

# “The Freedom and Independence of the Gospel”

**Galatians 2:1-10 6/21/20**

## **Galatians Series- Living the Gospel in the Power of the Spirit**

**Big Idea-** The gospel of grace and freedom was given to Paul. He did not seek nor need vindication of the gospel he preached, but by God’s grace and plan, he received it from those that were the leaders in Jerusalem. The biblical gospel is antithetical to the concept of needing to keep the OT law to gain God’s favor, and inclusion in His family.

**Background Texts-** Acts 9-15; Hebrews 7:11, 18; 8:13; Eph 2:11-15; Galatians 3:19; 2 Cor 3:4-11; Romans 10:1-8; Genesis 17:9-14; Leviticus 12:3; Acts 15:1, 5

**LESSON 1-** The power of the gospel is in its FREEDOM

- A. The freedom of the gospel was confirmed by REVELATION (Galatians 2:1-2; Acts 9-11; 1 Corinthians 9:1-2)
- B. The freedom of the gospel avoids the trap of law BONDAGE (Gal 2:3-5; Acts 15:6-13; see background texts above)

*Going Deeper* God wants us to embrace the freedom of the Gospel!

**Liberty in Christ (2:4)-** 1) from contributing to salvation; 2) from living under the law- 1 Cor 9:20-21; 3) from the Law’s curse- Gal 3:10-13

**LESSON 2-** The power of the gospel is in its INDEPENDENCE

- A. The independence of the gospel should bring UNITY (Gal 2:6-10; no personal favoritism- Acts 10:34)

*Going Deeper* God wants us be faithful to Him alone and fulfill our ministries!

**Theological Application:**

- 1) God takes His time with change. 10-15 years between ascension and first apostolic council in Jerusalem (Acts 15); inclusion of Gentiles.
- 2) Paul was a man of discipline, courage, and commitment to the gospel.
- 3) Paul takes the time to defend himself when the gospel is at stake.
- 4) Paul respects human authority, but the gospel always comes first.
- 5) The culture/world will always, eventually demand we give up affirming the exclusivity and absoluteness of the gospel.
- 6) God calls different people to different spheres of influence and ministry.
- 7) The gospel brings unity between different groups.

***Our Vision- Striving to be Disciples who make Disciples***

## Early Chronology of Paul the Apostle's Life

### Formative Period (14/15 years: summer AD 34/35 – spring 48)

This chronology covers the period from Paul's conversion in AD 34/35 up to the beginning of his first missionary journey.

**1. At Jerusalem** a. Witnesses the stoning of Stephen (Acts 7:58) b. Participates in the persecution of the Jerusalem church (Acts 8:1-4) c. Receives authority from the High Priest to go to Damascus to persecute Christians (Acts 9:1-2)

**2. Experiences at Damascus** a. Confronted by Jesus on the Damascus Road and converted (Acts 9:3-8; 22:5-11; 26:12-18) b. Ministered to by Ananias of Damascus (Acts 9:9-19; 22:12-16) c. Initial testimony at Damascus (Acts 9:19-22; 26:20) d. Departure to Arabia (Gal 1:16-17), which probably occurs between Acts 9:22 and Acts 9:23 e. Return to Damascus (Gal 1:17) f. Attempt to kill Paul by Jews during the reign of Aretas IV<sup>5</sup> (Acts 9:23-25; 2 Cor 11:32-33)

**3. Return to Jerusalem (3 yrs after conversion – Gal 1:18)** a. Befriended by Barnabas (Acts 9:26-28) b. Stays 15 days with Peter and visits with James (Gal 1:18-19) c. Hellenistic Jews attempt to kill Paul (Acts 9:29)

**4. Departure to Tarsus** Christians bring Paul to Caesarea and send him off to Tarsus. There he ministers in the regions of Syria and Cilicia (Acts 9:30; Gal 1:21-24). Note: During Paul's tenure in Syria-Cilicia, Peter is used to initiate the inclusion of Gentiles in the church (Acts 10–11).

### 5. Activities at Antioch

a. Church at Antioch develops from persecution that arose in connection with Stephen (Acts 11:19) b. The Jerusalem church sends Barnabas to investigate the activities of Antioch (Acts 11:22) c. Barnabas goes to Tarsus and returns with Paul to conduct intensive teaching ministry (Acts 11:25-26) .

Note: Herod Agrippa I initiates a persecution against Christians and has James the apostle killed. Peter is freed, and Agrippa is struck by God in AD 44 (Acts 12).

Note that the details recorded in Acts 11–12 may not be in strict chronological order, so that the events of 11:27-30 (including the famine) may be after Agrippa's death. Acts 12:25 would then resume the story of Paul.

**6. 2nd Jerusalem Visit** [= famine-relief visit] dates AD 45-47.

a. During the great famine of Claudius' reign (AD 41-54), Paul and Barnabas send a contribution for the relief of the brethren in Judea (Acts 11:27-30; **Gal 2:1-10**).

b. Titus accompanies them on the mission (Gal 2:1) c. Paul submits his gospel to "those who were of reputation" (Gal 2:2) d. James, Peter and John confirm Paul's gospel, and Titus is not compelled to be circumcised (Gal 2:3-10) e. Paul and Barnabas contact Barnabas' cousin, John-Mark, and bring him with them back to Antioch (Acts 12:25).

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