

LESSON 2

PAUL AND THE SAINTS

Galatians 1:1-2:21, Romans 1:1-17

Introduction to Galatians

Paul likely visited the churches of Galatia on his journey from Antioch to Ephesus about A. D. 53 (see Acts 18:23). Not long after his visit, Jewish Christians from Jerusalem or perhaps Jews from Antioch and Iconium (see Acts 14:19) went to the churches and refuted Paul's teachings (cf. Gal. 1:7; 5:7-10). Previously Paul had delivered to the Gentile Christians the decrees from the Jerusalem Conference (Acts 16:4-6). The instruction that Gentile Christians were not required to be circumcised and to keep Jewish ceremonial laws caused an energetic reaction from some Jewish Christians.

Some scholars argue that the Epistle to the Galatians was written before the Jerusalem Conference in A. D. 49; otherwise, Paul would have used the four decrees decided upon in Jerusalem to support his arguments. It is probable that the decrees had already been presented to the churches and further reference to them would have carried little weight in the debate. Paul's denial of having received "the gospel which was preached of me" from the Jerusalem Apostles may indicate that they were also being discredited.

The agreements in Jerusalem that the Gentiles were saved by faith and would not have laid upon them any "greater burden than these necessary things; that ye abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication: from which if ye keep yourselves, ye shall do well" (Acts 15:28-29) added nothing to Paul's teachings. The Jerusalem Conference was convened because "Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and disputation with them [certain of the sect of the Pharisees which believed]" (Acts 15:2,5). The Council had agreed to Paul's position.

Likely the believing pharisaical Jews appealed to the actions of Peter and Barnabas in Antioch (cf. Gal. 2:11-13) to refute Paul's arguments and the decrees of the Jerusalem Council. Peter and Barnabas withdrew from eating with Gentiles. The decrees of the Council had settled the question of salvation requirements for Gentiles but not the fellowship problems which arose when Jews and Gentiles were in the same church.

*Give two decisions of the Jerusalem Conference which caused a strong reaction from some Jewish Christians.*

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_

*(Gentile Christians were not required to be circumcised; they did not have to keep Jewish ceremonial laws)*

*Is this statement true or false?*

*Paul's denial of having received the Gospel he preached from the Jerusalem Apostles may indicate that those Apostles were being discredited also. \_\_\_\_\_*

*(true)*

*The Jerusalem Conference placed four restraints on Gentiles. They were:*

- To abstain from*
1. \_\_\_\_\_ *offered to* \_\_\_\_\_,
  2. \_\_\_\_\_,
  3. *things* \_\_\_\_\_,
  4. \_\_\_\_\_.

*(meat, idols, blood, strangled, fornication)*

The believing Pharisees considered Peter to be a superior authority to Paul. Paul responded by explaining that the authority of his Gospel was based neither upon himself nor the actions of Peter but was given by revelation. He proceeded to show that Peter carried no special authority: Paul opposed Peter in person in Antioch because his conduct condemned him.

Apparently the Judaizers attempted to discount the authority of Paul by attacking his person. His apostolic credentials were questioned along with his personal integrity. After a very brief introduction, Paul moved immediately into the defence of his apostleship.

The believing pharisaical Jews (Judaizers) believed that the man Jesus was the Messiah (Christ); therefore, the time had arrived when God the Father would deliver His children from sin and into the Kingdom. The people of God included Gentiles as well as Jews. The question was, What is required of Gentiles to be delivered from sin (saved) and brought into the Kingdom of God? The answer Paul gave was "faith". The answer the Judaizers gave was "belief in Jesus as the Messiah" and "circumcision and keeping the Law of Moses". Judaizers contended that foreigners must adopt Jewish national customs to be saved. Paul argued that national customs had nothing to do with salvation. Salvation is the result of a new relationship to God established by the attitude of faith.

The controversy of how man is justified in the sight of God continues today. There are those who believe that deliverance from the penalty of sin is based upon performance of good deeds. A man gains a right standing before God by refraining from immoral activities. On the other hand, many insist that a man's good works do not justify him. Guilty man is made righteous in the sight of God only by accepting God's righteousness provided through Jesus Christ.

### Paul's Greetings and Apologia

Galatians 1:1-2:21

#### Salutation (1:1-5)

Paul used his Gentile name in writing to the Church (v. 1). While he was a "Jew among Jews", he was known by his Hebrew name 'Saul'. Luke began to refer to him by his Roman name 'Paul' in Acts 13:9. At that time Paul exceeded Barnabas in leadership and his principal work was among the Gentiles.

The Judaizers questioned Paul's apostolic \_\_\_\_\_ as well as his personal \_\_\_\_\_.

(credentials, integrity)

Write Paul or Judaizers in the blank in front of the answer each gave to the question, How can a Gentile be saved?

\_\_\_\_\_ 1. Believe in Jesus as Messiah, be circumcised, and keep the Law of Moses

\_\_\_\_\_ 2. Faith

(1. Judaizers, 2. Paul)

Man is justified by accepting God's \_\_\_\_\_ provided through \_\_\_\_\_.

(righteousness, Jesus Christ)

It is possible that Paul had been vilified as a second-rate apostle who had learnt everything from Peter and James. In the first verse, Paul affirmed the divine origin of his apostleship. His commission came "not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father..." Perhaps the Judaizers suggested that Paul was not a genuine apostle because he was not one of the Twelve. Paul responded that the call of God constitutes one an apostle and not the appointment of men. The Twelve were commissioned especially to convey Jesus' teaching concerning the arrival of the Kingdom and to affirm the fact of His resurrection. Paul was given the special assignment of carrying this Good News to the Gentiles. An apostle is one who is sent on a special mission with the message of Christ.

Paul usually named the special friends who were with him when he wrote epistles (for example, Silvanus and Timothy in the Thessalonian letters and Sosthenes in 1 Corinthians). In Galatians, however, he only refers to special friends as "all the brethren" (v. 2). The Epistle is addressed to several churches in Galatia (v. 2). Paul departed from the familiar Greek greeting which used *chairein* and chose the word *charis* or grace (v. 3). Grace denotes the unmerited favour of God towards sinful man and is the basis for a right relationship with God. Grace describes God's gift of righteousness rather than man's achievement. Peace includes more than the Hebrew *shalom* which was common in salutation (v. 3). Christ gives an inward peace which passes all understanding.

Grace and peace come from God through "our Lord Jesus Christ, who gave himself for our sins" (vv. 4-5). 'Jesus' is the Saviour who was offered up as a sacrifice for our sins and 'Christ' is God's anointed King who gives victory over the forces of evil.

It was necessary for man to be cleansed of his sins before he could experience the presence and power of God to deliver him from the present evil age (v. 4). The present world order is under the power of Satan, and the Kingdom of God is invading and defeating the realm of Satan, emancipating man from his state of bondage. The present evil age is characterized by sin and death. The dawning Kingdom of God is characterized by righteousness and life. When God's Kingdom comes in fullness under His chosen King, all evil will be vanquished. The death of Christ for sin and our emancipation from the power of the present evil age are according to God's will. The hope and joy of the Gospel bring a doxology (v. 5).

In Galatians 1:1, Paul affirmed that his apostleship was of \_\_\_\_\_.

Write Paul or The Twelve in the appropriate blank before the statement which characterizes the specific commission of each.

\_\_\_\_\_ Teach concerning the arrival of the Kingdom of God and affirm the resurrection of Jesus.

\_\_\_\_\_ Take this Good News to the Gentiles.

(divine origin, The Twelve, Paul)

Which does grace describe: (1) God's gift of righteousness or (2) man's achievement?

(God's gift of righteousness)

Dr. John W. MacGorman points out that an expression of thankfulness for his readers is absent from Paul's salutation.<sup>1</sup> Since this is true of no other letter, it reveals the agitation and hurt Paul felt because of the Galatian defection.

The occasion for writing (1:6-10)

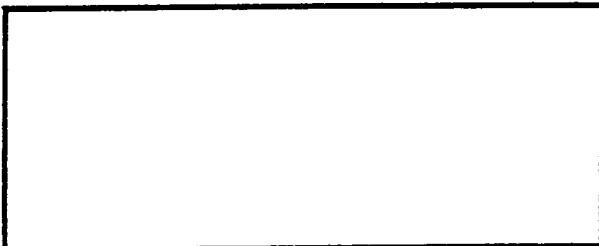
The Epistle was occasioned by the appearance of false teachers who preached a different (*heteron*) Gospel (v.6). What they preached was a perversion of the Gospel of Christ. They had laid aside the Gospel of God's grace (unmerited favour) in Christ and proclaimed a righteousness based on human effort. The perversion of the Gospel was not really another version of the Gospel which Paul preached; it was in opposition to the Gospel of grace (v.7). One Gospel depends on man and the other depends on God. One originates in pride and the other in faith. One leads to defeat and the other to victory. Paul was surprised that the Galatians turned so quickly from a Gospel which offered victory to a legalism which enslaved.

Paul pronounced unconditional doom upon those who preached a perverted Gospel (vv. 8-9). Paul's language is strong in pronouncing the irretrievable curse, but he recognized that the perverting of the Gospel is serious because it brings destruction to those who hear as well as to those who preach it. Man cannot accomplish his own salvation by depending on the moral codes and ceremonies of Moses. He does not keep the moral codes perfectly, and the ceremonies are only shadows of reality.

The qualifications of the person proclaiming the legalistic doctrine cannot make it correct (v.8). Even if an angel from Heaven proclaimed that keeping Jewish rituals and the customs of elders would save, the proclamation would not be true. Paul assured his readers that he did not devise the Gospel to please men, but he received it from God (v.10). Since it was divinely given, he was obligated to proclaim it faithfully. His faithfulness to the Gospel did not please men but brought imprisonment. Nevertheless, he proclaimed it because he was a "bond-servant" of Jesus Christ. The Gospel of Christ which removed the distinction between Jews and Gentiles was against Paul's Jewish nationalism as well as that of other Jews, especially the Pharisees.

Paul's strong language reveals that he was not a man-pleaser. Seemingly his opponents in Galatia had charged him with this (v.10). Had he attempted to

<sup>1</sup>John W. MacGorman, Galatians, Vol. II of The Broadman Bible Commentary (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1971), p. 83.



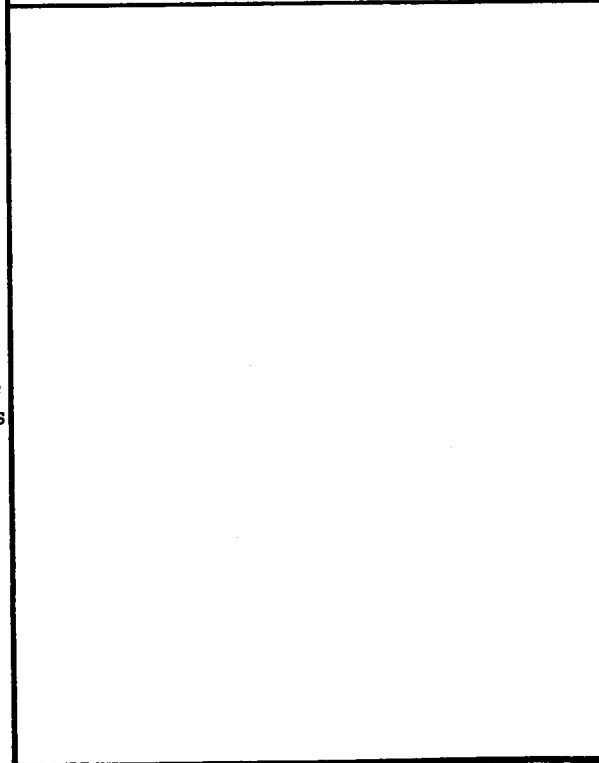
*List the characteristics of the Gospel Paul preached and the perverted Gospel of the Judaizers.*

<u>Gospel of Paul</u>	<u>Gospel of Judaizers</u>
Depended on _____	Depended on _____
Originated in _____	Originated in _____
Led to _____	Led to _____

*(Gospel of Paul--God, faith, victory)  
(Gospel of Judaizers--man, pride, defeat)*

*Paul recognized that perversion of the Gospel is serious because it brings destruction to those who \_\_\_\_\_ as well as to those who \_\_\_\_\_ it.*

*(hear, preach)*



gain the favour of men, he would not have spoken so boldly. Since he was a bond-slave of Christ, his task was not to please men by speaking what they wanted to hear (v. 10).

Paul's personal defence (1:11-2:21)

The divine source of his teachings (1:11-12).—Paul defended his apostolic authority on the basis that the message he preached was divinely given (v. 11). Apparently the Judaizers claimed Paul's apostleship rested upon human rather than divine authority. They probably suggested that he was dependent on the Jerusalem Apostles for his message and official recognition as an apostle.

Paul did not meet the apostolic requirements of having been with Jesus from the time of His baptism to His death and having encountered the resurrected Christ as the other Apostles. He did, however, receive his teachings and witness from Christ, not from men. The Gospel of grace which did not require Gentiles to be circumcised or to keep the customs of the elders was no human invention. His apostleship was divinely given because the message he was commissioned to carry to the Gentiles was divinely revealed.

Paul's statement that Jesus Christ is the Revealer did not mean that he received nothing from the eye-witnesses and followers of Christ. Paul received an account of the teachings and activities of Jesus from eyewitnesses, but he received the meaning and interpretation of them from Christ. Also, he had heard a voice from Heaven which imparted a divine message at the time of his conversion.

The words and actions of Jesus had to be interpreted and applied to Gentiles. What was the meaning to Gentiles of the message that the Kingdom has arrived in Christ? How could they enter the Kingdom? By divine revelation, Paul was able to answer these questions.

A refutation of the opponents (1:13-14).—The Judaizers claimed that their religion was rooted in Scripture (the Law of Moses and the Prophets). They considered Paul's rejection of "the traditions of the fathers" (v. 14) and his acceptance of the Gentiles into the Church as equals to be innovations from his Gentile environment. Although the Jew from Tarsus was exposed to Gentiles in his youth, his former actions proved that he had remained a conservative Jew. He had established a reputation for defending the Jewish religion to the extent of persecuting the Church of God and wasting it (v. 13). He had agreed previously with the Pharisees that Christianity was a perversion of Judaism. His actions revealed that he had not rejected

*Paul defended his apostolic authority on the basis that the message he preached was divinely \_\_\_\_\_.*

*(given)*

*Even though Paul did not meet the apostolic requirements, he declared that he did receive his \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ from Christ and not from \_\_\_\_\_.*

*(teachings, witness, men)*

*Is this statement true or false?*

*Paul's reference to Jesus Christ as the Revealer meant that he did not receive anything from eyewitnesses and followers of Christ. \_\_\_\_\_*

*(Compare your answer with the text.)*

*Paul was able to answer questions concerning Gentiles and their relation to Christ and the Kingdom of God by \_\_\_\_\_*

*(divine revelation)*

*The Judaizers thought Paul rejected "the traditions of the fathers" and accepted Gentiles into the Church as equals because of his \_\_\_\_\_.*

*(Gentile environment)*

Judaism nor had become sympathetic to Gentiles because of his previous environment. He was extremely zealous for his ancestral traditions until his conversion. (v. 14).

The dominant influence in Paul's life (1:15-17). — The Judaizers appear to have charged also that Paul received his interpretations from men. Paul reminded his opponents of the Jewish belief in God's providence. Even before his birth, God had determined the plan for Paul's life (v. 15).

Paul's divine call was based on God's grace rather than Paul's merit. Paul considered himself unworthy to minister to the Gentiles, a task the Judaizers belittled. Paul judged God's plan "to reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen" (v. 16) to be a noble calling. The Gentiles were also chosen for the Kingdom.

As an Old Testament scholar, Paul was acquainted with the message of the Prophets, especially Isaiah. Isaiah emphasized the place of the Gentiles in the Kingdom of God. The Judaizers expected a victorious, nationalistic Messiah who would give the Jewish nation victory over the Gentiles. The rejection of God's Messiah by the Jews and His crucifixion by the Gentiles were the mysteries of God's plan "which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ" (Eph. 3:9). The death of the Messiah provided for—

1. the atonement for sin by the shedding of blood;
2. the revelation of the divine rejection of a victorious, nationalistic, political Messiah and the affirmation of a suffering, universal Messiah.

If Jesus was the Messiah and was put to death, it was obvious that God's plan was not to send a messiah for the Israelite nation but a suffering servant to shed his blood for all. Jesus' death revealed to Paul that Jesus is the universal Messiah, and the Gentiles are included in the Kingdom.

Paul did not receive a knowledge of God's mysterious plan from the Apostles in Jerusalem but by the revelation of Jesus Christ (v. 12). Instead of going to Jerusalem to confer with the Apostles after his conversion, he went into Arabia, a desert region east of Damascus (v. 17). We do not know how far he went, what he did, nor how long he stayed. As Jesus was compelled by the Spirit to go into the wilderness for forty days and nights after the divine revelation at His baptism, so Paul needed a time of solitude after his conversion. His interpretation of the Old Testament had been an error; therefore, he

Is this statement true or false?

Paul's actions before his conversion show that he had not rejected Judaism nor had he become sympathetic to Gentiles because of his previous environment. \_\_\_\_\_ (Compare your answer with the text.)

According to the Judaizers interpretation of the Old Testament, the Messiah would be \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

(victorious, nationalistic)

Jesus' death revealed to Paul that the Messiah is a suffering \_\_\_\_\_ and is \_\_\_\_\_.

(servant, universal)

After his conversion, where did Paul go instead of to Jerusalem? \_\_\_\_\_, a desert region.

(Compare your answer with the text.)

needed to rethink his position and to correlate the Scriptures of the Prophets with his encounter with the living Lord and his commission to be an apostle to the Gentiles. From Arabia, he returned to Damascus.

Paul was influenced by Jewish traditions, but he was radically changed by God's grace in his conversion experience. At the time of his conversion, Paul "heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" (Acts 9:4). Through Ananias, the Lord revealed to Paul that he was a chosen vessel to the Gentiles. The unique encounter with the resurrected Lord at the time of Paul's conversion and the divine revelation through Ananias were predominant factors in changing Paul's life. The influences of his Jewish background, his previous understanding of the Old Testament, and the conversations with Jerusalem Apostles were secondary influences.

Paul's visit to Jerusalem (1:18-24).—Paul stated that he went to Jerusalem after three years (v.18). Whether the three years dated from his conversion and call (v.15) or from the time of his return from Arabia to Damascus (v.17) is uncertain. During Paul's first visit to Jerusalem (cf. Acts 9:26-30), he spent fifteen days with Peter (v.18). This brief period would not have been sufficient for Paul to have received his Gospel from the Apostles; nor would Peter have given to Paul the interpretation which applied the Gospel to the Gentiles. This information further proves Paul's argument that he received the Gospel he preached through divine revelation rather than from men, thus qualifying him as an apostle.

Paul's allusion to seeing "James the Lord's brother" (v.19) implies that James had become prominent in the Jerusalem Church. He mentioned him along with Cephas (the Aramaic name of Peter) and John as "pillars" of the Church (Gal. 2:9). His conversion may have come after the resurrection of Jesus. Paul refers to a resurrection appearance of Jesus to James (cf. 1 Cor. 15:7).

After Paul stated under solemn oath that his statements were true (v.20), he gave a summary of his activities during the following years (vv.21ff.). His oath perhaps was in response to an accusation that he lied about his visits with the other Apostles.

Since Paul worked in the regions of Syria and Cilicia (v.21), it is not likely that he was under the direction of the Twelve who remained in Jerusalem. Antioch, the third city of the Roman Empire, was in Syria, and Tarsus, Paul's native city, was located in Cilicia. These were predominantly Gentile areas where Paul worked for the next eleven (or perhaps fourteen) years. In the Book of Acts it is stated that when Paul left Jerusalem, he went to Tarsus (9:30). Little is known of the response to the Gospel

List the two predominant factors that changed Paul's life.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_

(His encounter with the resurrected Lord at his conversion, the divine revelation through Ananias)

The head of the Jerusalem Church when Paul visited there was \_\_\_\_\_, the Lord's brother.

(James)

List in sequence the places Paul went from the time of his conversion through his ministry in Syria and Cilicia. (See Gal.1:17-24.)

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

(Damascus, Arabia, Damascus, Jerusalem, Syria, and Cilicia)

there, but in Acts it is indicated that the work developed at Antioch of Syria to the extent that the Church there became the centre of missionary activity to the Gentiles (cf. Acts 13ff.). Paul was so occupied with his ministry in Syria and Cilicia that he did not spend time with the churches of Judea where the Apostles were influential (v.22). Although he was personally known by Peter and James, he was not personally known by the churches of Judea. Word of the conversion of the persecutor caused the Judean churches to glorify God (vv.23-24).

Paul's second visit to Jerusalem (2:1-10).—The Book of Acts indicates that Paul made two visits to Jerusalem before the Conference in A.D. 49 (see Acts 9:26ff.; 11:30; 12:25). In Acts 9:26ff., Paul was introduced to the Apostles by Barnabas. He occupied his time in Jerusalem by proclaiming the name of the Lord Jesus and disputing with the Grecians. Acts does not indicate that Paul went to Jerusalem to learn the Gospel. He and Barnabas were chosen to carry the offering to Jerusalem during the time of famine (Acts 11:30; 12:25), but they may not have seen the Apostles. Josephus, a Jewish historian, mentioned famines in Jerusalem about A.D. 44-48. Some scholars identify Paul's taking the famine offering to Jerusalem with the events described in Galatians 2. Paul gave his oath to the Galatians that he had made only two trips to Jerusalem during which he saw the Apostles.

It is likely that Paul did not consider the famine relief trip to Jerusalem to be involved in his defence in Galatia. On that trip, Paul saw elders of the Jerusalem Church (Acts 11:30) but likely did not confer with the Twelve concerning the Gospel. Galatians 2 probably refers to the trip to Jerusalem for the Conference in A.D. 49. This trip would have been the second in which Paul could have received his Gospel from the Apostles.

Paul took Barnabas and Titus with him on the second trip to Jerusalem (v.1). Barnabas had supported Paul before the disciples even when they avoided him because of fear (Acts 9:26ff.); he had brought Paul from Tarsus to help him in the fruitful work at Antioch (Act 11:25ff.). Barnabas had also accompanied Paul on the first missionary journey (Acts 13:2ff.). The two latter references indicate Barnabas' concern for the Gentile mission. Titus was a Gentile Christian who was not circumcised even though the Jerusalem Christians insisted on it. He was accepted into the Church without circumcision. Paul had circumcised Timothy whose father was a Greek in order that Timothy would have no barriers in his ministry to Jews. Paul refused to circumcise Titus because of his conviction on the issue that Gentiles were not required to keep Jewish rituals (v.3).

*In Galatians Paul stated that he made \_\_\_\_\_ trips to Jerusalem. However, the Book of Acts lists \_\_\_\_\_ trips to Jerusalem.*

*(two, three)*

*Whom did Paul take with him on the second trip to Jerusalem? \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_*

*Because Paul believed Gentiles were not required to keep Jewish rituals, he refused to circumcise \_\_\_\_\_.*

*(Barnabas, Titus, Titus)*

Paul stated that his trip was the result of divine revelation (v.2). When he arrived in Jerusalem, he first visited the Apostles and elders (Acts 15:4) to communicate to "them that gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but privately to them which were of reputation" (v.2). Afterwards, the entire Church came together to consider the issue raised by the believing Pharisees concerning the requirement of Gentiles to keep Jewish rituals.

Although he had not sought out the Apostles for his message, it was important that harmony and mutual understanding prevail between them. Technically, the purpose of the Jerusalem Conference was not to authorize officially Paul's Gospel to the Gentiles. It was to bring about understanding between Gentiles and Jews in order that fellowship could be maintained in the Church. The fact that the Jerusalem leaders failed to prevail in requiring the circumcision of Titus undercut the argument of the Judaizers that the Galatians should submit to that ritual.

There were "false brethren" in Jerusalem who insisted on imposing Jewish rituals on Gentile converts (v.4). Luke refers to them as "certain of the sect of the Pharisees which believed" (Acts 15:5). To learn and follow all of the rules of the Pharisees restricted a person's activities to the extent that he did not have freedom to serve Christ (v.4). Pharisaical customs restricted association with certain people and led to self-righteousness. These actions and attitudes made it impossible to share effectively the Gospel of Christ with unbelievers. Rituals of Judaism were related closely to Jewish nationalistic customs; therefore, to require Gentiles to adhere to the "traditions of my fathers" was to impose worthless requirements upon them. Paul refused to compromise with the believing Pharisees either at Antioch (Acts 15:2) or during the Jerusalem Conference (cf. Acts 15:6ff.; Gal. 2:5). The position which he took prevailed.

Since some earlier manuscripts omit the Greek words which are translated in English as "to whom" and "no, not", some scholars conclude that Titus was circumcised. They read verse 5: "We gave place by subjection for an hour." They interpret verse 3 to mean that Titus was circumcised, but the action did not come because of compulsion. Those who take this position claim that Paul agreed to the ritualizing gesture but did not regard it as compromising a principle.

Some men were determined to have Titus circumcised. Paul called these "false brethren secretly brought in, who slipped in to spy out our freedom which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage" (v.4—RSV). Paul stated that he refused to compromise for a moment with these pharisaical legalists who were determined to bring the Gentiles into bondage.

*Underline the phrase which completes correctly the following sentence.*

*The purpose of the Jerusalem Conference was*

- 1. to authorize officially Paul's Gospel to the Gentiles.*
- 2. to bring about understanding between Gentiles and Jews in order that fellowship could be maintained in the Church.*

(2)

*What customs made sharing the Gospel by the early Christians difficult?*

*(pharisaical customs)*

Paul turned his attention to those who "were reputed to be something" (namely, companions of Jesus during His earthly ministry). Since God has no favourites, those of reputation made no difference to Paul (v. 6). During the Jerusalem Conference, they added nothing to Paul's doctrine of salvation for the Gentiles. His statement agreed with the description in Acts 15. After Paul presented to the Apostles and elders the Gospel which he preached to the Gentiles, Peter supported his position by noting that the Gentiles' reception of the Holy Spirit demonstrated that God purified their hearts by faith and Jews were saved "even as they [the Gentiles]" (Acts 15:8-11). The Conference ended in agreement with the understanding that Paul was divinely chosen to carry the Gospel to the uncircumcision and Peter to the circumcision. There were not two Gospels but only one which preached salvation by faith; however, Jews and Gentiles had different national customs and different ways of expressing their faith. The same God who blessed Peter's ministry to the Jews blessed Paul's ministry to the Gentiles (v. 8).

The Jerusalem Conference actually defined how Jews were saved rather than how Gentiles were saved. Paul had gone to the Conference with the conviction that salvation is by faith. Peter concluded that Jews were also saved by faith, and that not even Jews were able to keep the Law of Moses. The meeting ended in agreement with the extending of "the right hands of fellowship" (v. 9). It was agreed that Paul and Barnabas would go to the Gentiles and Peter to the Jews. It was suggested that Paul and the Gentile churches should remember the poor Christians in Jerusalem (v. 10). This Paul was eager to do.

Peter's defection in Antioch (2:11-15).—Those who attended the Jerusalem Conference agreed that salvation was by faith, but the agreement did not eliminate deep-rooted loyalty to national traditions or racial pride. The Conference appears to have favoured the observance of Jewish customs by Jewish Christians; however, the legalistic acts were not required for the salvation of either Jew or Greek. Not every pharisaical Jewish Christian was willing to abide by the decision of the Council.

Paul did not indicate when Peter arrived in Antioch. In this third city of the Roman Empire, Peter found Jewish and Gentile converts sharing meals together. Jewish law prohibited this action and emphasized separatism (cf. Neh. 13). There had been historical periods when the survival of Judaism required separation from foreigners; otherwise, Jewish religious beliefs would have been compromised and idolatry would have been forced upon them. Some strict Christian Jews continued to perpetuate the law. On the other hand, Gentiles who were members of this same Church felt discrimination when Jews refused to share in fellowship meals.

Who were those who "were reputed to be something"? \_\_\_\_\_

(Compare your answer with the text.)

Underline what the Jerusalem Conference actually defined.

1. How Gentiles were saved.
2. How Jews were saved.

(2)

Peter had learnt from the vision in Joppa that meats were not unclean nor was it wrong to enter the house of a Gentile. He was wise enough to take six witnesses with him when he entered the house of Cornelius (Acts 10). He was called upon to give account for this action by the Jerusalem Christians (Acts 11). Proof that his actions were based on God's revelation satisfied them but did not change their attitudes of nationalism. The experience appears not to have brought significant changes to Peter. At the Jerusalem Conference he referred to the experience in the house of Cornelius in words which imply that the special vision had little influence on his normal activities. The vision did cause Peter to be more open toward Gentiles, but he did not have a strong conviction concerning the equality of Jews and Gentiles. He was willing to associate with Gentiles in Antioch until strict Jewish Christians from the Jerusalem Church which James pastored arrived in Antioch. Upon their arrival, he ceased fellowshiping with Gentiles (v. 12). His actions influenced other Jewish Christians, even Barnabas who had served many years among Gentiles (v. 13). Perhaps the pharisaical believers convinced Barnabas that Peter had been with Jesus; therefore, he carried greater authority than Paul who had led in the integration of Jewish and Gentile churches. Although Jesus had opposed the Pharisees, He had continued to observe Jewish religious practices. His ministry had been almost completely among Jews; therefore, the life of Christ offered little precedent by example for relating to Gentiles.

If Paul had not stood firmly, Christianity might have become subordinated to Judaism. Paul's argument recalls Peter's confession at the Jerusalem Conference: "Now therefore why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear?" (Acts 15:10). Peter admitted that Jews were saved by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ even as Gentiles. Paul pointed out that if one born a Jew could not keep the Jewish customs and laws but were like Gentiles in practical living, why should Jews compel Gentile Christians to try to live by the Jewish Law (v. 14). Gentiles did not have the background nor interest in keeping Jewish nationalistic customs; therefore, why should Jewish Christians insist on placing this yoke which they could not bear upon Gentile Christians (v. 15). The crisis was so serious that Paul publicly rebuked Peter. The question of spiritual religion was threatened by legalism; Christian love and respect for all men as equals were threatened by racism and narrow nationalism.

The true Gospel (2:16-21).—Paul referred to the "sinners of the Gentiles" in contrast to "Jews by nature" (v. 15). Strict Jews who observed the Law in detail (Pharisees) considered Gentiles who did not obey the Law to be in a different category--sinners. But if Jews lived "after the manner of Gentiles" (v. 14), the

*Underline the correct word or words.*  
*The life of Christ (did, did not) offer much precedent by example for relating to Gentiles.*  
 (did not)

*Paul pointed out that if one born a Jew could not keep the Jewish customs and laws, the Jews should not compel \_\_\_\_\_ Christians to try to live by the Jewish laws.*  
 (Gentile)

*Is this statement true or false?*  
*Paul rebuked Peter at Antioch because Peter withdrew from association with Gentile Christians. \_\_\_\_\_*  
 (true)

Law offered no hope of salvation: "Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law" (v.16). Justification means to be reckoned or declared right with God. Not even Jews are reckoned right with God by their customs, rules, and laws if they do not keep them perfectly.

Peter had admitted previously that even Jews who were raised under the customs of the Law were unable to keep it. The only hope for Jews and Gentiles is atonement by faith in Jesus Christ. Since both Jews and Gentiles have broken the Law, it condemns them instead of saving them. Christ's death on the cross provided atonement from man's sins; therefore, if Jews and Gentiles believe in Jesus Christ, their sins are removed by the blood of Christ and they then stand righteous before God. The Cross is God's act in His Son: God not only declared the sinner righteous but makes him righteous by removing his sin when he turns to Christ in faith. The works of the Law—circumcision, separateness from Gentiles, sacrifices, pretensions to moral purity—will justify no person who transgresses the moral law (v.16).

The Pharisees taught that if men became righteous by keeping the Law, God's presence and power would return in His Kingdom. Paul argued that not even Jews were obedient; therefore, salvation could not come by the Law. Faith in Christ was the means for both Jewish and Gentile sinners to be reckoned right with God (v.16). The Gospel of Christ did not advocate sin nor was Christ an agent for sin even though He offered salvation to sinners (v.17). The normal conclusion is that sinning is encouraged if sinners can be saved by faith in Christ. The legalists claimed that trying to keep the Law encouraged man to be righteous and not a sinner, but the Gospel of Christ encouraged men to be sinners. Actually, the opposite is true. Those who live by the works of the Law claim to be righteous but do not keep parts of it. In order to hide their failures, legalists deny their sins and pretend to be righteous. This life of deceit and hypocrisy leads to spiritual pride and is devoid of love or compassion for the honest person who admits his sin. The attitude and actions of the legalists are far removed from those of Christ. They become self-righteous judges who claim to do right but actually live deceptively to hide their wrong practices.

Paul encouraged both Jews and Gentiles to forsake dependence on the Law for salvation (v.18). If he had submitted to the pressure of the Judaizers to require the Gentiles to keep Jewish traditions, he would have been a transgressor because he had been teaching them to do the opposite (v.18). Since salvation is not by legal and ceremonial practices, Paul had ceased to be enslaved to those practices (the Law) in order to be liberated to do the will of God as revealed by His Spirit. Paul sincerely believed that the revelation he had from Jesus Christ (see 1:12) revealed God's will more completely than the Law which the Pharisees advocated.

*Galatians 2:16 states that no one is justified by the \_\_\_\_\_ of the \_\_\_\_\_.*

*(works, Law)*

*List some words which describe Pharisees or legalists.*

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

*(deceitful, hypocritical, self-righteous, proud)*

*Is this statement true or false?*

*Paul encouraged Jews as well as Gentiles to forsake dependence on the Law for salvation.*

*(Compare your answer with the text.)*

Verse 19 is difficult to interpret. Perhaps Paul used 'law' in two different ways. It could refer to the first five books of the Old Testament (the Law of Moses); to the entire Old Testament; to the ceremonial and moral requirements contained in the books of Moses; or to the rules and legalistic interpretations of the Old Testament laws. The scribes had defined each with numerous rules and legalistic actions. Perhaps Paul meant in Verse 19 that he "through the law" (the Old Testament Scriptures which spoke of Christ) was "dead to the law"—the legalistic pharisaical rules no longer controlled him. Through his new liberty, he was able to live according to God's will instead of being enslaved by legalism.

*Perhaps Paul was saying in Galatians 2:19 that through his new \_\_\_\_\_ he was able to live according to God's \_\_\_\_\_ instead of being enslaved by \_\_\_\_\_.*

*(liberty, will, legalism)*

Verse 20 vividly expresses the new attitude of the Christian. Paul had confessed already his zeal in the Jewish religion and his ambition to surpass those of his own age (1:13-14). After his Christian experience, he became aware that he had been living for himself instead of for God. He had been striving to advance himself in the Jewish religion. In contrast to Paul, Christ had died for others. He had commanded that His disciple must "deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me" (Luke 9:23). Paul knew the statement of Jesus, "For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it" (Luke 9:24). The self must be put to death in order that it not control one's life for selfish ends. Christ died for others. Christians are to live for others, but this is impossible until the self loses its power over one's life. After crucifying self, the Christian continues to live, but it is not his ego ("I") that exerts control over his life; rather, it is Christ who abides within who has control over him. The Christian continues to live "in the flesh" (a life inclined towards sin), but he is not dominated by sin because he lives "by the faith of the Son of God" (v.20). The Christian believes that the indwelling Christ who controls his life can give him victory over temptations and inclinations to sin (life in the flesh).

*The important truth in Galatians 2:20 is that \_\_\_\_\_ must be put to death so that \_\_\_\_\_ can control one's life.*

*(self, Christ)*

Following legalistic rules is man's effort to attain righteousness. Salvation by grace is God's accomplishment through Christ which is offered to man. Man cannot depend both on his own accomplishment and on God's provision for him. If he depends on his own efforts, then Christ's death is of no value to him (v.21).

*Following legalistic rules is \_\_\_\_\_ effort to attain \_\_\_\_\_.*

*Salvation by grace is \_\_\_\_\_ accomplishment through Christ which is offered to man.*

*(man's, righteousness, God's)*

Paul's Personal Introduction to the Romans

Romans 1:1-17

His identity and greetings (1:1-7)

Paul followed the typical Greek letter which began with many references to the sender and contained a greeting to the recipients. He identified himself as a bond-slave of Jesus Christ (v.1). He was not a slave belonging to man, but he had been "bought with a price" (1 Cor.6:20; 7:23). As a "called apostle", Paul was divinely commissioned and authorized to go forth with a message. He was not one of the original Twelve who had been with Jesus and had witnessed His resurrection, but Paul's authority was no less valid because of his divine call to go to the Gentiles. He was separated from other occupations to that of carrying the Gospel to the Gentiles.

The promise that God would send a descendant of David to establish the Kingdom was made by the Prophets (vv. 2-3). Jesus met the Messianic requirements as a descendant of David "according to the flesh" (v.3). David had been called a "son of God", but Jesus was designated Son of God in a special sense. He was more than a mortal human descendant of David.

His resurrection by the power of God's Spirit declared His divine nature (v.4). Jesus was divine as well as human before His resurrection, but His resurrection manifested His divine nature and lordship (v.5).

It was not the Apostles in Jerusalem who gave Paul the authority to teach the Gospel. It was by the authority of the resurrected Lord that Paul was commissioned to bring about obedience through faith among the Gentiles (v.5). Paul did not deserve the noble responsibility of carrying the Good News, but the grace of God expressed through Christ qualified him for the task. Paul's activities were not to exalt himself but were to honour the name of Christ (v.5).

The Roman Christians were also divinely called to Christ and were the beloved children of God (v.6). Because of God's call and grace, they had a special relationship to God. The Roman Christians were separated to be God's possession for service and worship.

Paul's greeting included the usual blessing of grace and peace. Grace is God's undeserved favour, and peace is the absence of trouble and evil. The special favour and protection come from God who is our Father and also the Father of the Lord Jesus Christ (v.7). Children normally expect blessings, provisions, and protection from their father. Christians can expect them from their Heavenly Father.

[Empty box for notes]

Jesus was \_\_\_\_\_ in nature as a descendant of \_\_\_\_\_.  
  
(human, David)

He is \_\_\_\_\_ in nature as revealed by His \_\_\_\_\_.  
  
(divine, resurrection)

[Empty box for notes]

What parallelism is there between what children expect from their fathers and what Christians can expect from their Heavenly Father?  
\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_  
  
(blessings, provisions, protection)

Paul's gratitude (1:8-15)

Paul followed the Greek style by expressing thanksgiving to God after the address and greeting. A soldier from Italy wrote to his father in Egypt: "Apion to Epimachus his father and lord, greeting. First of all I pray that you are in health and continually prosper and fare well with my sister and her daughter and my brother. I thank the Lord Serapis that when I was in danger at sea he saved me of..."<sup>2</sup> Paul was grateful that the faith of the Roman community was known all over the world. No doubt Christians felt a legitimate pride in knowing that Christianity was well represented in the capital of the Empire.

Paul approached the point of oath-taking in calling on God as his witness to substantiate his statements. Only God could know the inner spirit and private petitionary prayers of Paul for the Roman Christians and his strong inward desire to visit Rome (vv. 9-10). Paul desired to share "some spiritual gift" which would strengthen the Roman Christians as servants (v. 11). He believed the Christian life was under the control and power of the Holy Spirit who enables Christians to prophesy, minister as servants, teach, etc. (12:6-8). Paul shared in the impartation of spiritual gifts by communicating the Gospel which was the content and basis of Christian service. His doctrinal teaching would strengthen and stabilize the Roman Christians.

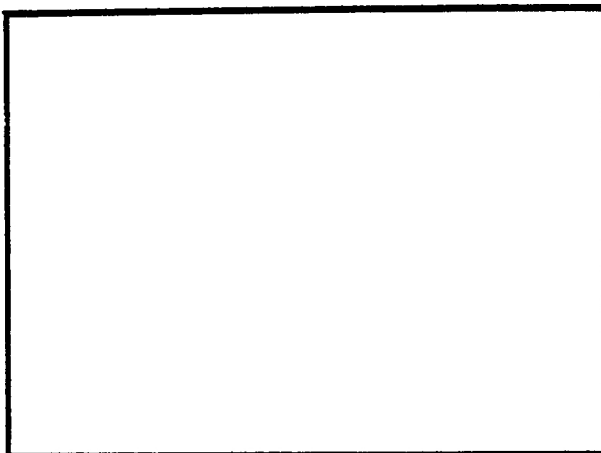
A second purpose of Paul's visit to the Romans was to gain personal encouragement and inspiration from their faith and commitment to the Lord (v. 12). He felt an obligation to minister to the Roman Christians since they were predominantly Gentile (v. 13), but he had been prevented previously from going to Rome. He also desired to share in the harvest which God had prepared.

Jews classified people of other nations as Gentiles; Greeks classified them as Barbarians (v. 14). To the Greeks, Barbarians were people who did not know Greek, including both Jews and Gentiles. The Greeks were the wise, and the Barbarians the unwise. Verses 13-15 imply that the Roman Church was predominantly Gentile at the time Paul wrote.

The theme (1:16-17)

Paul's theme for the Epistle is stated in verse 16: the Gospel of Christ "is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek". Paul was eager to preach the

<sup>2</sup>Milligan, Selections from the Greek Papyri, No. 36.



One of the reasons Paul desired to go to Rome was to share " \_\_\_\_\_ " which would strengthen the Roman Christians as servants.

(some spiritual gift)

Another reason Paul desired to go to Rome was to gain \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ from the Roman Christians' faith and commitment to the Lord.

(personal encouragement, inspiration)

Apparently the Roman Church was predominantly \_\_\_\_\_ at the time Paul wrote.

(Gentile)

Paul's theme for his Roman Epistle is found in what chapter and verse? \_\_\_\_\_

(Compare your answer with the text.)

Gospel in Rome for (because) he was not ashamed of it (vv. 15-16). He was not ashamed of the Gospel for (because) it is the power of God unto salvation (v. 16). The Gospel is the power of God unto salvation for (because) the righteousness of God is revealed in it.

Judaism offered salvation to Jews but not to Gentiles unless they submitted to Jewish customs. The Gospel of Christ offered salvation to all regardless of national identity.

Salvation means to experience the forgiving presence and power of God. Only when man is righteous can he confront the presence of a righteous God and live. The Good News is that sinful man can become righteous through faith; therefore, he can live. Righteousness is not man's accomplishment but is God's provision which is appropriated through faith. "Man who is made righteous through faith shall live" (v. 17). Righteousness is "from faith to faith" (v. 17)—salvation is by faith from start to finish. Man who believes that Jesus is the Messiah in whom the Kingdom has arrived finds power through faith to live the righteous life required of Kingdom citizens. He is not left to his own resources to keep the Law. Real life comes through faith rather than through human performance and personal achievement.

<p><i>The Good News is that _____ man can become righteous through _____; therefore, he can _____. This is Paul's theme in Romans.</i></p> <p><i>(sinful, faith, live)</i></p>

Home Study Exercise

Basic activity (Levels 1, 2, and 3). After reading the study guide text, answer the following questions.

1. Why did Paul deny receiving the Gospel from the Jerusalem Apostles? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. What were the four requirements placed upon Gentiles by the Jerusalem Conference?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. What answer did the Judaizers give to the question, What is required of Gentiles to be delivered from sin and brought into the Kingdom? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. In Galatians 1:1, what did Paul state was the source of his apostleship? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. How did Paul's apostleship differ from that of the Twelve? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

6. Describe the perversion of the Gospel of Christ by the Judaizers according to Galatians 1:7. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. According to Galatians 1:12-19, give two of Paul's answers to the accusation that he received the interpretation of his Gospel from men. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
8. Name two misinterpretations of the Old Testament which Paul had as a Pharisee. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
9. Who was head of the Jerusalem church when Paul visited there? \_\_\_\_\_
10. List Paul's itinerary as recorded in Galatians 1:17-24. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
11. How do Galatians 1:18 and 2:1 differ from Acts 9:26, 11:30, and Acts 15? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
12. Why did Paul refuse to circumcise Titus? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
13. What was the purpose of the Jerusalem Conference? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
14. To whom was Paul referring by the words "these who seem to be somewhat"? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
15. What did the Jerusalem Conference actually define? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
16. Why did Paul rebuke Peter at Antioch? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
17. According to Galatians 2:14-16, name two reasons Paul gave for Gentiles' not keeping the Law. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

18. Give a one-sentence explanation of Galatians 2:20. \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_
19. What does Romans 1:3-4 say about the nature of Christ? \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_
20. Name two stated purposes of Paul concerning his proposed visit to Rome. \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_
21. What was Paul's theme in Romans? \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Supplementary activity (Level 2):

1. Read pages 23-30 in The Epistle to the Romans by Hunter and pages 13-25 in Galatians to Colossians by Hunter.
2. What did Paul say about himself in the "address" of Romans?
3. Explain how Paul established the authenticity of his apostleship (see Gal. 1).
4. According to Hunter, what is the meaning of "righteousness of God"?
5. Explain the meaning of election according to Hunter.

Advanced activity (Level 3):

1. Read pages 33-58 and 71-77 in The Epistle of Paul to the Romans by Bruce and pages 13-25 in Galatians to Colossians by Hunter.
2. List the ways (with Scripture references) Paul used the words 'flesh,' 'spirit,' and 'law' in Romans and Galatians (see Bruce, pages 40-58).
3. According to Bruce, to what degree did Paul's experience on the Damascus Road affect his thought and life?
4. Explain, "declared to be the Son of God with power" (Rom. 1:4).
5. Explain how Paul established the authenticity of his apostleship (see Gal. 1).
6. What accusations made by the Judaizers against Paul are reflected in Galatians?
7. Explain the meaning of election according to Hunter.

### Seminar Discussion

1. How did Paul's doctrine of salvation (Gospel of Christ) differ from that of the Judaizers?
2. What was divinely revealed to Paul with regard to the Gospel of grace or of Christ?
3. Why was Paul's refusal to have Titus circumcised an important stand?
4. How do the accounts in Acts and Galatians differ with regard to Paul's visits to Jerusalem?
5. What was the real outcome of the Jerusalem Conference?
6. What caused Peter's defection in Antioch and what was Paul's response?
7. Why did Paul desire to go to Rome?