been matter of action. The punishment fixed by the lex Plaetoria was probably a pecuniary penalty, and the consequential punishment of [infamia](http://penelope.uchicago.edu/Thayer/E/Roman/Texts/secondary/SMIGRA%2A/Infamia.html) or loss of political rights. The minor who had been fraudulently led to make a disadvantageous contract, might protect himself against an action by a plea of the lex Plaetoria (exceptio legis Plaetoriae). The lex also appears to have further provided that any person who dealt with a minor might avoid all risk of the consequences of the Plaetoria lex, if the minor was aided and assisted in such dealing by a curator named or chosen for the occasion. But the curator did not act like a tutor: it can hardly be supposed that his consent was even necessary to the contract; for the minor had full legal capacity to act, and the business of the curator was merely to prevent his being defrauded or surprised.

The praetorian edict carried still further the principle of the lex Plaetoria, by protecting minores generally against positive acts of their own, in all cases in which the consequences might be injurious to them. This was done by the "[in integrum restitutio](http://penelope.uchicago.edu/Thayer/E/Roman/Texts/secondary/SMIGRA%2A/Restitutio_in_Integrum.html)": the praetor set aside transactions of this description, not only on the ground of fraud, but on a consideration of all the circumstances of the case. But it was necessary for the minor to make application to the praetor, either during his minority, or within one year after attaining his majority, if he claimed the restitutio; a limitation probably founded on the lex Plaetoria. The provisions of this lex were thus superseded or rendered unnecessary by the jurisdiction of the praetor, and accordingly we find very few traces of the Plaetorian law in the Roman jurists.

Ulpian and his contemporaries speak of adolescentes, under twenty-five years of age, being under the *general* direction and advice of curatores, as a notorious principle of law at that time ([*Dig.* 4, tit. 4](http://webu2.upmf-grenoble.fr/Haiti/Cours/Ak/Corpus/d-04.htm#4); De Minoribus XXV Annis). The establishment of this general rule is attributed by Capitolinus (*M. Anton.* c10) to the emperor M. Aurelius in a passage which has given rise to much discussion. Savigny's explanation is as follows:— Up to the time of Marcus Aurelius there were only three cases or kinds of curatela:

1. That which was founded on the lex Plaetoria, by which a minor who wished to enter into a contract with another, asked the praetor for a curator, stating the ground or occasion of the petition (reddita causa). One object of the application was, to save the other contracting party from all risk of judicial proceedings in consequence of dealing with a minor. Another object of the application was, the benefit of the applicant (the minor); for no prudent person would deal with him, except with the legal security of the curator (Plaut. *Pseudolus*, I.3.69: "Lex me perdit quinavicenaria: metuunt credere omnes.").
2. The curatela, which was given in the case of a man wasting his substance, who was called "prodigus."
3. And that in the case of a man being of unsound mind, "demens," "furiosus."

In both the last-mentioned cases provision was made either by the law or by the praetor. Curatores who were determined by the law of the Twelve Tables, were called legitimi; those who were named by the praetor, were called honorarii. A furiosus and prodigus, whatever might be their age, were placed under the cura of their agnati by the law of the Twelve Tables. When there was no legal provision for the appointment of a curator, the praetor named one. Curatores appointed by a consul, praetor, or governor of a province (praeses), were not generally required to give security for their proper conduct, having been chosen as fit persons for the office. What the lex Plaetoria required for particular transactions, the emperor Aurelius made a general rule, and all minors, without exception, and without any special grounds or reasons (non redditis causis), were required to have curatores.

V3. Paul says that as children we were held in bondage under the elemental (στοιχεῖα) things of the world.

[stoicheia](http://biblehub.com/greek/stoicheia_4747.htm)- στοιχεῖα-basic principles

Thayer's Greek Lexicon

a row, rank, series; hence, properly, that which belongs to “any first thing, from which the others belonging to some series or composite whole take their rise; an element, first principle". The word denotes specifically:

1. the letters of the alphabet as the elements of speech, not however the written characters, but the spoken sounds.

2. the elements from which all things have come, the material causes of the universe

3. the heavenly bodies, either as parts of the heavens, or (as others think) because in them the elements of man's life and destiny were supposed to reside.

4. the elements, rudiments, primary and fundamental principles (the 'a b c') of any art, science, or discipline

Paul is thus saying that the Law was going backwards to the A, B, Cs of learning versus going onward towards maturity of faith in Christ.

V4. Paul says that the divine act of adoption corresponds to the time fixed by God to send His Son as the nodal point of salvation. It is for this reason that the people of Christ are those ‘upon whom the ends of the ages have met’ (1Cor10:11). The nodal point of salvation-history, marked by the coming of Christ, constitutes the divinely ordained epoch for the people of God to enter into their inheritance as his mature and responsible sons and daughters. Here it is the ‘realized’ aspect of Christian eschatology that Paul presents, the ‘already’ rather than the ‘not yet.’ The Galatians must understand that the period of tutelage is past; their spiritual majority has arrived. (Bruce, 1982, p.194)

1Cor10:11 (NIV) …on whom the culmination of the ages has come.

 (NLT) They were written down to warn us who live at the end of the age.

 (NAS) …upon whom the ends of the ages have come.

V5. To be redeemed from under law is to be redeemed from the curse under the law. This was effected by Christ enduring the death on which a curse was pronounced. God sent His Son in the likeness of sinful flesh (ROM8:3) with God condemning sin in the flesh.

V6. It is through faith that the Gentile Christians have become ‘sons of God’ in Christ Jesus (Gal3:26), just as it is through faith that they have received the Sprit (Gal3:2, 14) and through faith that they have been justified (Gal2:16; 6-9, 11). Their instatement as sons and their receiving the Spirit would appear simultaneous. The fact that Christians call God “Abba,” as did Jesus shows that they too have the indwelling of the Spirit. (Rom8:15f)

So far as theologians know, Jesus was unique in his use of ‘abba’ for God the father. He taught his disciples to do the same. It was so common amongst disciples that it passed unchanged from Aramaic into the Greek as ‘abba.’ Paul even assumes its use amongst Gentile Christians in Rome who were not his converts (Rom8:15) as confidently as he knows it to be current among those of Galatia.

V7-8. The Gentile Christians were also freed from the bondage to counterfeit God’s.

V9. For Paul, there is no real distinction between being known by God and being chosen by him (Rom8:29).

Those who behaved in the preposterous way contemplated by the Galatian Christians, had manifestly no conception of the new order into which faith in Christ had brought them. The
basic principles ([stoicheia](http://biblehub.com/greek/stoicheia_4747.htm) στοιχεῖα), not only regulated the Jewish way of life under the law, but also the pagan way of life in service to gods that were no gods at all. The Galatian Christians that turned to the law would be enslaved to the basic principles all over again as if they were reverting back to worshiping idols. This is an astonishing statement for Paul the former Pharisee, but Paul makes it. Why? Both ways of life were powerless to save and to create sonship to the true God.

From the context it may be gathered that the basic principles ([stoicheia](http://biblehub.com/greek/stoicheia_4747.htm) στοιχεῖα) is anything that man puts his faith in other than the true God.

The Law, working on the flesh, stimulates sin, and sin leads to death (Rom7:7-11). It is because of the inadequacy of the flesh that to be ‘under law’ (Gal3:23) is in practice to be ‘under sin’ (gal3:22), whereas to be dead to law (Gal2:19) is in practice to be dead to sin (Rom6:2, 11).

Christ, the liberator of his people, is stronger than any elemental principle. However, if one abandons faith in Christ, then the elemental principle will take one back into bondage.

V10-11. The Galatians apparently were going back to following cultic calendars, thus endangering their trust in Christ, by trusting in religious obligations. They were going back to practices from which they were liberated. (Col2:16)

Compare Paul’s attitude in Romans14:5-10 versus Gal4:10-11, Phil1:15-18. Paul is concerned about the false prophets and brethren he attacks in Gal2:4. See Col2:20-23 Paul would have wasted his efforts on the Galatians if they would have reverted to legalism or reliance on the law.

V12-20. Paul’s physical health had been compromised somehow. It could be the same splinter in the flesh mentioned in 2Cor12:7-10. But no one can be sure of it today. There have been multiple guesses at what Paul’s ailment was: malaria, eye infection/inflation, epilepsy, problems due to scar tissue, etc.

V19. It is not that Paul sees two stages in Christian experience-being justified by faith and having Christ formed within one-it is rather that the one implies the other and reliance on the law for salvation negates both.

V21-31. Paul now reinforces his argument by using an allegorical interpretation of the Genesis story of Hagar and Sarah, with their respective sons Ishmael and Isaac. Paul himself calls his interpretation allegorical-that means the entities in the story stand for something other than their face value. The interpreter is bringing out the intention of the original author. Ismael, born of the slave girl Hagar, was Isaac’s senior by about 14 years. (Gen16:1-6)

Sarah did not want Ishmael, the son of a slave girl, to share in the inheritance of Isaac. It was common practice at the time for the children born of a slave girl to share in the inheritance of the sons of the wife. According to the code of Hammurabi, for example, ‘the children of the wife shall divide the property of the father’s house equally with the sons of the bondmaid; the son and heir, the son of the wife, shall choose a share (first) and take it’. As for the case of a childless wife, it stipulated that if a wife proves childless she shall provide her husband with a slave wife and the son of such a slave wife shall not be expelled. Abraham agreed to expel Ishmael but only because he was directed to by God. God had already decided to offer the promise through Isaac and not Ishmael. (Gen17:19; 18:9-19, 21:12) Therefore, the Jews and Gentiles who believe in Jesus Christ are the children of the free woman and the Jews and Gentiles who do not believe in Jesus Christ are the children of the slave woman.

Identifying Hagar with Sinai is to identify her and her descendants with the Law, which holds men and women in bondage. Those who are represented by Isaac are those of Sarah, they are of the Jerusalem from above. The Jerusalem that is of God. The heavenly Jerusalem. (Is54)

[From Heaven →](https://theorangemailmanmyblog.wordpress.com/2008/08/12/from-heaven/)

The Old Testament Foundation for the New Jerusalem

Isaiah saw a future kingdom in which Jerusalem will be the religious, political, and economic center of all the earth.  The Word of God will go forth from Jerusalem, Isaiah 2:3.  That’s the religion of the kingdom.  The LORD will rule from Jerusalem in glory, Isaiah 24:23.  That’s the government of the Messiah.  The people of Jerusalem will cultivate the earth and enjoy its fruits, Isaiah 65:21-23, as well as partaking of the wealth of Gentile nations, Isaiah 60:14-16.  That’s the economy of the future.

***Isaiah 60:1***Arise, shine; For your light has come! And the glory of the Lord is risen upon you. ***2*** For behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, And deep darkness the people; But the Lord will arise over you, And His glory will be seen upon you. ***3*** The Gentiles shall come to your light, And kings to the brightness of your rising.

When the New Jerusalem descends, it will shine forth its light to the entire world, since the true light will be reigning from in its midst.  Isaiah 60 would be a good place to start to read about the place of “the city of the LORD, The Zion of the Holy One of Israel” and her place amongst the Gentile nations during this Messianic Kingdom.  Gentile nations will come to the light which the New Jerusalem shines forth during the Messianic Kingdom.

***Isaiah 65:17*** For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth; And the former shall not be remembered or come to mind. ***18*** But be glad and rejoice forever in what I create; For behold, I create Jerusalem as a rejoicing, And her people a joy.

This new heavens and new earth are further described in Isaiah 65.  A new and improved Jerusalem is also prophesied to exist during this time of a new heavens and new earth.  We see that death will be severely hampered, but not completely defeated.  Animals will live at peace with each other during this kingdom in the places where the LORD’s reign is established.  Isaiah 66:20-24 closes Isaiah’s prophecies of the Messianic Kingdom stating that Israel’s offspring will continue with her priests and Levites continuing as well.  Yet there are carcasses of men who have transgressed against the LORD which will be able to be viewed by those that go forth.

***Isaiah 62:1*** For Zion’s sake I will not hold My peace, And for Jerusalem’s sake I will not rest, Until her righteousness goes forth as brightness, And her salvation as a lamp that burns. ***2*** The Gentiles shall see your righteousness, And all kings your glory. You shall be called by a new name, Which the mouth of the Lord will name. ***3*** You shall also be a crown of glory In the hand of the Lord, And a royal diadem In the hand of your God. ***4*** You shall no longer be termed Forsaken, Nor shall your land any more be termed Desolate; But you shall be called Hephzibah, and your land Beulah; For the Lord delights in you, And your land shall be married. ***5*** For as a young man marries a virgin, So shall your sons marry you; And as the bridegroom rejoices over the bride, So shall your God rejoice over you.

This New Jerusalem was prophesied of in Isaiah 62.  It would be the crown of glory in the hand of the LORD as well as being the bride which God rejoices over.  It is this New Jerusalem which Gentiles will see in its glory.  So we see in Isaiah 62 a future kingdom whereby there is a New Jerusalem which is the bride of the LORD existing here on the earth which Gentile kings will walk in her light.  How much more can I show the parallel of the New Jerusalem of Revelation 21 and 22 with this prophecy in Isaiah 62?  Those who live in this New Jerusalem will be called “the holy people, the redeemed of the LORD”, Isaiah 62:12.

Chapter 5

V1-6 Paul submits that circumcision as a legal requirement, necessary for salvation, accepts thereby to the principle of salvation by keeping the whole law. (Dt27:26)

V7-10

V7. Paul uses an athletic term here to mean “cutting in” in front of a runner so as to trip him up. The verb was used in this kind of context originally of breaking up a road so as to prevent progress
[enekopsen](http://biblehub.com/greek/enekopsen_1465.htm) - ἐνέκοψεν  - cut into

V9. “A little leaven,” Paul uses this same proverbial saying in 1Cor5:6-7, 1Cor15:33. This follows the Jewish tradition that one must get rid of leaven during the Passover (Ex12:14-20, Ex16:3-8) otherwise it will be a corrupting influence, thus leaven represents evil and malice.

V10-11

V11. NIV – offense

 NAS – stumbling block

 DBT (Darby Bible Translation) - scandal

Stumbling block - in the greek 🡪 σκάνδαλον

σκάνδαλον (offense) skandalon (from where we get our word scandal).

Strong's Concordance

skandalon: a stick for bait (of a trap), generally a snare, a stumbling block, an offense

HELPS Word-studies

*skándalon* – properly, the trigger of a trap (the mechanism closing a trap down on the unsuspecting victim); (figuratively) an *offense*, putting a *negative cause-and-effect relationship* into motion.

*/skándalon* ("the means of stumbling") stresses the *method* (*means*) of *entrapment*, i.e. how someone is caught by *their own devices* (like their personal bias, carnal thinking).

(*skándalon*) is *the native rock* rising up through the earth, *which trips up* the traveler, hence, of Jesus the Messiah, to the Jews who refused him”; "properly, the *bait-stick* of a trap, *a snare, stumbling-block*" (*Abbott-Smith*); "the stick in the trap that springs and closes the trap when the animal touches it"

STRONGS NT 4625: σκάνδαλον -- a purely Biblical ((occurring some twenty-five times in the Greek O. T., and fifteen, quotations included, in the New)) and ecclesiastical word for σκανδάληθρον, which occurs occasionally in native Greek writings; the Sept. for מוקֵשׁ (a noose, a snare) and מִכְשׁול;

a. properly, "the movable stick or tricker (`trigger') of a trap, trap-stick; a trap, snare; any impediment placed in the way and causing one to stumble or fall" (a stumblingblock, occasion of stumbling): [Leviticus 19:14](http://biblehub.com/interlinear/leviticus/19-14.htm); a rock of offence), i. e. a rock which is a cause of stumbling — figuratively applied to Jesus Christ, whose person and career were so contrary to the expectations of the Jews concerning the Messiah, that they rejected him and by their obstinacy made shipwreck of salvation, [Romans 9:33](http://biblehub.com/interlinear/romans/9-33.htm) and [1 Peter 2:8](http://biblehub.com/interlinear/1_peter/2-8.htm) (7) (from [Isaiah 8:14](http://biblehub.com/interlinear/isaiah/8-14.htm)).

b. metaphorically, "any person or thing by which one is (`entrapped') drawn into error or sin," used for Jesus because his ignominious death on the cross roused the opposition of the Jews), [1 Corinthians 1:23](http://biblehub.com/interlinear/1_corinthians/1-23.htm). To put a stumbling-block in one's way, i. e. to do that by which another is led to sin, [Romans 14:13](http://biblehub.com/interlinear/romans/14-13.htm); the same idea is expressed by (to cast a stumbling-block before one), [Revelation 2:14](http://biblehub.com/interlinear/revelation/2-14.htm); words or deeds which entice to sin (Wis. 14:11), [Matthew 18:7](http://biblehub.com/interlinear/matthew/18-7.htm); to cause persons to be drawn away from the true doctrine into error and sin, [Romans 16:17](http://biblehub.com/interlinear/romans/16-17.htm).

Strong's Exhaustive Concordance

stumbling block.

Scandal; probably from a derivative of [kampto](http://biblehub.com/greek/2578.htm); a trap-stick (bent sapling), i.e. Snare (figuratively, cause of displeasure or sin) -- occasion to fall (of stumbling), offence, thing that offends, stumblingblock.

Had Paul been involved in proselytization before he became a disciple? What was proselytizing? It was the practice of converting Gentiles into Jews. What happened during this practice?

There are two kinds of proselytes in [Rabbinic Judaism](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rabbinic_Judaism); *ger tzedek* (righteous proselytes, proselytes of righteousness, religious proselyte, devout proselyte) and *ger toshav* (resident proselyte, proselytes of the gate, limited proselyte, half-proselyte)

A "righteous proselyte" is a [gentile](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gentile) who has converted to Judaism, is bound to all the doctrines and precepts of the Jewish religion, and is considered a full member of the Jewish people. The proselyte is circumcised as an adult ([*milah l'shem giur*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Brit_milah#Milah_l.27shem_giur)), if male, and immerses in a [*mikvah*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mikvah) to formally effect the conversion.

A "gate proselyte"[[11]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Proselyte#cite_note-11) is a [resident alien](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Resident_alien) who lives in the Land of Israel and follows some of the customs. They are not required to be circumcised nor to comply with the whole of the Torah. They are bound only to conform to the [Seven Laws of Noah](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Seven_Laws_of_Noah) (do not worship idols, do not blaspheme God's name, do not murder, do not commit fornication (immoral sexual acts), do not steal, do not tear the limb from a living animal, and do not fail to establish rule of law) to be assured of a place in the [world to come](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/World_to_come).

Possibly. But now Paul’s point in Galatians is to show that all Christianity is contained in the cross of Christ. The cross generates everything Christian in the life of man.

V12 Who were these agitators? No one knows. Were they Jewish militants? Jewish Christians? Gnostics? We do not know. There are various examples of agitators in the New Testament: Acts17:5, Acts21:38

V13-16 Paul here shows that freedom from the law in no manner does away with moral conduct. Henceforth, the obligations of moral conduct are fostered not by the law but by the operation of the free Spirit. If in verse 1 Christian freedom is the bulwark again legalism, here is the bulwark against libertinism. The flesh here denotes not just the weak human nature but also the appetites and propensities which unchecked produces the works of the flesh listed in verse 19. The freedom of the Spirit is the antidote to both legal bondage and unrestrained license. The law had no power against the flesh.

Paul says here that the fulfillment of the law is to love one another. (Rom13:8-10, Lev19:18) This is the same verse that was quoted by Jesus as the 2nd greatest commandment. No external force or sanction can compel the loving of a neighbor as oneself; such love must be generated from within—by the Spirit. The flesh is Paul’s term for everything aside from God in which one places his final trust.”

V17-18. Corresponds to what Paul says in 2Cor3:18, Rom6:14. To be led by the Spirit is to walk in the Spirit-to have the power to refuse the desires of the flesh and become increasingly shaped in the image of Christ-to cease to be under the law but to live by grace. What is grace-God living in you via the Holy Spirit, the greatest form of grace. The greatest gift of grace. You did not get the wrath you deserve (mercy) you received the Spirit of sonship to live in you (grace) that allows you to cry out Abba Father. (Rom8:15, Gal4:6).

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| V19-21. Fornication or sexual immorality -[porneia](http://biblehub.com/greek/porneia_4202.htm)- πορνεία*porneía* (the root of the English terms "pornography, pornographic"; cf. [4205](http://biblehub.com/greek/4205.htm) */pórnos*) which is derived from *pernaō*, "to sell off") – properly, a *selling off* (surrendering) of sexual purity; *promiscuity* of any (every) type.

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| [◄](http://biblehub.com/greek/4201.htm) 4202. porneia [►](http://biblehub.com/greek/4203.htm) |
| Strong's ConcordanceShort Definition: fornication, idolatryDefinition: fornication, whoredom; met: idolatry.HELPS Word-studies**4202** *porneía* (the root of the English terms "pornography, pornographic"; cf. [4205](http://biblehub.com/greek/4205.htm) */pórnos*) which is derived from *pernaō*, "to sell off") – properly, a *selling off* (surrendering) of sexual purity; *promiscuity* of any (every) type. NAS Exhaustive ConcordanceWord Originfrom [porneuó](http://biblehub.com/greek/4203.htm)DefinitionfornicationNASB Translationfornication (4), fornications (2), immoralities (1), immorality (16), sexual immorality (1), unchastity (1).Thayer's Greek LexiconSTRONGS NT 4202: πορνείαπορνεία, πορνείας, ἡ (πορνεύω), the Sept. for תַּזְנוּת, זְנוּת, זְנוּנִים, fornication (Vulg.fornicatio (and ([Revelation 19:2](http://biblehub.com/interlinear/revelation/19-2.htm))prostitutio)); used a. properly, of illicit sexual intercourse in general (Demosthenes, 403, 27; 433, 25): [Acts 15:20, 29](http://biblehub.com/interlinear/acts/15-20.htm); [Acts 21:25](http://biblehub.com/interlinear/acts/21-25.htm) (that this meaning must be adopted in these passages will surprise no one who has learned from [1 Corinthians 6:12](http://biblehub.com/interlinear/1_corinthians/6-12.htm)ff how leniently converts from among the heathen regarded this vice and how lightly they indulged in it; accordingly, all other interpretations of the term, such as of marriages within the prohibited degrees and the like, are to be rejected); [Romans 1:29](http://biblehub.com/interlinear/romans/1-29.htm) Rec.; [1 Corinthians 5:1](http://biblehub.com/interlinear/1_corinthians/5-1.htm); [1 Corinthians 6:13, 18](http://biblehub.com/interlinear/1_corinthians/6-13.htm); [1 Corinthians 7:2](http://biblehub.com/interlinear/1_corinthians/7-2.htm); [2 Corinthians 12:21](http://biblehub.com/interlinear/2_corinthians/12-21.htm); [Ephesians 5:3](http://biblehub.com/interlinear/ephesians/5-3.htm); [Colossians 3:5](http://biblehub.com/interlinear/colossians/3-5.htm); [1 Thessalonians 4:3](http://biblehub.com/interlinear/1_thessalonians/4-3.htm); [Revelation 9:21](http://biblehub.com/interlinear/revelation/9-21.htm); it is distinguished from μοιχεία in [Matthew 15:19](http://biblehub.com/interlinear/matthew/15-19.htm); [Mark 7:21](http://biblehub.com/interlinear/mark/7-21.htm); and [Galatians 5:19](http://biblehub.com/interlinear/galatians/5-19.htm) Rec.; used of adultery ((cf. [Hosea 2:2](http://biblehub.com/interlinear/hosea/2-2.htm) (4), etc.)), [Matthew 5:32](http://biblehub.com/interlinear/matthew/5-32.htm); [Matthew 19:9](http://biblehub.com/interlinear/matthew/19-9.htm). b. In accordance with a form of speech common in the O. T. and among the Jews which represents the close relationship existing between Jehovah and his people under the figure of a marriage (cf. Gesenius, Thesaurus, i., p. 422{a} following), πορνεία is used metaphorically of the worship of idols: [Revelation 14:8](http://biblehub.com/interlinear/revelation/14-8.htm); [Revelation 17:2, 4](http://biblehub.com/interlinear/revelation/17-2.htm); [Revelation 18:3](http://biblehub.com/interlinear/revelation/18-3.htm); [Revelation 19:2](http://biblehub.com/interlinear/revelation/19-2.htm); ἡμεῖς ἐκ πορνείας οὐ γεγεννήμεθα (we are not of a people given to idolatry), ἕνα πατέρα ἔχομεν τόν Θεόν, [John 8:41](http://biblehub.com/interlinear/john/8-41.htm) (ἄθεος μέν ὁ ἄγονος, πολύθεος δέ ὁ ἐκ πόρνης, τυφλωττων περί τόν ἀληθῆ πατέρα καί διά τοῦτο πολλούς ἀνθ' ἑνός γονεῖς αἰνιττόμενος, Philo de mig. Abr. § 12; τέκνα πορνείας, of idolaters, [Hosea 1:2](http://biblehub.com/interlinear/hosea/1-2.htm); (but in John, the passage cited others understand physical descent to be spoken of (cf. Meyer))); of the defilement of idolatry, as incurred by eating the sacrifices offered to idols, [Revelation 2:21](http://biblehub.com/interlinear/revelation/2-21.htm). Strong's Exhaustive Concordancefornication. From [porneuo](http://biblehub.com/greek/4203.htm); harlotry (including adultery and incest); figuratively, idolatry -- fornication.  |

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Sexual immorality was so common in Graeco-Roman antiquity that, except when carried to excess, it was not regarded as especially reprehensible. Some of the churches that Paul started had difficulty abandoning their former pagan tolerance of it but there is no hint of this problem in the Galatian churches.

[http://michaeljkruger.com/one-trait-that-set-the-earliest-christians-apart-from-the-surrounding-culture](http://michaeljkruger.com/one-trait-that-set-the-earliest-christians-apart-from-the-surrounding-culture/)

[**One of the Main Ways that the Earliest Christians Distinguished Themselves from the Surrounding Culture**](http://michaeljkruger.com/one-trait-that-set-the-earliest-christians-apart-from-the-surrounding-culture/)

[September 10, 2014](http://michaeljkruger.com/one-trait-that-set-the-earliest-christians-apart-from-the-surrounding-culture/)



In the first century, while Christianity was still in its infancy, the Greco-Roman world paid little attention.  For the most part, the early Christian movement was seen as something still underneath the Jewish umbrella.

But in the second century, as Christianity emerged with a distinctive religious identity, the surrounding pagan culture began to take notice.  And it didn’t like what it saw.  Christians were seen as strange and superstitious–a peculiar religious movement that undermined the norms of a decent society.  Christians were, well, *different*.

So, what was so different about Christians compared to the surrounding Greco-Roman culture?  One distinctive trait was that Christians would not pay homage to the other “gods” (see my prior post on this subject [here](http://thegospelcoalition.org/article/are-christians-intolerant-haters-the-charges-are-not-new)).  This was a constant irritant to those governing officials who preferred to see the pagan temples filled with loyal worshipers (temples which earned a good deal of money from the tributes they collected).

But, there was a second trait that separated Christians from the pagan culture:  *their sexual ethic*.  While it was not unusual for Roman citizens to have multiple sexual partners, homosexual encounters, and engagement with temple prostitutes, Christians stood out precisely because of their refusal to engage in these practices.

For instance, Tertullian goes to great lengths to defend the legitimacy of Christianity by pointing out how Christians are generous and share their resources with all those in need.  But, then he says, “One in mind and soul, we do not hesitate to share our earthly goods with one another. All things are common among us *but our wives*” (*Apol*. 39). Why does he say this?  Because, in the Greco-Roman world, it was not unusual for people to share their spouses with each other.

In the second-century *Epistle to Diognetus*, the author goes out of his way to declare how normal Christians are in regard to what they wear, what they eat, and how they participate in society.  However, he then says, “[Christians] share their meals, *but not their sexual partners*” (*Diogn*. 5.7).  Again, this is the trait that makes Christians different.

We see this play out again in the second-century *Apology of Aristides*.  Aristides defends the legitimacy of the Christian faith to the emperor Hadrian by pointing out how Christians “do not commit adultery nor fornication” and “their men keep themselves from every unlawful union” (15).

A final example comes from the second-century apology of Minucius Felix.  In his defense to Octavius, he contrasts the sexual ethic of the pagan world with that of Christians:

*Among the Persians, a promiscuous association between sons and mothers is allowed. Marriages with sisters are legitimate among the Egyptians and in Athens. Your records and your tragedies, which you both read and hear with pleasure, glory in incests: thus also you worship incestuous gods, who have intercourse with mothers, with daughters, with sisters. With reason, therefore, is incest frequently detected among you, and is continually permitted. Miserable men, you may even, without knowing it, rush into what is unlawful: since you scatter your lusts promiscuously, since you everywhere beget children, since you frequently expose even those who are born at home to the mercy of others, it is inevitable that you must come back to your own children, and stray to your own offspring. Thus you continue the story of incest, even although you have no consciousness of your crime. But we maintain our modesty not in appearance, but in our heart we gladly abide by the bond of a single marriage; in the desire of procreating, we know either one wife, or none at all (31).*

This sampling of texts from the second century demonstrates that one of the main ways that Christians stood out from their surrounding culture was their distinctive sexual behavior.  Of course, this doesn’t mean Christians were perfect in this regard.  No doubt, many Christians committed sexual sins.  But, Christianity as a whole was still committed to striving towards the sexual ethic laid out in Scripture–and the world took notice.

Needless to say, this has tremendous implications for Christians in the modern day.  We are reminded again that what we are experiencing in the present is not new–Christians battled an over-sexed culture as early as the first and second century!

But, it is also a reminder why Christians must not go along with the ever-changing sexual norms of our world.  To do so would not only be a violation of the clear teachings of Scripture, but it would rob us of one of our greatest witnessing opportunities.  In as much as marriage reflects Christ’s love for the church, Christians’ commitment to marriage is a mean of proclaiming that love.

In the end, Christianity triumphed in its early Greco-Roman context not because it was the same as the surrounding pagan culture, but because it was different.

<http://www.roman-empire.net/society/soc-household.html>

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| Household Sex |

In a Roman household, sex was in plentiful supply. Except, so it seems, between the actual married couples. The existence of slaves in the house naturally mean that, particularly the men, but also the women (although with the risk of pregnancy and disgrace), had access to sex whenever they so wanted it.
Roman sexuality in its pagan times is perhaps hard to understand by western society with its values heavily influenced by Christianity.
To a Roman, sex did not create any kind of bond between two people. It created no obligation between one side and the other. And, for the man at least, there appeared no reason why he should not share many sexual partners, - as long as it didn't get him into any form of trouble.
What is peculiar though is that, whereas even the sharing of a meal created a form of social relationship with a person, having sex with them did not.
Marriage was a contract between a woman and a man, but it did not in any way require them to love each other.
If Romans saw marriage as an institution brought about by civilization, then sex to them had nothing to do with civility. In fact it was the direct opposite. It was where the animal still resident in man revealed itself. There was no shame in sexual acts at all. And yet it was seen as indecent to treat it as anything else but a private matter. So, it was definitely not something one talked about.
As far as the law was concerned then sex with slaves was not adulterous. Or at least not for men. And sex with a free-born man or woman was only adultery if they were not doing it for money. Thus, sex with a prostitute did not constitute adultery.
However, adultery with a free-born was a crime, *stuprum*. And for this there was only one punishment; death.
So as long as one steered clear of committing *stuprum*, anything was allowed. There was no limits on age and also none on gender.

However, if Rome was a tolerant society in law, then socially it was still not acceptable to be seen to practice sex in excess. This was deemed a flaw in a Roman's character, making him disreputable.
And if the majority of Romans treated sex with an embarrassed silence, then it was expected that everyone else did so, too.
Worst of all was it to follow the example of the Greeks, who saw sex as some form of pleasurable art. That in Roman eyes was decadent, perverse, if not barbaric. Sex offered many social pitfalls to a citizen. If it followed no particular rules, then its practice could reveal weaknesses about the man.
The worst weakness ever to be discovered in a man was 'effeminacy'. In fact it was perhaps the worst insult known to Romans to be called effeminate.
For an effeminate man was soft, he had become weak and girlish in the eyes of his fellow countrymen. The easy life had made him so, particularly if he enjoyed sexual relations too much. Such a man become both a homosexual and a womanizer in the eyes of others. Paradoxical as that might be, it was the Roman way. And few were safe from being deemed effeminate. Even Pompey the great general who had led forces into the east and conquered huge sways of territory for Rome, was deemed an effeminate lecher for his excessive love for Julia - his own wife!

If slaves were all bound not merely by ownership but by loyalty (*fides*) to a particular household, then the rejection of one of the men's advances could be seen as more than disobedience, but betrayal of sorts. And if the man did refrain from forcing the slave to obey, then it was not necessarily out of respect of the slave's shared humanity, but could well have been due to his own desire to restrain himself. Self-control and restraint, inner discipline, was a virtue sought by all Romans. To be able to curb his desires and show inner strength both to himself as well as to his slaves will have no doubt made many a master not abuse his powers to too great an extent.

However, the fact that a family would live under the same roof with slaves who had shared the bed with some of the family members. This could lead to some confusion about the relation between slaves and masters. For the children of the slaves might well be half-sisters or brothers of the Roman children of the household.
In such situations there was naturally the possibility of incest. Though indeed it would be not seen as such. For incest was only deemed so when involving members of your own 'official' family.
But if the master of the house was sleeping with the daughter of a slave who had been a former mistress this was not deemed to be so, despite it being very well possible that the girl was in fact his daughter. And if it were not the master himself, who was to say that his son might not share a bed with the girl, who might be of a similar age to him. If biologically they might be half-sister and half-brother, the law saw nothing wrong with it. And for all the confusion and secrecy about sex in the household, they might well not have known about their shared parentage.

Impurity- could include perjury, misuse of sex
[akatharsia](http://biblehub.com/greek/akatharsia_167.htm)
ἀκαθαρσία

Definition: (outrageous conduct, conduct shocking to public decency, a wanton violence), wantonness, lewdness

Debauchery-vices, lack of restraint, shamelessness of all manner, without regard for self-respect or the rights and feelings of others

aselgeia: licentiousness, wantonness

Original Word: ἀσέλγεια, ας, ἡ
Part of Speech: Noun, Feminine
Transliteration: aselgeia
Phonetic Spelling: (as-elg'-i-a)
Short Definition: wantonness, lewdness
Definition: (outrageous conduct, conduct shocking to public decency, a wanton violence), wantonness, lewdness.

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| Sorcery – φαρμακεία-[pharmakeia](http://biblehub.com/greek/pharmakeia_5331.htm)  |  |

the use of medicine, drugs or spells

STRONGS NT 5331: φαρμακεία

a. the use or the administering of drugs

b. poisoning: [Revelation 9:21](http://biblehub.com/interlinear/revelation/9-21.htm)

c. sorcery, magical arts, often found in connection with idolatry and fostered by it: [Galatians 5:20](http://biblehub.com/interlinear/galatians/5-20.htm) [Isaiah 47:9](http://biblehub.com/interlinear/isaiah/47-9.htm); [Exodus 7:22](http://biblehub.com/interlinear/exodus/7-22.htm); [Exodus 8:18](http://biblehub.com/interlinear/exodus/8-18.htm); [Exodus 7:11](http://biblehub.com/interlinear/exodus/7-11.htm)); tropically, of the deceptions and seductions of idolatry, [Revelation 18:23](http://biblehub.com/interlinear/revelation/18-23.htm).

STRONGS: a drug; an enchantment

Sorcery was a serious offence in Roman law. Maybe because it was connected to poisoning.

Poison was discovered in [ancient times](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ancient_times), and was used by ancient tribes and civilizations as a hunting tool to quicken and ensure the death of their prey or enemies. This use of poison grew more advanced, and many of these ancient peoples began forging weapons designed specifically for poison enhancement. Later in history, particularly at the time of the [Roman Empire](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roman_Empire), one of the more prevalent uses was assassination. As early as 331 BC, poisonings executed at the dinner table or in drinks were reported, and the practice became a common occurrence. The use of fatal substances was seen among every social class; even the [nobility](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nobility) would often use it to dispose of unwanted political or economic opponents. [Pliny the Elder](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pliny_the_Elder) describes over 7000 different poisons. Gaius Plinius Secundus ([c.](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Circa) AD 23 – August 25, AD 79), commonly known by his [Anglicized](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anglicized) name, Pliny the Elder ([/ˈplɪni/](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Help%3AIPA_for_English)), was a Roman [author](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Author), [naturalist](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Natural_history), and [natural philosopher](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Natural_philosopher). He was also a naval and army commander of the early [Roman Empire](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roman_Empire) and personal friend of the emperor [Vespasian](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vespasian).

V22-23. Peace is a fruit of the Spirit- Those who are at peace with God receive the “peace of God,” which protects their hearts and minds in Christ Jesus (Phil4:7) and should flow into the community (Col3:15) because God is a “God of peace” ((Rom5:33; 16:20a; 2Cor13:11; Phil4:9; 1Thes5:23; Heb13:20). It is the opposite of enmity, hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions and envy. Therefore, the church should do its best to protect against all that would fight against this peace (Eph4:1-3). Unity of mind, heart, and purpose was what characterized the early church (Acts2:43-46). Jesus said that you will know that a church belongs to Him because of the love for each other. (John13:34) There can be no love where there is no peace. Peace should be in the home (1Cor7:15), in the church (1Cor14:33; Eph4:3), in the world (Rom12:18), between Jew and Gentile (Eph2:14-18). God wants us to pursue peace (Rom14:19). Peacemakers will be seen as sons of God (Matt5:9).

All these fruits of the Spirit are displayed by God in many ways.

God is patience: Ex34:6; Ps103:8; Lk18:7; Rom2:4; Rom9:22

Therefore we need to be imitators of God (Eph5:1) and be patient: Eph4:2; Col1:11; Col3:12; 1Thes5:14.

God is kind: Ps34:8; 1Pet2:3; Ps136:1; Lk6:35; Rom11:22.

What does God want us to do with His kindness?

To lead us to repentance (Rom2:4) and to show kindness to others (Rom11:22; 2Sam9:3; Eph4:32; 1Cor13:4).

Faithfulness - [pistis](http://biblehub.com/greek/pistis_4102.htm) - πίστις

Faithfulness can mean being both full of faith and also being loyal. God shows us His faithfulness. God is faithful to his promises (Dt7:9; 1Cor1:9; Rom3:3) We therefore need to be faithful to God. (Lk12:42; Lk16:10; Mt25:14-30)

Gentleness- Jesus was gentle (Mt11:29; 12:20, Mt5:5)

Self-control- Think of what God wants us to be like. He wants us to be self-controlled. The world teaches us that we have to control others. Think of all the dictators of the world who want to control others instead of controlling themselves. Think of the stalkers who want to control women instead of controlling themselves. Think of those who are violent and aggressive. They are so busy trying to control others that there is no room or thought to controlling themselves. However, this virtue is not about our ability to hunker down and grin and bear it. Self-control is a fruit of the Spirit. We need to ask God for self-control. We need desire it. We need to pursue it. How are you doing? Or are you feeding your sinful nature? Watching porn, over eating, over sleeping, not being disciplined in your times with God, taking care of your health, over spending, missing work, over indulging in alcohol? Are you out of control? Are you getting help with your struggles?

God is the one who helps us gain self-control through His Spirit. The more you understand grace-the more you will overcome in this area. There are groups out there that can help you: Celebrate Recovery, Broken Chains, Alcoholics Anonymous, Narcotics Anonymous, Gamblers Anonymous, Weight Watchers, etc. Your higher power is Jesus. But are you getting the help? Are you being open? The struggles will continue unless you get rid of the secrets. Are you struggling in silence? Are you trying to convince yourself that you can handle it on your own? There is no shame in accepting that you need help. Getting help is not a sign of weakness but of strength.

Interestingly enough, what do the works of the flesh do?

They block fellowship. The fruits of the Spirit allow, promote and enhance fellowship. This is why hiding sin is so dangerous. It prevents you from getting the support you need to overcome. This is exactly why Paul brings this up in Galatians 6. How do we help one another? We get open and support one another. Otherwise, Satan continues to deceive us into thinking we need to fight sin alone.

Strong's Concordance

koinónia: fellowship - κοινωνία
Phonetic Spelling: (koy-nohn-ee'-ah)
Short Definition: participation, communion, fellowship
Definition: (lit: partnership) (a) contributory help, participation, (b) sharing in, communion, (c) spiritual fellowship, a fellowship in the spirit.

HELPS Word-studies

*koinōnía*– properly, what is *shared* in *common* as the basis of *fellowship* (*partnership, community*).

Thayer's Greek Lexicon

Κοινωνία - fellowship, association, community, communion, joint participation, contact; in the N. T. as in classical Greek

1. the share which one has in anything, participation; with the genitive of the thing in which he shares: [Philippians 2:1](http://biblehub.com/interlinear/philippians/2-1.htm); , [2 Corinthians 13:13](http://biblehub.com/interlinear/2_corinthians/13-13.htm) (14); [Philippians 3:10](http://biblehub.com/interlinear/philippians/3-10.htm); [Philemon 1:6](http://biblehub.com/interlinear/philemon/1-6.htm); in the benefits of Christ's death, [1 Corinthians 10:16](http://biblehub.com/interlinear/1_corinthians/10-16.htm), in the (mystical) body of Christ or the church, [2 Corinthians 8:4](http://biblehub.com/interlinear/2_corinthians/8-4.htm); [Ephesians 3:9](http://biblehub.com/interlinear/ephesians/3-9.htm), to obtain fellowship in the dignity and blessings of the Son of God, 1 Corinthians 1:9.

2. contact, fellowship, intimacy: the right hand as the sign and pledge of fellowship (in fulfilling the apostolic office), [Galatians 2:9](http://biblehub.com/interlinear/galatians/2-9.htm), what in common has light with darkness? [2 Corinthians 6:14](http://biblehub.com/interlinear/2_corinthians/6-14.htm), used of the intimate bond of fellowship which unites Christians: absolutely, [Acts 2:42](http://biblehub.com/interlinear/acts/2-42.htm); [Philippians 1:5](http://biblehub.com/interlinear/philippians/1-5.htm); [1 John 1:3, 7](http://biblehub.com/interlinear/1_john/1-3.htm); of the fellowship of Christians with God and Christ, [1 John 1:3, 6](http://biblehub.com/interlinear/1_john/1-3.htm), (which fellowship, according to John's teaching, consists in the fact that Christians are partakers in common of the same mind as God and Christ, and of the blessings arising therefrom). By a use unknown to secular authors κοινωνία in the N. T. denotes:

3. a benefaction jointly contributed, a collection, a contribution, as exhibiting an embodiment and proof of fellowship: [2 Corinthians 8:4](http://biblehub.com/interlinear/2_corinthians/8-4.htm); for the benefit of one, [2 Corinthians 9:13](http://biblehub.com/interlinear/2_corinthians/9-13.htm); ποιεῖσθαι κοινωνία (to make a contribution), [Romans 15:26](http://biblehub.com/interlinear/romans/15-26.htm); [Hebrews 13:16](http://biblehub.com/interlinear/hebrews/13-16.htm).

Strong's Exhaustive Concordance

fellowship; contribution

From [koinonos](http://biblehub.com/greek/2844.htm); partnership, i.e. (literally) participation, or (social) intercourse, or (pecuniary) benefaction -- (to) communicate(-ation), communion, (contri-)distribution, fellowship.

Paul does not just mean that there are no laws again the fruit of the Spirit. Paul also means that when one lives according to the Spirit a Christian is in a sphere with which law has nothing to do.

Can the state make a law that we must love our neighbor? No. The state can only make a law that says that we will do our neighbor no harm. The law prohibits hate crimes but it does not promote love. The fruit of the Spirit is not a precondition for justification. It is the product of justification. It is the product of grace, not a prerequisite for baptism.

V24-26. Those who belong to Christ, have acknowledged his lordship and have put him on in baptism (Gal3:26-27). They have made a clean break with the flesh and the law. They are dead to the law, to sin and the flesh. (Rom6:1-5, Gal2:20, Col3:1-5). Living by the Spirit is the root, walking by the Spirit is the fruit; consequently it results in the reproduction of the thoughts and actions of Christ in the disciples.

Chapter 6

V1-5.

V1. Those who are spiritual i.e. those who walk by the Spirit (Gal5:22-25) and manifest the fruit of the Spirit, must help restore those who have fallen into sin. The spiritual are highly aware of their own vulnerability to temptation and that should prevent self-righteousness in the wake of helping others.

V2. The strong must help the weak (Rom15:1, 1Cor8:13) with their “burdens”:

burdens -[barē](http://biblehub.com/greek/bare__922.htm) βάρη

Strong's Concordance
Short Definition: a weight, burden
Definition: a weight, burden, lit. or met.

HELPS Word-studies

*báros* – properly, a weight; (figuratively) *real substance* (what has *value*, *significance*), i.e. carries personal and eternal significance, heaviness, burden, trouble: load, burden, figuratively, a load, abundance, authority, burdensome.

V3-4. There is great danger in comparing ourselves to each other instead of comparing ourselves to Christ and His Spirit. Thus Paul’s emphasis on the fruit of the Spirit in Gal5:22-24.

V5. How is it that we bear one another’s burdens and yet bear our own burdens? Here the word burden is the word: [phortion](http://biblehub.com/greek/phortion_5413.htm) φορτίον load

Strong's Concordance

phortion: a burden
Phonetic Spelling: (for-tee'-on)
Short Definition: a burden, freight
Definition: a burden; the freight of a ship.

HELPS Word-studies

**5413** *phortíon* – properly, a *burden* which must be carried by the *individual*, i.e. as something *personal* and hence is not *transferrable*, i.e. it cannot "be shifted" to someone else.

 What this passage teaches is that when someone has a burden that is a very heavy burden, then we should help each other. However, we should not be taking care of other people’s responsibilities and enabling them to be irresponsible. There are loads that we must all carry ourselves. For example: I should be paying my own bills, taking care of my own health, doing my own homework, cleaning my own room, etc. God expects us to help one another when times are tough. But we are not to take care of each other to the point of enabling.

Jesus had this same attitude, He carried our burdens (βάρη) and helped us overcome sin and death. This is something we would never have been able to do alone. However, it is our responsibility to carry our own load (φορτίον) daily as disciples and follow Jesus. Do not expect Jesus to do your laundry, homework, chores for you. That’s your job.

 What daily actions should we be doing for ourselves?

V6-10.

V6. Paul is showing that despite the fact that he could claim a right as an apostle to be supported by the Galatians, he is refraining from doing so. (11Cor9:14; 1Thes2:9; 1Cor9:15-18; Acts20:33-35; 2Thes3:6-13) The laborer is worth his wages. (Lk10:7; 1 Tim5:18; Mt10:10) Paul possibly wanted to show that the false brethren that were teaching the Galatians circumcision, had other motives that may be based in fees. It was common for pagan priests to charge fees for their ritual and sacrificial services.

V7-10. The law of sowing and reaping has a long history in the Bible. However, mockers do not heed this law. (Hos8:1-7; Job4:8; Prov22:8; 2Cor9:6-9; 1Cor15:33; Jam1:16-25; 2Chron36:15-16; Jer20:1-7) Living by the Spirit and not the flesh has its reward of eternal life (2Cor5:10). Therefore, persevere (1Cor15:50; Rom5:3; Phil1:27ff; 1Tim2:6)

V11-18.

V11. Paul often used amanuensis (professional writers) and probably did use one up to this point in the letter. He then takes up the pen to finish it. This made the letter authentic. (1Cor16:21; Col4:18; 2Thes3:17f). Kind of like the way kings used seals to authenticate their messages or we sign our names to a typed document to make it official. Paul apparently expected the letter to be read to all the churches in Galatia. His handwriting would have authenticated it to all the churches in Galatia.

At some point, the letter would be copied and passed around the churches. However, the emphasis on writing in his own hand would serve the purpose of ensuring that false brethren would not twist Paul’s letter to suit their needs and that its instructions would be carried out carefully.

Various theories are forwarded to explain why Paul wrote in large letters. Some say that Paul concluded the letter in his own hand in order to add emphasis to what was written beforehand. Some say that Paul’s thorn in the flesh was his failing eye sight and this contributed to his need to write in large letters. Others claim that Paul’s health issues had to do with his hands, which affected his penmanship. Yet another theory is that Paul wrote in large letters to make it easy to read, because at one point he had hand damage due to being crucified or even that it was due to Paul having “workman’s” hands due to his trade as a tent maker. All of this is, of course, speculation. It may be simply that Paul’s handwriting had developed over the years into large letters.

V12. If some of the trouble-makers could persuade the Gentile Christians to accept circumcision, that might preserve the Jerusalem church and its daughter churches in Judaea from reprisals at the hands of Zealot-minded militants for being linked with uncircumcised Gentiles. To such militants the cross of Christ, as it was proclaimed by Paul and those who agreed with him, was a scandal (5:11).

V13. No one knows for sure who the “they” in this are:

Gentile Christians who already had been circumcised?

Jewish Christians who were Judaizing?

Gnostic groups?

V14. Paul does not boast in external things (accomplishments) anymore (like keeping the law) but in something nobler, the cross of Christ. In 2 Cor11:21f and Phil3:4-6 Paul mentions some aspects of his heritage and personal achievement in which he would have boasted before his conversion. But no longer, for those are from things of the flesh and not of faith.

But the noble object of Paul’s present boasting was, by all ordinary standards of his day, the most ignoble of all objects—a matter of unrelieved shame. It is difficult, after sixteen centuries and more during which the cross has been a sacred symbol, to realize the unspeakable horror and loathing which the very mention or thought of the cross provoked in Paul’s day. The word *crux* was unmentionable in polite Roman society; even when one was being condemned to death by crucifixion. Cicero notes that the sentence used which served as a sort of euphemism; ‘hang him on the unlucky tree.’ At

(An approximate symbol that might provoke similar reaction in us today might be that of having an electric chair, lethal injection needle or noose on a necklace, top of a church building, on the cover of Bibles or on a ring or other type of jewelry.)

One could have understood it if the early Christians, knowing that the crucifixion of Jesus was an undeniable fact, had admitted it reluctantly when they were compelled to do so. But Paul, a Roman citizen by birth and religious Jew by upbringing, not only dismisses as the merest refuse (Phil3:8) those things in which he had once taken great pride but embraces as the most worth-while goal in life the knowledge of the crucified Christ and boasts in his cross- a shocking paradox indeed.

What would you think?

1. There is a homeless man in your city.
2. He is despised by the political leaders for being a trouble maker.
3. He is condemned by the religious authorities for being irreverent.
4. He is scoffed at by the intelligentsia for being uneducated yet full of himself.
5. He is considered a rebel by the government.
6. He is followed by a bunch of backwards out of town “hicks.”
7. This lunatic claims to be God.
8. He has been executed by lethal injection/electric chair/hung by a noose (or whatever other manner of grotesque torture man can or has devised to kill.

That is the message that Paul embraced. (1Cor1:18) It would come as no surprise to Paul that such a message would be scandalous. How could anyone in the Greco-Roman world accept such an absurd message. Paul says that this could only happen because of the power and wisdom of God (1Cor2:4). Paul has made a radical break with everything that he considered valuable before.

When I survey the wondrous cross,

On which the Prince of glory died,

My riches gain I count but lost,

And pour contempt on all my pride.

Forbid bid it Lord that I should boast,

Save in the death of Christ, my Lord,

All the vain things that charmed me most,

I sacrifice them to His blood.

See from His head, His hands, His feet,

Sorrow and love flow mingled down;

Did ever such love and sorrows meet,

Or thorns compose so rich a crown?

Were the whole world of nature mine,

That were a present far too small,

Love so amazing, so divine,

Demands my soul, my life, me all.

V15. The only thing that matters is the cross of Christ and whether I am in Christ or not. I am a new creation (Rom6:4, 2Co5:17; Rom8:1; Gal2:20)

V17. EXPOSITORY (ENGLISH BIBLE)

[Ellicott's Commentary for English Readers](http://biblehub.com/commentaries/ellicott/galatians/6.htm)

(17) The Apostle has done. He will not dally with these vexatious attacks upon himself and his authority any more. He dismisses them with an appeal which ought to be final. He points to the scars of wounds which he had received in his Master’s service. The branding-irons of Christ, he says, have imprinted these upon me. They show that I, like the slaves of a heathen temple, am devoted and consecrated to His service. They are my credentials, and I shall produce no others. My assailants must leave me in peace.

The marks.—The stigmata, or marks inflicted with branding-irons, such as those which show that a slave is attached to a particular temple or to the service of some particular deity. Branding was applied in some other cases, but especially to temple slaves. Those with which the Galatians were most familiar would be engaged in the worship of Cybele.

There does not seem to be evidence to connect this passage directly with the incident of the “stigmata” in the life of St. Francis of Assisi, but it would seem very probable that the use of the word, which was left untranslated in the Latin versions, suggested, whether by a more or by a less distant association, the idea which took so strong a hold upon his mind that in a moment of extreme spiritual tension the actual marks of the Passion seemed to imprint themselves upon his body.

Of the Lord Jesus.—The true text is simply, “of Jesus.”

[MacLaren's Expositions](http://biblehub.com/commentaries/maclaren/galatians/6.htm)

Galatians 6:17

THE OWNER’S BRAND

The reference in these words is probably to the cruel custom of branding slaves as we do cattle, with initials or signs, to show their ownership. It is true that in old times criminals, and certain classes of Temple servants, and sometimes soldiers, were also so marked or tattooed, but it is most in accordance with the Apostle’s way of thinking that he here has reference to the first class, and would represent himself as the slave of Jesus Christ, designated as His by the scars and weaknesses which were the consequences of his apostolic zeal. Imprisonment, beating by the Jewish rod, shipwrecks, fastings, weariness, perils, persecutions, all these he sums up in another place as being the tokens by which he was approved as an apostle of Jesus Christ. And here he, no doubt, has the same thought in his mind, that his bodily weakness, which was the direct issue of his apostolic work, showed that he was Christ’s. The painful infirmity under which, as we learn, he was more especially suffering, about the time of writing this letter, may also have been in his mind.

All through this Epistle he has been thundering and lightning against the disputers of this apostolic authority. And now at last he softens, and as it were, bares his thin arm, his scarred bosom, and bids these contumacious Galatians look upon them, and learn that he has a right to speak as the representative and messenger of the Lord Jesus.

So we have here two or three points, I think, worth considering. First, think for a moment of the slave of Christ; then of the brands which mark the ownership; then of the glory in the servitude and the sign; and then of the immunity from human disturbances which that service gives. ‘From henceforth let no man trouble me. I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus.’

I. First, then, a word or two about that conception of the slave of Christ.

It is a pity that our Bible has not rendered the title which Paul ever gives himself at the beginning of his letters, by that simple word ‘slave,’ instead of the feebler one, ‘servant.’ For what he means when he calls himself the ‘servant of Jesus Christ’ is not that he bore to Christ the kind of relation which servants among us bear to those who have hired and paid them, and to whom they have come under obligations of their own will which they can terminate at any moment by their own caprice; but that he was in the roughest and simplest sense of the word, Christ’s slave.

What lies in that metaphor? Well, it is the most uncompromising assertion of the most absolute authority on the one hand, and claim of unconditional submission and subjection on the other.

The slave belonged to his master; the master could do exactly as he liked with him. If he killed him nobody had anything to say. He could set him to any task; he could do what he liked with any little possession or property that the slave seemed to have. He could break all his relationships, and separate him from wife and kindred.

All that is atrocious and blasphemous when it is applied to the relations between man and man, but it is a blessed and magnificent truth when it is applied to the relations between a man and Christ. For this Lord has absolute authority over us, and He can do what He likes with everything that belongs to us; and we, and our duties, and our circumstances, and our relationships, are all in His hands, and the one thing that we have to render to Him is utter, absolute, unquestioning, unhesitating, unintermittent and unreserved obedience and submission. That which is abject degradation when it is rendered to a man, that which is blasphemous presumption when it is required by a man, that which is impossible, in its deepest reality, as between man and man, is possible, is blessed, is joyful and strong when it is required by, and rendered to, Jesus Christ. We are His slaves if we have any living relationship to Him at all. Where, then, in the Christian life, is there a place for self-will; where a place for self-indulgence; where for murmuring or reluctance; where for the assertion of any rights of my own as against that Master? We owe absolute obedience and submission to Jesus Christ.

Was Paul referring to some physical mark on his body caused by the persecutions he suffered for Jesus? If so, maybe he is reminding the Galatians of the very marks he received while ministering to them that were in the Galatian region. Paul may be saying, ‘You know that I am a slave of Christ, not because I talk a good talk or use persuasive words, but because you know the marks of Christ on my body. Those physical scars are not because of circumcision but because of the marks in my body I gladly received on your behalf as an apostle to you Galatians.’

What were the cities/towns of Galatia that Paul preached to?



The churches of Galatia:

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Scripture** | **Galatian City** | **Galatian Persecution** | **Scripture** | **Result** |
| Acts13:14 | **Psidian Antioch** | Persecution | Acts13:50 | People begging to hear the Gospel . Many converted to the Lord. Message spread through the whole region (Acts13:42, 48-49) |
| Acts14:1 | **Iconium** | Attempted stoning and mistreatment | Acts14:5 | Great multitude believed and city split. (Acts14:1,4) |
| Acts14:6 | **Lycaonia, Lystra** | Stoning | Acts14:19 | Disciples supported Paul (Acts14:20) |
| Acts14:6 | **Derbe** | None mentioned |  | Many disciples made (Acts14:21) |

Paul’s conclusion about his Galatian ministry? Acts14:22 “Through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God.” (see also Phil3:10; 2Cor1:5-7; Coloss1:24)

V18. The grace of the Lord Jesus be with the Galatians. Why grace? Paul begins with (Gal1:3) and stresses throughout the epistle to the Galatians that we are saved by grace through faith and not by ritualistic conformity to the law. This he concludes in all of his letters: Rom16:24, 1Cor16:23, 2Cor13:14, Gal4:18, Eph6:24; Phil4:23, Col4:18, 1Thes5:28, 2Thes3:18, 1Tim6:12, 2Tim4:22, Titus3:15, Phm25.

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**Appendix**

“While the “trouble-makers” were no doubt moved by religious zeal, there are hints of another kind of motivation. Paul charges them with the aim of avoiding persecution ‘for the cross of Christ’ (Gal6:12). Moreover, he implies that if he himself preached circumcision (as some alleged he still did), he would not be persecuted as he was.”

“An illuminating suggestion was made by Robert Jewett in an article published in 1971. There was a resurgence of ‘zealot’ activity in Judaea under the governors Tiberius Julius Alexander (c. AD 46-48), who crucified two insurgent leaders, sons of Judas the Galilaean (Jos., Ant. 20.102), and his successor Ventidius Cumanus (c. 48-52), during whose period of office disorders increased (Ant. 20.105-136; War 2.223-246). Zealot vengeance was liable to be visited on Jews who fraternized with Gentiles, and Jewish Christians who shared table-fellowship with their Gentile brethren were exposed to such reprisals. If Gentile Christians could be persuaded to accept circumcision, this (it was hoped) would protect Jewish Christians against zealot vengeance. The persuasion would be more effective if Gentile believers were assured that circumcision was a condition required by God from all men who wished to be accepted by him” (R. Jewett, “The Agitators and the Galatian Congregation’, NTS 17 (1970-71), 198-212. (The Epistle of Paul to the Galatians, p31).