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)
      2. Audience (1:2b)
      3. Greeting (1:3-5)
   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)
   2. A curse on those who proclaim or receive a false gospel (1:8-9)
   3. Paul’s model of not trying to please people (1:10)
II. Using autobiography, Paul defends his apostleship and gospel (1:11-2:21)

A. Paul’s gospel comes directly from God (1:11-24)
   1. Jesus Christ personally taught Paul the gospel (1:11-12)
   2. Paul’s former life in Judaism (1:13-14)
   3. Paul’s present life in the church (1:15-17)
   4. Paul did not visit with the Apostles in Jerusalem until 3 years after his conversion (1:18-20)
   5. Paul left the company of the apostles (1:21-24)

B. The Apostles endorse Paul’s ministry and gospel (2:1-10)
   1. Paul travels to Jerusalem (2:1-5)
   2. The Pillars gave Paul and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship (2:6-10)
II. Using autobiography, Paul defends his apostleship and gospel (1:11-2:21)

C. Paul consistently was committed to the true gospel (2:11-21)

1. Paul rebuked Peter at Antioch which proves his apostolic authority (2:11-14)
   ○ Paul blamed Peter for being in the wrong (2:11)
     • Paul rebukes Peter, proving the independence and authority of Paul’s gospel
   ○ When Peter avoided having meals with Gentile Christians, he affirmed the gospel of the Judaizers (2:12)
   ○ Other Jews, including Barnabas, followed Peter’s example (2:13)
   ○ To avoid eating with Gentiles was a gospel issue! (2:14)
     • Refusing to eat with the Gentiles, Peter sends the message that Gentiles are not fully forgiven in Christ until they follow the dietary restrictions of the Old Testament.
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C. Paul consistently was committed to the true gospel (2:11-21)
   1. Paul rebuked Peter at Antioch which proves his apostolic authority (2:11-14)
   2. Paul proclaims the biblical gospel: both Jews and Gentiles are justified by faith alone (2:15-20)
      ○ Justification is by faith alone and not by the works of the Law (2:15-16)
        • Even though Paul and Peter were Jewish, they still turned their backs on the Law and embraced Christ by faith alone (2:15-16)
        • 2:16 is Paul’s thesis statement. All of Galatians explains/proves this verse.
What does ‘justification’ mean?

1. Justification means ‘to declare righteous’
   - This does not change our internal character
   - Justification does not mean ‘to be made righteous’

2. Justification includes the forgiveness of sins
   - The guilt/condemnation/penalty for our sins is gone!

3. Justification includes the imputation of the perfect righteousness of Christ
   - We are clothed, not infused, with Christ’s perfect righteousness
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      ○ Putting people under the Law for righteousness is sinful (2:17-19)
         • Christ did not sin by teaching that all foods are clean (2:17)
         • If the dietary laws contribute to salvation, then Paul is unsaved because he does not keep them (2:18)
         • Christians have died to the Law (2:19)
      ○ Our new life as Christians is dominated by faith in Christ, and not by Law (2:20)
         • This verse is Paul’s spiritual autobiography in a nutshell
         • Faith is the instrument of sanctification, and love fuels sanctification
II. Using autobiography, Paul defends his apostleship and gospel (1:11-2:21)
   C. Paul consistently was committed to the true gospel (2:11-21)
      1. Paul rebuked Peter at Antioch which proves his apostolic authority (2:11-14)
      2. Paul proclaims the biblical gospel: both Jews and Gentiles are justified by faith alone (2:15-20)
      3. Salvation by works contradicts grace (2:21)
Salvation is by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone.
Adding any religious/ceremonial work results in a message that does not save.