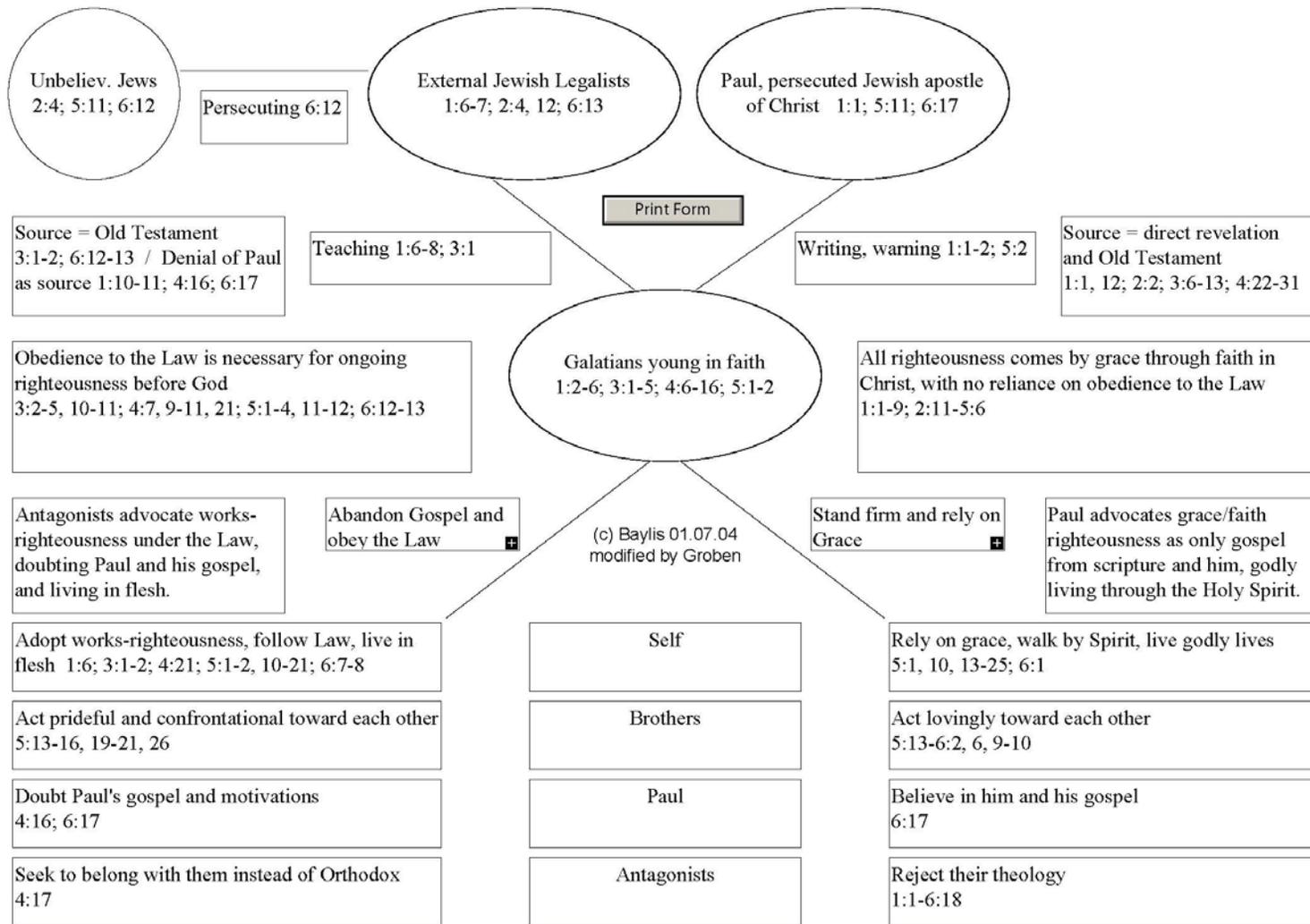


Synthetic Chart

Galatians Paul brought the true gospel of Christ – <i>righteousness by grace through faith in Christ</i> – which [unlike following the Law] results in godly living.				
Introduction	Source of Gospel	Content of Gospel	Effect of Gospel	Summary
Paul shared the true gospel of Christ with the Galatians. <i>Identifies the problem.</i> 1:1-9	Paul preaches the gospel from Christ, to please God, not men. <i>Defends the integrity of his teaching.</i> 1:10-2:21	Righteousness comes by grace through faith in Christ, leaving no need for the Law. <i>Defends the exclusion of the Law from the gospel.</i> 3:1-4:31	Reliance on Christ’s righteousness leads to godly living. <i>Defends reliance on the gospel for ongoing righteousness.</i> 5:1-6:14	The new creation is the key. <i>Restates a key point.</i> 6:15-18
<i>Galatians 5:1: It was for freedom that Christ set us free; therefore keep standing firm and do not be subject again to a yoke of slavery.</i>				

Problem/Solution Chart



ARGUMENT OF THE BOOK

Main Problem

Outside Jewish legalists have convinced some in the Galatian churches that, in a desire to be a people-pleaser, Paul presented them with less than the full gospel, having omitted the need for following the Mosaic Law to maintain righteousness before God, thus leaving the Galatians under a curse.

Goal

Paul will show that his gospel is from and for Christ, and that he has never acted as a people-pleaser in this regard. Further, he will show that the gospel he initially presented to the Galatians was the only true gospel, and that this gospel need not, indeed cannot, include adherence to the Mosaic Law. Last, he will show that while reliance on grace results in godly living, reliance on the flesh and the Law results in the opposite.

Definitions

- Antagonists: refers to Jewish legalists who advocated the Galatians follow the Law for ongoing righteousness before God, and accused Paul of purposely leaving out this aspect of the gospel in order to ensure Galatian affection [see 1:6-7; 2:3-4, 12; 6:12-13].
- Apostle: refers to the men sent out directly by Jesus Christ under his authority [see 1:1].
- Christ: refers to the Messiah, who is Jesus the Son of God and second member of the Godhead along with God the Father and the Holy Spirit, promised throughout the Old Testament, who would [among other things] provide deliverance from sin, death, and evil, and provide the Holy Spirit and new birth under the New Covenant [see 2:16-17, 20-21; 3:8, 13-14, 22-29; 4:4-5].
- Circumcised / Circumcision: refers to the act of snipping off the male foreskin, usually in reference to obeying the Mosaic Law [though the covenant of circumcision between God and Abraham predates the Mosaic Law]; sometimes refers to those who have experienced this in pursuit of the covenant with God, i.e. Jews [see 2:3, 7-9, 12; 5:3, 6, 11; 6:12-15].
- Curse / Accursed: refers to the opposite of blessing, a negative action of God toward man; specifically refers in Galatians 3:10 to Deuteronomy 27:26, which called for a curse on those who did not obey all of the Mosaic Law [see 1:8-9; 3:10-13].
- Dispensation: refers to a period of time when God relates to mankind in a specific way, with specific obligations and promises; in

Galatians, Paul specifically discussed two dispensations: that of the Mosaic Covenant and that of the contemporary time period under the New Covenant [see 3:23-25].

- Evil Age: refers to the contemporary time period, which was between the resurrection of Christ and his return, during which Satan continued to rule and the Gentiles continued to dominate Israel [see 1:4].
- Faith: refers to confident belief in God's revelation, including his promises of deliverance through Christ [2:16, 20; 3:6-8, 14, 22-24].
- Gentiles: refers to those who were not Jews by heritage, i.e. DNA [see 2:8-15].
- God: refers to the God of the Old Testament, God the Father, as opposed to either of the other members of the triune Godhead: Jesus Christ or the Holy Spirit [see 1:1, 3-4, 15-16; 3:6, 17-18; 4:4-6].
- Godly Living: refers to living in the image of God or living in the character of Christ, rather than living in the ways of the sinful flesh [see 5:19-25].
- Gospel / True Gospel: refers to the gospel of Jesus Christ, which Paul preached, that Jesus the Christ died to pay the price of sins, providing believers – those who accepted in faith his identity and work – with his righteousness, reconciliation with God, and eternal life [see 1:3-6, 11-12; 2:2-7; 3:8, 13-14; 4:4-5, 13].
- Grace: refers to an unearned gift or favor from God [see 1:6, 15; 2:9, 21].
- Holy Spirit: refers to the third member of the triune Godhead, distinct from God the Father and Christ; it is the "Spirit" who does the work of bringing about the new creation and sanctification in the one who believes in Christ [see 3:3-5; 4:6, 29; 5:16-25].
- Indwelling: refers to the reality that in this dispensation believers experience the blessing of the Holy Spirit dwelling within them; the Holy Spirit thus provides the believer with constant access to God and works the grace of sanctification in him [see 3:3, 5; 4:6; 5:16-25].
- Israel: refers to the nation created by God through Abraham, the descendents of Jacob, thus Jews, whom God led out of Egypt in the exodus and to whom God provided the Law through Moses; specifically referred to in Galatians 6:16 as "the Israel of God"

by which Paul meant the true Jewish remnant of believers [see 2:8-15; 6:16].

- Jews:** refers to those descended from Jacob by heritage, or DNA, which comprised Israel [see 2:8-15].
- Judaism:** refers to the religious culture of the Jews, guided by their interpretation of the Old Testament scriptures [see 1:13-14].
- Justified:** refers to being declared righteous in God's sight [see 2:16-17; 3:11, 24; 5:4].
- Kingdom Promises:** refers to specific promises of God in scripture regarding life under the New Covenant, some of which are realized in the contemporary dispensation but which will be fully realized in the Millennial Kingdom and on the New Earth; these include justification and sanctification, as part of the work of Christ and the Holy Spirit [see 3:14, 17-22, 29; 4:23-28].
- Legalists:** refers to Jews who advocate following the Law even if one is a follower of Christ [see 2:3-4, 12; 6:12-13].
- Mosaic Law / The Law:** refers to the body of law given by God through Moses to the Jews after the exodus from Egypt, found in the biblical books Exodus, Leviticus, and Deuteronomy; sometimes refers to the entire Old Testament instruction [see 3:17-24].
- New Covenant:** refers to the "promise" that God would establish a new covenant with his people to replace the Mosaic Covenant at which they were failures; this covenant was established by Christ [Luke 22:20]; Paul, in his discussion of being people of the promise, quoted Isaiah 54:1 [4:27], which refers to the time of complete fulfillment of this new covenant with Israel through the promised redeemer, Christ [see 3:14, 17-22, 29; 4:23-28 for promises related to this covenant].
- New Creation:** refers to the new birth of the believer in Christ, which is the regeneration by the Holy Spirit allowing for justification, sanctification, and eternal life [see 6:15].
- Orthodox Community of Faith:** refers to those believers following Christ through the apostolic teachings, from which the antagonists hope to sever the Galatian loyalties [see 4:17; 6:16]
- Righteousness:** refers to an absence of guilt before God due to sin, making possible reconciliation with God and eternal life [see 2:21; 3:6, 21].
- Sanctification:** refers to the state of holiness, i.e. separation from the world for God's purposes; experientially, it is the process by which the

Holy Spirit transforms the believer toward being more “perfected,” more in the image of God, more like Christ in character; facilitated in part through the renewing of the mind as the believer appropriates God’s revelation [Romans 12:2] which is an act of grace in itself [see 3:3; 5:5-6, 13-16, 22-25].

Sin: refers to an action contrary to the will and character of God; sometimes refers to a state of corruption, which bears the penalty of death [see 1:4; 2:17; 3:22].

Uncircumcised: refers to Gentiles [see 2:7-8].

Walk by the Spirit / Be Led: refers to the Holy Spirit’s graceful work within the believer to experience further sanctification, allowing the believer to resist the temptation to act in the sinful flesh and bringing forth Christ-like character and behavior in the believer [see 5:16-25].

Interpretive Argument

I. Introduction and Identification of the Problem. Theme: Paul shared the true gospel of Christ with the Galatians [1:1-9].

Discussion of Argument: In this introduction, Paul laid the foundation for his argument, identifying the characters, the true gospel, and the problem, as follows:

- † He has authority granted from Christ and God [1:1-2].
- † The gospel he received: faith in the graceful atoning work of Christ [1:3-5].
- † Identity of the problem: Having been saved by the true gospel, the Galatian believers now are listening to those supporting a distorted gospel [1:6-7].¹
- † He originally brought them the true gospel, and anyone preaching otherwise should be accursed [1:8-9].

Effectiveness of Argument: Paul quickly established his credibility and his reason for writing. In his self-identification, he lay the first block in his defense against the charge of being a people-pleaser, by noting he was sanctioned by Christ and God the Father, not other men. In expressing his gospel, he subtly mentioned that they were in the present “evil age” [v.4], which is between the resurrection [v.1] and the second advent it signifies. Thus they were not in the future kingdom, nor were they in the previous time of the Mosaic Law during which the Law promised curses for the disobedient and blessings for the obedient. This was a first hint about the error of the distorted gospel and accusations they had heard, which he magnified by calling their acceptance of these false teachings a desertion of God [v.6]. In completing his introduction, Paul expressed

¹ Based on my research, I believe these churches were not in the northern ethnic Galatia, but rather in the southern part of the Roman political province, the churches mentioned in Paul’s first missionary journey, in what is now Turkey. From this research, I also believe that Paul learned of this problem just after returning from this first missionary journey, to Antioch where he found a similar problem occurring. This places the date of this epistle just before the Jerusalem Council, after which Paul would revisit these churches on his second missionary journey, to share with them the vindication of his views at that Council.

how adamant he was about the integrity of his gospel message, that anyone who might change it – even himself or an angel – should be accursed. Together, these few lines set the tone and direction of the letter, putting the Galatians on alert that Paul would refute the charges against him and prove the accuracy and integrity of his gospel.

II. Source of the Gospel and Defense of the Integrity of Paul’s Teaching. Theme: Paul preaches the gospel from Christ, to please God, not men [1:10–2:21].

Discussion of Argument: Paul focused first on rebutting the idea that he preached an incomplete gospel to the Galatians because he was trying to please them [men]. He made the following points:

- † He got his gospel from Christ and preached it for Christ [1:10-14].
- † He began his ministry without dependence on apostolic approval [1:15-24].
- † The apostles eventually approved his gospel, but did not contribute to it [2:1-10].
- † He defended this gospel even when it required rebuking the apostle Peter [2:11-21].

Effectiveness of Argument: This section refutes the allegation that Paul preached a people-pleasing gospel by making four points: his gospel was from Christ, not men; he made no initial effort to obtain approval from the other apostles when he began his ministry; when he did discuss his gospel with the other apostles, they approved of it without adding to it; and he stood by his gospel even when it required confronting Peter. Thus the evidence clearly shows Paul preached the same gospel to Jews and Gentiles, without any effort at people-pleasing.

In relating his discussion with Peter, Paul introduced his discussion of why his gospel was incompatible with keeping the Law: As Christ is the only source of righteousness, and faith in Christ is the only means to obtain that righteousness, the Law necessarily cannot be a vehicle for righteousness in the believer, and thus reliance on it must be a sin. This conclusion is a great contrast to the arguments of the antagonists, that in leaving out obedience to the Law Paul opened the Galatians up to a curse: the curse in fact comes from turning back to the Law when one already has Christ.

A. Paul’s gospel is for and from Christ, not men [1:10-14].

1. Paul is trying to please God and Christ, not men [1:10].
2. Paul’s gospel was not given to him by men, but by Christ [1:11-12].
3. Paul gave up his respected position in Judaism for persecution as a follower of Christ [1:13-14].

Not only was Paul trying to please Christ and God instead of men, but he knew it would be impossible to truly serve Christ if one wanted to be a people-pleaser. Second, the gospel he taught them was sanctioned directly from Christ, not from other men. Third, he was once high up in Judaism and persecuting believers but then joined the ranks of the persecuted, an action proving his motivation of pleasing Christ instead of people.

B. Paul's ministry was not dependent on apostolic approval [1:15-24].

1. Once saved by Christ to preach to the Gentiles, Paul did not consult with men, not even the apostles, but went to Arabia, then back to Damascus [1:15-17].
2. Three years later, Paul went to Jerusalem and met Peter and James, but not the other apostles, and then went off to Syria and Cilicia [1:18-21].
3. The churches in Judea did not know Paul, but they knew of his conversion and work and therefore praised God [1:22-24].

From the start of his ministry, Paul was following the guidance of Christ. While he respected the other apostles, he felt no need to consult with them as he began his ministry. When he did meet up with Peter and James, they evidently did not share with him anything he did not already know. Meanwhile, news of his ministry reached Judea, and it was an encouragement to praise of God, not to criticism of Paul.

C. The apostles approved of Paul's gospel, but did not contribute to it [2:1-10].

1. Fourteen years later,² Paul finally discussed his gospel with the other apostles, and found them in agreement [2:1-3].
2. The only question about Gentiles following the Law came from false believers, who were refuted [2:4-5].
3. Paul was not trying to appease the other apostles, nor did they add to his gospel, but he found they agreed with him and encouraged his ministry to the Gentiles, only reminding him to care for the needy³ [2:6-10].

When Paul did compare his gospel with that of the other apostles, many years later, he found they were in agreement. As evidence of this agreement, he mentioned that Titus was with him but was not required to be circumcised [v.3]. He found the same sort of antagonists in Jerusalem as were in Galatia, but did not yield to them, evidence of the integrity of his gospel and that he is not a people-pleaser.

D. Even when opposed by another apostle, Paul stood firm for his gospel [2:11-21].

1. Paul even faced down Peter when Peter went against this theology, being influenced by those who insisted on following the Law [2:11-13].
2. Paul's argument was that a person is made right with God by faith in Christ, not by obeying the Law; even the Jewish apostles lived by this, so it made no sense to require the Law of the Gentiles [2:14-16].
3. It is a sin to try to live by the Law when Christ removed the need [2:17-19].

² It is not relevant for this analysis exactly when this meeting occurred, but I believe it was fourteen years after Paul's conversion, based on a reconciliation with the history in Acts I did for a previous paper.

³ I believe these needy were in Jerusalem. If my timeline is correct, this meeting took place when Paul, Barnabas, and Titus brought the famine offering [Acts 11:27-30].

4. By association with Christ, believers are dead to the Law, and thus live now for Christ [2:20].

5. If believers could be made righteous by the Law, Christ would not have had to die [2:21].

Paul stood by his gospel even when it meant facing Peter, further proving he was not a people pleaser and did not change his gospel to accommodate anyone.

His argument with Peter serves to introduce the next concept, the defense of the exclusion of the Law from the gospel. Paul argued that, theologically, Jews by nature were law-keepers, but as they were not justified by the Law, but by faith in Christ, they had to realize that this justification in Christ leads to abandoning the Law as a source of righteousness: realizing first that if the Law could bring righteousness then Christ would have died needlessly; second that otherwise Christ could be seen as a minister of sin. With this in view, if a believer – who died to the Law through his association with Christ – tried to resume living by the Law, this itself would be a sin. The Law convicted the believer [Paul] to judicial death, but Christ took that death penalty, and so the resurrected Christ now lived in the believer, who in his flesh must live by faith in Christ.

III. Content of the Gospel and Defense of the Exclusion of the Law from the Gospel.

Theme: Righteousness comes by grace through faith in Christ, leaving no need for the Law [3:1-5:1].

Discussion of Argument: Having established the source and motivation of his gospel as Christ, not men, and thus defending against questions of the integrity [consistency] of his gospel preaching, Paul moved more fully into defending that gospel against the idea that it must include obedience to the Law. He emphasized the following five points:

- † Righteousness comes by faith, not the Law [3:1-5].
- † This view of righteousness is scriptural [3:6-29].
- † Believers are now sons and heirs of God, not slaves [4:1-7].
- † As children of the promise, believers should embrace the promise [4:8-20].
- † Believers must stand against the persecution by children of the flesh [4:21-5:1].

Effectiveness of Argument: This section established the truth that righteousness comes by grace through faith in Christ, with no reliance on the Law, and therefore believers have no need to seek righteousness through following the Law and should not listen to those who propose that course. Paul used the Old Testament – the source for the antagonists' theology – to show that righteousness has always come by faith, not the Law. This was true even of Abraham, the founder of the nation, and nothing changed when God brought the Law for its own purposes. In fact, it is demonstrable that one of the purposes of the Law was to point the way to Christ and his deliverance. Further, the coming of Christ has removed the need for the Law because he more fully exemplifies righteousness before God, he alone delivers righteousness to believers, and he has ushered in a new dispensation under a new covenant in which believers receive the indwelling Holy Spirit. Having been blessed with all that by grace when they came to faith in Christ, it would be ridiculous for the Galatians to enslave themselves again to the

Law. Thus they can see that the arguments of the antagonists are false, as are their motives and actions, which is consistent with expectations for such people based on scriptural history. Therefore, Paul exhorts them to stand firm in their faith in the true gospel against this attack.

A. Righteousness comes by faith, not the Law [3:1-5].

1. The Galatians were saved and given the Holy Spirit by grace through their faith in Christ [3:1-2].
2. The Galatians are sanctified by grace also, and so should not look to the Law or their own efforts for this [3:3-5].

Just as they received salvation and thus the Holy Spirit by grace through their faith in Christ, so too the Galatians should realize that they continue into experiential sanctification by grace through their faith in Christ. Thus, their ongoing righteousness before God is a gift, not a result of their works through the Law.

B. This view of righteousness is scriptural [3:6-29].

1. Abraham's righteousness came by faith, and only those Jews with faith are accounted as sons [3:6-7].
2. Gentiles who are receiving what was promised for them in God's promise to Abraham are blessed with justification through faith [3:8-9].
3. The Law cannot provide righteousness, and those who seek righteousness under the Law must obey all of the Law or be cursed [3:10-12].
4. Christ's death redeemed believers from the curse of failing to keep the Law, bringing about the promise made to Abraham for the Gentiles [3:13-14].
5. God's promise to Abraham [and his seed, Christ] was not invalidated by his bringing the Law to Abraham's descendents [3:15-18].
6. The Law served God's purpose of showing sin and the need for justification by faith in the coming Christ [3:19-24].
7. Christ has come and believers are reconciled with God through faith in Christ himself, so no longer need the Law as a pointer to the coming Christ [3:25].
8. Believers, regardless of circumstances, are now heirs of Abraham's promise through Christ [3:26-29].

Even the founder of the nation Israel came to righteousness before God by faith in God's promises, and so it has been for his descendents also. Only faithful Jews were true Jews, true sons of Abraham [cf. Deuteronomy 32:5, where Moses foretold those who were not faithful would be declared not to be God's children]. The Gentiles were now enjoying part of the promise made to Abraham [Genesis 12:1-3], that through Abraham all the nations [i.e. the Gentiles] would be blessed; this was further refined to the blessing coming through Abraham's promised seed, Christ [Genesis 22:18].

The Law promised blessing to those who were obedient and curses for those who were not – a source of concern for the Galatians, who were wondering if they needed to obey the Law – but only Christ ever obeyed it fully, so only Christ got the full blessing. Everyone else got the curse from sin, but Christ died to take the curse and give the blessing. So it is in Christ that we are blessed, through faith in him, not by following the Law. The gift of the Law for the nation Israel did not invalidate the previous promise, nor did it supplant that promise as a means to righteousness. Rather, it served as instruction on righteousness [and thus on how to live] and evidence of the need for righteousness by grace through faith as was promised. Now that Christ has appeared and believers have the eyewitness account, they no longer need the Law to help anticipate Christ and his work, they can appropriate it now. Christ is the son of God, and in him Gentile believers are sons by faith. No matter who a person is – especially whether a Jew [son by seed, or DNA] or Gentile – righteousness comes by grace through faith in Christ.

C. Believers are now sons and heirs of God, not slaves [4:1-7].

1. The people of God [believing Jews, primarily] were children in faith, held in bondage by their guardian, the Law [4:1-3].
2. Christ came to redeem believers so they could be adopted as sons [4:4-5].
3. Because believers are sons, they have the Holy Spirit in their hearts and are heirs of God, of his kingdom promises, not slaves to the Law [4:6-7].

Under the Law, there were children of God who were heirs [believing Jews], but they were under such restrictions from the Law that it was like being a slave to the Law. Now these children are full sons and heirs of the inheritance. The Gentile, coming to faith, is no longer a slave with no inheritance, but rather an adopted son and heir of the kingdom promises, just like the believing Jew.

D. As children of the promise, believers should embrace the promise [4:8-20].

1. Before the Galatians knew God, they were slaves to things that were not God, but now that they know God, they should avoid such enslavement, even to the Law [4:8-11].
2. Despite his illness, the Galatians received Paul kindly the first time as he shared the gospel with them [4:12-14].
3. As they valued him for his gospel then, so they should not turn away from him and his gospel now [4:15-16].
4. These other teachers hope to shift Galatian loyalties to them, but they should validate their claims by consistent behavior [4:17-18].
5. Paul must again labor for them to embrace the true gospel [4:19-20].

Now that the Galatians are adopted sons through faith in Christ, they should not desire to return to life as a slave under the Law. When they received the gospel of righteousness given in grace through faith in Christ, they rejoiced, so it is unreasonable that they should now return to an attitude of slavery and blame Paul for not leading them there. They must see that the false teachers are

seeking their loyalty and to enslave them to the Law by shutting them out of the orthodox community of faith. The stark choice is righteousness and sonship by grace through faith or enslavement to the Law, and Paul is laboring for them to embrace the true gospel.

E. Believers must stand against the persecution by children of the flesh [4:21-5:1].

1. Children of the promise are free, while children of the flesh are not [4:21-27]
2. The Galatians are children of the promise, and so will be persecuted by those of the flesh as scripture reveals is the expectation [4:28-31].
3. They must rely on Christ's work and not enslave themselves again to the Law [5:1].

Abraham had received a promise [previously mentioned], but instead of waiting for it to come to fruition, he tried in the flesh to bring it about. Thus he had two sons: Isaac, born of the promise; and Ishmael born of the flesh. The one born of the flesh was born to slavery, and this is akin to contemporary Jerusalem which is in slavery to the Law, with no inheritance in the promise because it believes in works of the flesh instead of the promise. The other was born of the promise and into freedom and inheritance of the promise, and this is the position the Galatian believers enjoy. Children of the promise have always experienced persecution from children of the flesh, so they should expect such assaults as those coming from the antagonists, and they must resist them, standing firm in their freedom in Christ, refusing to be tricked into returning to slavery under the Law.

IV. Effect of the Gospel and Defense of Reliance on the Gospel for Ongoing Righteousness.

Theme: Reliance on Christ's righteousness leads to godly living [5:2-6:18].

Discussion of Argument: Having defended against both accusations, that he preached different gospels to different people in order to please them and that the gospel of grace through faith he gave to the Galatians was insufficient, Paul turned to comparing the effects of the two gospels under consideration, making the following points:

- † Embracing Christ is accepting his righteousness, not pursuing their own [5:2-12].
- † Reliance on Christ for sanctification will not lead to sin [5:13-21].
- † Reliance on the Holy Spirit will lead to a godly life [5:22-6:10].

Paul then concluded with a summary of his arguments [6:11-18].

Effectiveness of Argument: This section establishes the truth that godly living results from grace through faith in accepting Christ's righteousness – from the work of Christ and the Holy Spirit in the believer – not from self-righteous efforts at obeying the Law, and gives some application examples. There is an evident contrast between the actions of walking by the Spirit and walking under the Law, and also one between the results of walking by the Spirit and walking under the Law. Contemporary Israel had no inheritance because of their lack of faith, so it made no sense to follow their teachings, which not only would not lead to righteousness before God but would not lead to righteous behavior either.

Paul concluded with a summary of his argument, driving home his points one more time: his opponents were not worthy of a hearing, whereas he was; he lived and preached to please Christ; and obtaining righteousness was not about following the Law, but about experiencing the supernatural work of grace.

A. Rely on Christ's righteousness, not pursuing it for themselves [5:2-12].

1. If the Galatians chose to believe in righteousness from the Law, then they would be forsaking Christ [5:2-4].
2. Christ is about faith working through love, not works righteousness [5:5-6].
3. The arguments to the contrary, which have led them astray, are not from God [5:7-10].
4. Paul does not preach works righteousness, as evidenced by his persecution from and mutual antagonism with the antagonists [5:11-12].

Were the Galatians, despite the forgoing arguments, to choose to pursue works righteousness under the Law, they would be forsaking the work of Christ. This work of Christ is different than obligation to the Law, it is an act of loving grace accomplished through our faith. They can be sure that those who are antagonizing them with other arguments are not doing God's work as Paul is. Just as the Jews were to leave behind the ways of Egypt when they began again in the exodus and Mosaic Covenant, so believers in this dispensation were to leave behind the ways of the Law as they began again as a new creation in the New Covenant with Christ. They can also be sure, again, that Paul is consistent in this teaching of his gospel, because he is actively persecuted by the unbelieving Jews.

B. Reliance on Christ will not lead to sin [5:13-21].

1. The Galatians are freed, not to license, but to loving service [5:13-15].
2. If the Galatians walk by the Spirit, they will not fall into fleshly sin [5:16-17].
3. Being led by the Spirit is not being under the Law [5:18].
4. The deeds of the flesh are not Christ-like [5:19-21].

The Galatians can be assured they are free of the Law, but they must also know that this does not mean license to sin. Instead, it means they should have right motivation to love others as themselves, because they have received God's love and they love God above all. With this right motivation, they can be empowered by the Holy Spirit to resist temptation to sin. As mentioned earlier [3:2], it is through grace and faith that they receive and experience sanctificational righteousness. This is not the same as trying to follow the Law in the flesh, rather it is resisting the fleshly urge to be unlike Christ in character, by walking in faith in God's revelation, empowered by the Holy Spirit. Ironically, those who in character seek to keep the Law [such as unbelieving Jews in the nation Israel] act in the flesh to pursue works-righteousness, and so they feel self-righteous and – not only are enslaved and not heirs – they are destined to live out

the deeds of the flesh, which are evil, unlike Christ, even against the Law they purport to keep.

C. Reliance on the Holy Spirit will lead to a godly life [5:22-6:10].

1. Being led by the Spirit yields exhibits of Christ-like qualities [5:22-25].
2. These humble Christ-like qualities reveal believers should not promote themselves, but rather should be focused on helping others: gently restoring those who have fallen, carrying their burdens, supporting those who teach [5:26-6:6].
3. Reliance on the flesh will bring corruption, but reliance on the Holy Spirit will bring eternal life [6:7-8].
4. The Galatians should continue to rely on the Spirit, doing his work by doing good to all, especially believers [6:9-10].

Those who walk in faith, empowered by the Holy Spirit, reveal different qualities than those walking in the flesh, by the Law. They experience fruit of the Spirit which are Christ-like qualities. Thus, the source of sanctification is seen to be the same as the source for justification. Walking in this faith, we can avoid the fleshly behaviors of antagonism and instead show love. It is those who are condemned who put their faith in works-righteousness. Those who have eternal life put their faith in the work of the Holy Spirit. Thus, they should continue on the path they began in faith, trusting in God's deliverance of righteousness, which will result in loving good deeds.

D. Conclusion [6:11-18].

1. Those who have taught otherwise are avoiding the persecution Paul faces, and thus are twice hypocrites, as people pleasers and law breakers [6:12-13].
2. Paul boasts only in Christ [6:14].
3. It is not about following the Law, but about becoming a new creation [6:15].
4. The peace and mercy of God are upon those who live by this, including the true Israel of God, i.e. the believing remnant of Jews [6:16].
5. Paul is Christ's proven apostle to them, so nobody should challenge his teaching [6:17].
6. Paul wishes them grace [6:18].

In his conclusion, Paul revealed that the antagonists were persecuted themselves by unbelieving Israel, and it was because of this that they had adopted the legalistic theology. He thus revealed his antagonists to be hypocrites in two ways: they were seeking to appease the unbelieving Jews [avoid persecution] by changing the gospel [what they accused Paul of doing], and they were failing to keep the same law they advocated the Galatians to follow. This summary reiterates that Paul was the apostle from Christ in this confrontation, and that the essence of sanctificational righteousness is not on fleshly following of the Law but rather on becoming experientially the new creation in Christ that they became in position at salvation.

Application of Message

Historical Application [tersely following the text]

1. The Galatians were to stand firm in their faith in the true gospel, and not be enslaved by the Law [5:1, 10].
2. The Galatians were to walk in the Spirit, be led by the Spirit in daily life [5:16, 25].
3. The Galatians were to exhibit in daily life characteristics of Christ, not those of the flesh [5:13, 16].
4. The Galatians were to act lovingly toward each other, including serving each other, not challenging or boasting toward each other, restoring the fallen gently, bearing each other's burdens, sharing with their teachers, and doing good to all but especially other believers [5:13—6:2, 6, 9-10].
5. The Galatians were to trust in Paul, not challenging his integrity, authority, or gospel message [6:17].

Present Day Preaching Application [with implications from the text]

1. Believers today are to stand firm in their faith in the true gospel, and not be enslaved by the Law.
 - † Thus, believers today will trust in God's grace through their faith as the only source of righteousness before God, both at the time of salvation and ongoing moment-by-moment.
 - † Thus, believers today will trust in God's grace through their faith as the only source of experiential righteousness as a part of the ongoing sanctification process.
 - † Thus, believers today will not depend on their own efforts in self-righteousness.
 - † Thus, believers today will not judge others or themselves relative to each other, since all rely on Christ for righteousness.
 - † Thus, believers today will not become legalistic in their approach to daily life.
 - † Thus, believers today will understand and appropriate the biblical truth about their identity and position in Christ.
2. Believers today are to walk in the Spirit, be led by the Spirit in daily life.
 - † Thus, believers today will not seek to walk in their own strength and courage, but empowered by the Holy Spirit.
 - † Thus, believers today will not seek to walk in their own wisdom, but by God's revelation.

† Thus, believers today will pursue submission to the Holy Spirit in all thoughts, discussions, and actions, including the use of spiritual gifts.

3. Believers today are to exhibit in daily life characteristics of Christ, not those of the flesh.

† Thus, believers today – appropriating righteousness by grace through faith and walking in the Holy Spirit – will seek to be characterized by the fruit of the Spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.

† Thus, believers today – appropriating righteousness by grace through faith and walking in the Holy Spirit – will seek not to be characterized by the deeds of the flesh: immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, envying, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these.

4. Believers today are to act lovingly toward each other.

† Thus, believers today will serve each other.

† Thus, believers today will not challenge or boast toward each other.

† Thus, believers today will restore the fallen gently.

† Thus, believers today will bear each other's burdens.

† Thus, believers today will share with their teachers.

† Thus, believers today will do good to all but especially other believers.

5. Believers today are to trust in Paul, not challenging his integrity, authority, or gospel message.

Specific Implementation [Present day]

1. Believers today are to stand firm in their faith in the true gospel, and not be enslaved by the Law. Thus, believers today will trust in God's grace through their faith as the only source of righteousness before God, both at the time of salvation and ongoing moment-by-moment; trust in God's grace through their faith as the only source of experiential righteousness as a part of the ongoing sanctification process; not depend on their own efforts in self-righteousness; not judge others or themselves relative to each other, since all rely on Christ for righteousness; not become legalistic in their approach to daily life; and understand and appropriate the biblical truth about their identity and position in Christ.

Specific Implementation Ideas: Believers could implement this application step in the following ways:

† Learn the gospel well, and remind yourself of it daily so that you never begin to doubt it or introduce error into it.

† Thank God each day for his grace, reminding yourself in the process that your righteousness is a gift from God, not something you merited.

- † When doing well or accomplishing something, do not fall to the temptation to think you are more righteous before God than you were before.
- † When struggling in life or failing at something, do not fall to the temptation [or accusation] to think you are less righteous before God than you were before.
- † Do not think anything you do or avoid doing adds a bit to your righteousness before God.
- † Keep your heart right with God, check your motives regularly, seek to apply scripture to life, and confess your sins regularly, but do not become overly focused on your past successes or failures to be obedient.
- † Remind yourself daily that your sanctification – transformation toward Christ-like character and the image of God you were created to be – is accomplished by the Holy Spirit as an act of grace, not your own earnest efforts [though you can cooperate with the Spirit’s work through spiritual disciplines such as Bible study, prayer, praise and worship of God, confession, participation in biblical community, and walking in the Spirit].
- † Take captive any thought of pride, arrogance, or conceit, because your value before God is entirely his gift of grace.
- † Take captive any thought of worthlessness or failure, because your value before God is not dependent on your worldly success.

2. Believers today are to walk in the Spirit, be led by the Spirit in daily life. Thus, believers today will not seek to walk in their own strength and courage, but empowered by the Holy Spirit; not seek to walk in their own wisdom, but by God’s revelation; and seek submission to the Holy Spirit in all thoughts, discussion, and actions, including the use of spiritual gifts.

Specific Implementation Ideas: Believers could implement this application step in the following ways:

- † Adopt an attitude of submission toward God, yielding moment-by-moment to the Holy Spirit’s work in you.
- † When faced with challenges, seek help from God through prayer, instead of trying to accomplish on your own.
- † When feeling too weak or afraid to carry on, know that God is with you and will strengthen you to carry on.
- † Believe that God will provide all that is necessary for you to carry out the work he has for you.
- † Believe that God will provide you with a way to resist temptation.
- † In every decision, in every aspect of life, seek God’s wisdom through scripture and prayer.
- † When faced with difficult decisions, choose to believe in the scriptural promises and obey the scriptural demands, and let God be in charge of the consequences.

- † Adopt a philosophy that God blessed you with your spiritual and natural gifts for the purpose of glorifying him and bringing others closer to him, not for your own glory or benefit.

3. Believers today are to exhibit in daily life characteristics of Christ, not those of the flesh. Thus, believers today – appropriating righteousness by grace through faith and walking in the Holy Spirit – will seek to be characterized by the fruit of the Spirit [love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control]; and seek not to be characterized by the deeds of the flesh [immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, envying, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these].

Specific Implementation Ideas: Believers could implement this application step in the following ways:

- † Daily pray for the fruit of the Spirit and for sanctificational growth in your life.
- † Be conscious in all human intercourse of the fact that you represent Christ and so must seek to replicate his character in yourself by the power of the Holy Spirit.
- † When you find you are acting in the flesh, seek to stop, confess to God and apologize to your victim, and pray for a return of experiential righteousness by the power of the Holy Spirit.

4. Believers today are to act lovingly toward each other. Thus, believers today will serve each other; not challenge or boast toward each other; restore the fallen gently; bear each other's burdens; share with their teachers; and do good to all but especially other believers.

Specific Implementation Ideas: Believers could implement this application step in the following ways:

- † Consider participating in church ministry teams, such as the nursery, children's program, middle-school program, high school program, parking, greeting, ushering, setup and takedown, worship team or choir, small group leadership or teaching, hospital visitation, or any other way your spiritual gifts, abilities, experiences, passions, and personality might be useful for serving others.
- † Look for ways to meet the needs of others within your small group or church.
- † Look for opportunities to help others in your small groups or church as they accomplish their ministry or life tasks.
- † Look for opportunities to do something unexpectedly kind for those in the church, or those in daily life outside the church.
- † Give financially to the church, which will use the money to minister to others and to support those who engage in full-time ministry to their benefit.

- † Give gifts to those who are serving in ministry, to encourage and support them.
- † Seek to show fruit of the Spirit toward each other at all times, e.g. patience, gentleness, kindness, etc.
- † Avoid posturing toward each other by staking stands on loyalty to various pastors within the church.
- † Handle all conflicts within the church according to the scriptural conflict covenant the church has adopted.
- † Use gentleness and love when confronting those who have fallen into some bondage to sin, seeking to restore them, not condemn them.
- † Initiate new ministries that meet a previously unmet need in the community of the church or the community of the town.

5. Believers today are to trust in Paul, not challenging his integrity, authority, or gospel message.

Specific Implementation Ideas: Believers could implement this application step in the following ways:

- † When encountering someone from a pseudo-Christian cult who casts doubt on aspects of the gospel message, do not enter into this doubt.
- † When encountering someone who disparages Paul as an early-church corruption of the original gospel message from Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, do not believe Paul's gospel is any different from that spoken by Christ in those other New Testament books.
- † Accept the scriptural teaching in Paul's epistles as authoritative for life, and apply those teachings, adopting the theology, believing the history, and applying the commands.

IDENTIFYING THE PROBLEM/SOLUTION

Characters

Primary Antagonists: those causing a problem in Galatia

Physical Traits: The antagonists are from outside of the Galatian churches [1:6].

Theological Beliefs: The antagonists are Jewish legalists in that they encourage Gentiles to follow the Law [1:7, 2:4, 12; 6:13].

Theological Positions: There are no specified positions for the antagonists.

Secondary Antagonists: those causing a problem for the primary antagonists

Physical Traits: There are no specified identifications of these antagonists, but they have been persecuting those who do not advocate following the Law to attain righteousness [5:11; 6:12], suggesting they are unbelieving Jews. There were some like them in Jerusalem [2:4].

Theological Beliefs: These antagonists believe righteousness requires following the Law [5:11; 6:12]. Paul's reference to a similar incident in Jerusalem suggests they are unbelievers [2:4].

Theological Positions: There are no specified positions for these antagonists.

Readers

Physical Traits: The readers are in the churches of Galatia [1:2].

Theological Beliefs: The readers are believers in the churches of Galatia who believed in Paul's gospel [1:2-6, 11; 3:1-5, 26-27; 4:6-16; 5:1, 7-8]. However, they are young in their faith as evidenced by their susceptibility to unorthodox teachings [1:6; 3:1; 4:9-10, 21; 5:2].

Theological Positions: There are no specified positions for the readers. The letter is addressed to all the believers in the churches of Galatia [1:2].

Author(s)

Physical Traits: The author is Paul [1:1], though he writes with the support of other believers with him [1:2]. He had a bodily affliction when in Galatia [4:13]. He is persecuted and scarred [5:11; 6:17]. He is Jewish by heritage [1:13-14].

Theological Beliefs: Paul is a believer [1:1, 15-16]. He formerly was an unbelieving Jew engaged in attacking believers [1:13-14].

Theological Positions: Paul is an apostle, sent by Christ and God directly, not by men [1:1, 16; 2:6-8].

Problem

Antagonists' Actions Toward the Readers

The antagonists were teaching the Galatians a distortion of the true gospel [1:6-8; 3:1]. They were trying to compel the Galatians to get circumcised and follow the Law [3:1-5; 4:9, 21; 5:2; 6:12]. They were seeking them out, trying to induce them to loyalty to their group [4:17; 6:12]. They were seeking to convince them of the discredit of Paul's gospel and of his integrity in preaching it consistently [1:10; 5:11; 6:17].

Antagonists' Theology

Source of Antagonist's Theology: The antagonists got their theology from the Old Testament [3:1-2; 6:12-13]. Specifically, they appear to have advocated Deuteronomy 27:26: "Cursed is he who does not confirm the words of this law by doing them..." They denied Paul as an accurate source [1:10-11; 4:16; 6:17].

Content of Antagonist's Theology: The antagonists advocated the theology that obedience to the Law was necessary for ongoing righteousness before God [3:2-5, 10-11; 4:7, 9-11, 21; 5:1-4, 11-12; 6:12-13; also inferred from Paul's denouncement of similar antagonists in 2:4, 12, 16, 18; 6:12], which comes from Deuteronomy 27:26. Essentially, they proposed that inheritance or sonship under God went to those who kept the Law, while those who did not keep the Law were cursed.

Reader's Actions Resulting from Accepting Antagonists' Theology

Self: The antagonists encouraged the readers to be deceived into forsaking reliance on Christ by adopting another gospel based on works righteousness [1:6; 3:1-2; 4:21; 5:1-2, 10; 6:7-8], resulting in fleshly behavior [5:13-16, 19-21, 26].

Brothers: The antagonists encouraged the readers to be prideful and confrontational toward one another [5:13-16, 19-21, 26].

Author: The antagonists encouraged the readers to cause Paul trouble, i.e. to doubt his gospel and motivations [4:16; 6:17].

Antagonist: The antagonists encouraged the readers to seek a belonging with them instead of with the orthodox church [4:17].

Problem Summary Statement

Based on a theology that obedience to the Law was necessary for ongoing righteousness before God, Jewish antagonists were teaching the Galatian believers that they must seek a works-based righteousness under the Law, resulting in doubting Paul and his gospel, fleshly acts, and confrontational attitudes toward each other.

Solution

Author's Action Toward the Readers

Paul was writing to the Galatian churches [1:1-2], warning them [5:2], rebuking them [1:6; 3:1], and teaching them about the true gospel [1:1-9; 2:16], his consistent preaching of that gospel [1:8—2:21; 5:11], why that gospel removes obligation to the Law [2:15—5:1], and how that gospel will lead to ongoing righteousness before God [5:2—6:10].

Author's Theology

Source of Author's Theology: Paul's theology came from apostolic authority [1:1], direct revelation [1:1, 12; 2:2], and the Old Testament [3:6-13; 4:22-31; 5:14].

Content of Author's Theology: Paul advocated the theology that all righteousness came by grace through faith in Christ, both for salvation and sanctification [1:1-9; 2:11—5:6], as evidenced by the resulting fruit of the Spirit in those who put faith in this grace [5:13—6:6], thus removing the need for obedience to the Law [2:15—5:1]. Essentially, Paul proposed that seeking self righteousness under the Law was what led to a curse, and that inheritance and sonship under God came by grace through faith; i.e. the source of righteousness leading to salvation and ongoing sanctification was the righteousness of Christ allocated to the believer by grace through faith.

Readers' Actions Resulting from Accepting Author's Theology

Self: Paul encouraged the readers to stand firm in the gospel of grace through faith and not be enslaved again to the Law [5:1, 10], which would result in their walking by the Spirit and so not falling into fleshly living [5:13-25; 6:1].

Brothers: Paul encouraged the readers to act lovingly toward each other [5:13—6:2, 6, 9-10].

Author: Paul encouraged the readers to not doubt him and thus cause him trouble [6:17].

Antagonist: Interestingly, Paul never specifically advocated any behavior toward the antagonists. However, surely he argued for a rejection of their theology throughout the whole letter.

Solution Summary Statement

Based on the theology of righteousness by grace through faith in Christ, including that this righteousness removes the burden of the Law and results in good deeds, Paul wrote to the churches in Galatia to encourage them to resist the teaching [and temptation] to seek righteousness by works under the Law, to remain faithful to him and his gospel from Christ, and thus to walk in Spirit empowerment and act lovingly toward each other.