

# Galatians– Embracing Grace and Truth

*Facilitated by Sister Patricia Weaver*

 828 7580 6094 ▶ Thursday March 12, 2026

Women of Excellence

Bible Study 7pm

## Memory Verse

**Galatians 1:10 (ESV)** For am I now seeking the approval of man, or of God? Or am I trying to please man? If I were still trying to please man, I would not be a servant of Christ.

## Galatians 1:1–5 (NLT)

This letter is from Paul, an apostle. I was not appointed by any group of people or any human authority, but by Jesus Christ himself and by God the Father, who raised Jesus from the dead.<sup>2</sup> All the brothers and sisters here join me in sending this letter to the churches of Galatia. <sup>3</sup> May God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ give you grace and peace. <sup>4</sup> Jesus gave his life for our sins, just as God our Father planned, in order to rescue us from this evil world in which we live. <sup>5</sup> All glory to God forever and ever! Amen.

## Galatians 1:1–5 (NASB95)

- 1 Paul, an apostle (not *sent* from men nor through the agency of man, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father, who raised Him from the dead),
- 2 and all the brethren who are with me,  
**To** the churches of Galatia:
- 3 Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ,
- 4 who gave Himself for our sins so that He might rescue us from this present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father,
- 5 to whom *be* the glory forevermore. Amen.

# **Galatians– Embracing Grace and Truth**

*Facilitated by Sister Patricia Weaver*

## **Galatians– Embracing Grace and Truth**

### **POINT 1 - PAUL’S AUTHORITY**

**Paul, an apostle (not sent from men, nor through the agency of man, but through Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised Him from the dead), and all the brethren who are with me, to the churches of Galatia: (1:1–2)**

Following the custom of his times, the apostle begins his letter by stating his name, **Paul**. He then establishes his authority as an apostle, first on the basis of his right to the title “apostle,” second on the basis of the manner in which he was chosen for that office, and third on the basis of his relationship to fellow believers.

#### THE TITLE APOSTLE

#### **an apostle (1:1a)**

An **apostle** (“one who is sent with a commission”) a messenger who was chosen and trained by Jesus Christ for proclaiming His truth during the formative years of the church. In its primary and technical usage, the term applied to the original twelve who were chosen at the beginning of Jesus’ earthly ministry (Mark 3:14; Luke 6:13) and were set aside to lay the foundation of the early church and to be the channels of God’s completed revelation (Acts 2:42; Eph. 2:20). They were also given power to perform healings and to cast out demons as verifying signs of their divine authority (Acts 2:43; 2 Cor. 12:12; Heb. 2:3–4). It should be noted that, shortly before Pentecost, Judas was replaced by Matthias (Acts 1:26).

Because he was not among the original twelve, Paul needed to defend his apostleship in ways that they did not. Because one of the qualifications was witnessing the risen Christ (Acts 1:22), Paul explained to the Corinthian church that between His resurrection and ascension Jesus first “appeared to Cephas

## **Galatians– Embracing Grace and Truth** *Facilitated by Sister Patricia Weaver*

[Peter], then to the twelve. After that He appeared to more than five hundred brethren at one time; ... then He appeared to James, then to all the apostles; and last of all, as it were to one untimely born, *He appeared to me also*” (1 Cor. 15:5–8).

Paul witnessed the resurrected Christ in a unique way. As he was traveling to Damascus to arrest and imprison Christians there, “suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him; and he fell to the ground, and heard a voice saying to him, ‘Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?’ And he said, ‘Who art Thou, Lord?’ And He said, ‘I am Jesus whom you are persecuting’ ” (Acts 9:3–5). Through the godly Ananias of Damascus, the Lord declared this former enemy of the gospel to be “a chosen instrument of Mine, to bear My name before the Gentiles and kings and the sons of Israel” (v. 15). Just as the Lord “effectually worked for Peter in his apostleship to the circumcised [He] effectually worked for [Paul] also to the Gentiles” (Gal. 2:8).

Further personal appearances of the Lord to Paul are recorded in Acts 18:9; 22:17–21; 23:11; and 2 Corinthians 12:1–4 (cf. 1 Cor. 9:1).

### THE MANNER IN WHICH HE WAS CHOSEN

**(not sent from men, nor through the agency of man, but through Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised Him from the dead), (1:1b)**

Because false teachers were accusing Paul of being a self-appointed apostle who had no authority to teach and to rule the churches, he emphatically stated that his was no human commission, that he was **not sent from men**. He had not appointed himself and had not even been divinely appointed **through the agency of men**. No human means of any sort was involved in his apostolic commissioning. No human source, no human ceremony, no laying on of hands

## **Galatians– Embracing Grace and Truth** *Facilitated by Sister Patricia Weaver*

by any group in Jerusalem, Antioch, or anywhere else was involved in his call to apostleship, though the elders at Antioch were a part of the sending process of his special mission tour to evangelize (Acts 13:1–3).

Paul's original call to apostleship was directly **through Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised Him from the dead**. Jesus called Paul and set him apart before he had contact with any of the other apostles. After several years of divine preparation (see Gal. 1:17–18), he was sent out to begin his work among the Gentiles directly by the Holy Spirit, whose divine appointment was acknowledged by the leaders of the church at Antioch (Acts 13:2–3). Paul's authority was not man-given or self-given but **God-given**, and his right to instruct the Galatians was grounded in that divine prerogative.

Paul never missed an opportunity to mention the resurrection, without which the gospel would be powerless. The God who appointed Paul an apostle was **God the Father, who raised His Son from the dead**.

Paul certainly had a vastly superior commissioning to any of the false-teaching, self-appointed Judaizers who were confusing the Galatians and trying to set themselves above his authority.

The apostle's frequent mention of **God** and **Father** in relation to **Jesus Christ** throughout the New Testament marks an emphasis that should not be missed. The intent is not for us to understand God as *our* Father (although that truth is mentioned in 1:4) but **the Father** in relation to the role He has in the Trinity, particularly His relation to the Son. The intent is to emphasize the significance of the relationship between the first and second members of the Trinity as to essential nature. The title is to express *equality* of deity between the two, a Father and Son who share the same nature (cf. Matt. 11:27; John 5:17–18, 22;

## **Galatians– Embracing Grace and Truth** *Facilitated by Sister Patricia Weaver*

10:29–33; 14:9; 17:1–5; Rom. 15:6; 2 Cor. 1:3; Eph. 1:3; 1 Pet. 1:3; 2 John 3). It asserts that **Jesus Christ** is the One who is of the nature of God and that the true God is the One who is **the Father of Jesus Christ**.

### HIS ASSOCIATION

**and all the brethren who are with me, to the churches of Galatia: (1:2)**

A third basis of Paul’s authority is implied by his referring to companions with him at the time of writing as **brethren**, in contrast to his own identification as apostle.

Jesus told the Twelve, “Truly, truly, I say to you, he who receives whomever I send receives Me; and he who receives Me receives Him who sent Me” (**John 13:20**). A short while later He said to them, “These things I have spoken to you, while abiding with you. But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you” (**14:25–26**).

Because the apostles’ teaching came directly from the Lord, the writings of Paul, Peter, John, and the others are every much as divinely inspired and authoritative as the words that Jesus spoke in person during His earthly ministry. As Paul made clear to Timothy, “All Scripture is inspired by God” (**2 Tim. 3:16**), who is the Author of its every word, whether through the prophets, the Lord Jesus Christ, or the apostles.

Because the Bible is God’s own Word, to be subject to God is to be subject to the Bible. It is not of human opinion but the repository of divine truth.

As discussed in the Introduction, **the churches of southern Galatia** were in the central Asia Minor cities of Antioch of Pisidia, Iconium, Lystra, and Derbe, where

# **Galatians– Embracing Grace and Truth**

## ***Facilitated by Sister Patricia Weaver***

Paul had ministered on both his first and second missionary journeys (Acts 13:14–14:23; 16:1–5). The fact that Paul founded those **churches** certainly gave him some authority in dealing with them (cf. 1 Cor. 4:14–21, where Paul expresses his right to reprimand the Corinthians because he was their spiritual father).

### **Discussion Questions**

- 1. Why does Paul feel compelled to assert his apostolic authority so forcefully in the opening?**
- 2. How does Paul’s insistence that his call came directly through Christ and God the Father and not through man shape the letters argument?**
- 3. What stood out to you in this portion of the lesson?**

### **POINT 2 - PAUL’S MESSAGE**

**Grace to you and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us out of this present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father, (1:3–4)**

## **Galatians– Embracing Grace and Truth** *Facilitated by Sister Patricia Weaver*

As Paul explains later in the epistle, the gospel he preached was “not according to man. For I neither received it from man, nor was I taught it, but I received it through a revelation of Jesus Christ” (**Gal. 1:11–12**). Two of the most precious words related to that God-given gospel are **grace** and **peace**. The first is the source of salvation and the second is the result. **Grace** is positional, **peace** is practical, and together they flow **from God our Father** through His Son and our Savior, **the Lord Jesus Christ**.

In verse 4 Paul gives a summary of the true gospel of **grace** and **peace**, showing its nature, its object, and its source.

### THE NATURE OF THE GOSPEL: CHRIST’S ATONING DEATH AND RESURRECTION

#### **who gave Himself for our sins, (1:4a)**

In turning from grace to a legalistic system of salvation by works, the Galatians had ignored the significance of the death of Christ.

The heart of the gospel is Christ’s willing sacrifice of **Himself for our sins**. Salvation is not earned by one’s efforts to eliminate sin, but by one’s trust in God’s promise to forgive sin through the work of Jesus Christ. His atoning death was the most essential part of the divine plan of redemption, without which all of His teachings and miraculous works would have been meaningless and a mockery. Apart from Christ’s sacrificial death, His earthly ministry would have portrayed the power and truth of a great and wonderful God—but a God with whom men could never be reconciled, because they had no way out of their sin.

Since no man can eliminate sin by works (Rom. 3:20), it must be forgiven. That is why it was absolutely necessary that “He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness” (**1 Pet. 2:24**).

# Galatians– Embracing Grace and Truth

*Facilitated by Sister Patricia Weaver*

## THE OBJECT OF THE GOSPEL: TO DELIVER FROM THE PRESENT AGE

**that He might deliver us out of this present evil age, (1:4b)**

The purpose of the gospel is to **deliver** those who believe in Christ from **this present evil age**. Jesus' death was a rescue operation, the only possible means of saving men from the doomed world and from eternal death by providing for them eternal life. **Deliver** carries the idea of rescuing from danger. Peter used the word to describe God's deliverance of him from prison (Acts 12:11), and the Roman commander Claudius Lysias used it of his rescue of Paul from the mob in Jerusalem (23:27; cf. v. 10). Galatians 1:4 contains the only metaphorical use of the term in the New Testament.

**Age** does not refer to a period of time but to a passing, transitory system, in this case the **evil**, satanic world system that has dominated the world since the Fall and will continue to dominate it until the Lord's return. Although they are not removed from the earth until they die or are raptured, believers are rescued **out of this present evil age** the moment they receive Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. They are still in the world, but they are no longer of it (John 17:11, 14–18; Phil. 3:20–21; 1 John 5:5). The faithful Christian life is the heavenly life lived on earth.

## THE SOURCE OF THE GOSPEL: THE WILL OF GOD

**according to the will of our God and Father, (1:4c)**

The source of the saving gospel of Jesus Christ is the sovereign, loving, compassionate, gracious **will of our God and Father**, who “so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life” (**John 3:16**).

## **Galatians– Embracing Grace and Truth**

*Facilitated by Sister Patricia Weaver*

Jesus prayed in the Garden, “Father, if Thou art willing, remove this cup from Me; yet not My will, but Thine be done” (**Luke 22:42**). It was *not* the Father’s will for that cup to be removed, because otherwise the world could not be saved. It was the **will** of the **Father** for His precious Son to die in order that those who trust in Him might live. The Father sent the Son to die, and the Son willingly laid down His life.

Specifically, every rescued believer is delivered because of the sovereign, gracious will of God. “But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name, who were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God” (**John 1:12–13**). Salvation is thus removed from the will of man and is buried deep in the sovereign decree of God.

### **POINT 3 - PAUL’S MOTIVE**

**to whom be the glory forevermore. Amen. (1:5)**

Paul concludes his introduction with a doxology fitting for such a saving God. His motive for writing to the Galatian churches was that he might acknowledge that God is worthy of **glory forevermore**. The apostle’s supreme purpose was to glorify his Lord, and he calls all believers to do everything “to the glory of God” (1 Cor. 10:31).

In these five opening verses of Galatians Paul covers the four stages of man’s salvation. The first stage was the sovereign decree of God to save, the second was the death of Christ for man’s sins, the third was the appointment of apostles to testify to that divine provision, and the fourth was the gift of God’s grace and peace to those who believe in Jesus Christ. In each of the stages the Father and

## **Galatians– Embracing Grace and Truth**

*Facilitated by Sister Patricia Weaver*

the Son work together, because Their will and Their work are always one (John 5:30; 6:38; 10:30).

**Amen** expresses the affirmation fitting the worthiness of God to receive glory for such a wondrous provision of eternal, gracious salvation.

### **Discussion Questions**

- 1. What does “rescue us from this present evil age” mean?**
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 2. What alternative message were the Galatians being tempted to accept?**
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 3. What stands out to you in this lesson that you can apply to your Life?**

### **Closing Prayer**