Background to Galatians

- Paul converts to Christianity (Acts 9)
- 1st missionary journey (Acts 13-14)
  - Paul plants churches in the southern Galatian cities of Antioch, Iconium, Lystra, and Derbe
- Paul visits the Jerusalem Council ~ A.D. 49 (Acts 15:1-35)
  - The Jerusalem Council decided Gentiles did not need to become Jews and follow the Mosaic Law to become Christians.
  - Paul mentions his trip to the Jerusalem council in Galatians 2:1. Therefore, Paul must have written Galatians after the Jerusalem Council.
  - Paul wrote Galatians to counter judaizing false teachers who were undermining the central NT doctrine of justification by faith. Ignoring the express decree of the Jerusalem Council (Ac 15:23–29), they spread their dangerous teaching that Gentiles must first become Jewish proselytes and submit to all the Mosaic law before they could become Christians.
- Paul visited northern Galatia after the Jerusalem Council (Ac 16:6)
Paul’s 1\textsuperscript{st} Missionary Journey: to Southern Galatia
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Purpose of Galatians

Paul warns the Galatians not to tolerate any addition to the gospel of grace, particularly ritual circumcision, because a Gentile following Jesus does not need first to become a Jew.
I. Introduction (1:1-10)

A. The Apostolic Greeting (1:1-5)

1. Author (1:1-2a)
   - Paul (1:1)
     - Paul defends his apostolic authority by showing that he was commissioned by the highest authority: the risen, living Lord
   - All the brethren who are with me (1:2a)
     - Other believers concur with the Pauline gospel

2. Audience (1:2b)
   - The local churches in southern Galatia

3. Greeting (1:3-5)
   - All praise to God for the work of the cross
     - Paul begins and ends Galatians by boasting in the cross (Gal. 6:14)
     - Paul persuades the Galatians to reject the false teachers because of the work of the cross
I. Introduction (1:1-10)
   A. The Apostolic Greeting (1:1-5)
   B. Rebuke: the occasion of the letter (1:6-10)

Where we would normally expect to find an apostolic blessing, we hear instead an apostolic curse!

1. Paul’s amazement at their departure (1:6-7)
   o Leaving the biblical gospel is deserting God Himself

2. A curse on those who proclaim or receive a false gospel (1:8-9)
   o The truth of the message depends on its content (whether it accords with the gospel), not the credentials of the messenger (1:8)
   o So that you don’t lead others astray, may God damn your soul to hell right now! (1:8-9)

3. Paul’s model of not trying to please people (1:10)
   o Paul does not accommodate the gospel so that his hearers would find it acceptable (1:10)
I. Introduction (1:1-10)

II. Using biography, Paul defends his apostleship and gospel (1:11-2:21)

   Defending his apostleship also proves the gospel he preached is biblical

   A. Paul’s gospel comes directly from God (1:11-24)
      1. Jesus Christ personally taught Paul the gospel (1:11-12)
         o Paul’s gospel was not invented by humans
            • Humans always invent a gospel of works in order to glorify themselves
      2. Paul’s former life in Judaism (1:13-14)
         o Paul used to persecute the church (1:13)
         o Paul advanced in Judaism (1:14)
            • Paul was not influenced by the biblical gospel prior to conversion
      3. Paul’s present life in the church (1:15-17)
         o God graciously saved Paul so he would preach the gospel (1:15-16a)
            • Only divine intervention through the biblical gospel would radically change Paul’s life
         o For the first 3 years, Paul did not consult with other people (1:16b-17)
Paul’s Pre-Conversion and Post-Conversion Travels
Salvation is by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone.
Adding any religious/ceremonial work results in a message that does not save.