

Title: **Introduction to Galatians (Part 3)**

Passage: **Galatians 1:1a,2b**

Theme: **Introduction to the book of Galatians**

Number: **0614Ga1.1a2b(3)**

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{Read Passage}

[i] Who's on First?

Two men met recently and struck up a conversation. One was telling the other about some problems he was having with one of his kids. After a while the other guy said, "You think you have family problems? A few years ago I met a young widow with a grown-up daughter and we got married. Later, my father married my stepdaughter. That made my stepdaughter my stepmother and my father became my stepson. Also, my wife became mother-in-law of her father-in-law. Then my wife's daughter, who is now my stepmother, had a son. This boy is my half-brother because he was my father's son, but he is also the son of my wife's daughter, which makes him my wife's grandson. That makes me grandfather of my half-brother. This was nothing until my wife and I had a son. Now the sister of my son, my mother-in-law, is also the grandmother. This makes my father the brother-in-law of my child, whose stepsister is my father's wife. I am my stepmother's brother-in-law, my wife is her own child's aunt, my son is my father's nephew and I am my own grandfather!" – Author unknown.

That story resonates w/me as far as my studies in Gal. are concerned. Has nothing to do with family relationships – but trying to figure out t/cast of charact. in t/Epistle & how they fit into t/BOA, along w/Paul's life & travels, t/corresp. dates, t/theories regarding who Paul was writing to (north or south G.) – all of that has had my head spinning.

[ii] This is week 3 in our introduction to the book of Galatians

So far we've not gotten past the first word: "Paul".

[iii] Our outline: Parts to a mailed letter

I. The Return Address

A. Who Wrote (or sent) the Letter?

II. The Address Proper

A. Who Was on the receiving end of the Letter?

III. The Post-Mark Date

A. When and Where was the Letter Written?

IV. The Contents of the Letter

A. What Is the Letter About and Why was it Written?

V. The Text of the Letter

A. What is the Style and Structure of the Letter

VI. The Stamp

A. Are there Issues Pertaining to Authenticity and Canonicity?

We're just using this outline for illustration purposes – Letter's of antiquity didn't have postal stamps, return address labels and the like.

Ancient letters (NT epistles) were structured differently.

Author put his name first – not last like we do today (v. 1):

PAUL, an apostle . . .

Then there would be t/person(s) to whom t/letter was written – in this case, a group (v. 2):

to the churches of Galatia:

Greeting (vv. 3-4)—a greeting that begins w/words so common to Paul:
Grace to you and peace . . .

Body of the letter (1:6 – 6:10)

Concluding thoughts (begin in 6:11):

See with what large letters I am writing to you with my own hand.

Valediction – “yours truly” (6:18)

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, brethren.
Amen.

I reference t/parts to a modern letter only for the sake of analogy.

In that regard ==>

I. The Return Address – Παῦλος ἀπόστολος (Paul, an apostle)

Spent our time reviewing the life and ministry of the Apostle Paul.

Answering t/? ==>

A. Who was the Apostle Paul?

We've spent most of our time in the BOA as we've answered that ?

Next 2 points ==>

II. The Address Proper

Who were the recipients of the letter?

III. The Post-Mark Date

When was the letter written? ==>

Hang together. For t/most part, t/dating of the letter will depend on who you take t/Galatians to be.

1:2 – “churches in Galatia.”

3:1 – he refers to them as “Galatians”

Galatia and *Galatians* could refer to 2 different areas

1. One of the biggest questions as far as any study of Galatians is concerned: North or South?

Here's t/issue: Back in Paul's day there were 2 different ways to understand t/term “Galatia.”

Ethnic Galatia (north of Asia Minor)

Provincial Galatia (south Asia Minor)

“Did Paul write to CH's in t/N or S.?” It is a relevant ?

Volumes have been written on this matter over t/years. Largely more recent years (recent as far as CH history goes). Wasn't much of an issue until t/19th c.

Again – I want to point your attention to t/map on t/back of your outline. If you're listening to this at a later date you might want to look this up, find a map of 1st c. Asia Minor on t/internet or in an Atlas (don't do it while you're driving).

a. Helpful – you can use your right hand (rough map)

Hold your RH up w/your palm facing away from you. 4 fingers up w/no spaces between them; your thumb sticking out in a typical “traffic cop” halt/stop gesture. Rotate your hand counter-clockwise so that your thumb is in a 7:00 or 8:00 position. Not while driving / mad.

Thumb would be pointing to Egypt; web between thumb and forefinger is Palestine (Israel); 1st knuckle is Antioch in Syria; 4 fingers are Asia Minor. Space under your fingers is t/Med. Sea; Space over your fingers is t/Black Sea.

Knuckles on your index/middle finger = south Galatia.

Knuckles on your ring/little finger = north Galatia.

OR – you can turn to t/maps section in your Bible & it's all right there.

2. Northern Galatia = Ethnic Galatia – Southern Galatia = Provincial Galatia

a. Northern Galatia = Ethnic Galatia

Certain Gallic, or Celtic tribes (ref. to as Gauls / Galatians by Gk. & Lat. writers) fought eastward thru Europe – 278-277 BC finally settling in t/north central plateau – an area they designated Galatia (“The Country of the Gauls”).

Rom. historian Livy describes them as having ==>

“ . . . tall bodies, long reddish hair, huge shields, very long swords;”

He's describing ancestors of our two deacons (J/J).

“ . . . in addition, [they sing] as they go into battle [with] yells and leapings and the dreadful din of arms as they clash shields accoring to some ancestral customs—all these are deliberately used to terrify their foes.” [Livy Hist. 38.18.3-9]

These Gauls, typically tall, fair skinned, reddish hair share ethnicity w/the Celts of t/UK. – interesting that 2 of t/taller men in our congregation apparently share that ancestry.

As for me –

You know you're Italian when . . .

You can bench press 300 pounds, shave twice a day and still cry when your mother yells at you.

You can threaten *and* hug t/same person during a single conversation.

If someone in t/family is taller than 5'10" you assume he's adopted or illegitimate.

TAP did visit Rome and couldn't hide among t/crowds like he could in Galatia.

a. Northern Galatia = Ethnic Galatia

Settled by Celtic tribes (called Celts, Gauls, or Galatians).

These Galatians in t/northern A.M. eventually joined t/Roman cause. They supported t/Rom. Gen. Pompey in his battle against Mithradates V and were rewarded afterward by having their region expanded to t/south.

3 decades later, following t/Battle of Actium, t/Roman Octavian (Augustus) expanded Galatia to into a large area in southern A.M. – an area than had never been ethnically Galatian.

About 25 BC Augustus reorganized the region as a Roman Province under t/authority of a Roman gov.

As I understand it, north and south were included in t/Province. But there was a difference in that t/southern area was now referred to as “Galatia” even as t/north had been.

3. Again the question ==>

Did Paul write to CH's in t/northern Galatian region? The area which was Galatia Proper? Or did he write to southern Galatia, the Roman Province?

a. This really wasn't much of a question until the 19th c.

From t/Church Fathers to the Reformers, it was assumed that when Paul writes “to the churches in Galatia” (v. 2) he is writing to t/Celts or Gauls of t/north.

b. A scholar name Sir William Ramsey published his *Historical Commentary on the book of Galatians* (1899) and *The Church in the Roman Empire* (1893)

In those works he clearly articulated t/view that Paul wrote t/EOG not to CH's in t/northern Galatian region (ethnic G.) but to those CH's in t/southern region (provincial G.).

c. I can't even begin to get into all the arguments

It's quite complex & there are good reasons for either position (n or s).

d. Why I lean toward the view that Paul wrote to churches in southern / provincial Galatia

1. No record of CH's being established in the northern Galatian cities (Tavium, Ancyra, Pessinus).

2. There is a record of CH's established in the southern Galatian cities. *Within the provincial Galatia were the towns which the apostle Paul evangelized on his first missionary journey, viz. Antioch, Iconium, Lystra and Derbe (Acts 13–14).*

3. There is no other way to singularly designate the cities in the southern region than to refer to them as “Galatians”

Greek geographer Strabo describes the province as mixed (Greeks, Romans, Gauls, Jews). But all within the Roman Province were considered Galatians. Inscriptions bearing the name of slaves refer to them as “Galatians” even though none has a Celtic name. A first century inscription outside t/city of Pisidia in the south refers to it as “the city of the Galatians.” Inscriptions on tombstones in the southern region refer to the dead as Galatians. [Dictionary of Paul and His Letters, s.v. Galatians, Epistle To]

4. Paul commonly used provincial titles to refer to the geographic location of churches he founded (Achaia; Asia; Macedonia).

5. The 3 other occurrences of ‘Galatia’ in the NT (2 Tim. 4:10; 1 Pet. 1:1; and 1 Cor. 16:1) almost certainly refer to the Roman province.

6. Three times Paul mentions Barnabas (vv. 2:1, 9, 13) who was His traveling companion during the 1st Missionary Journey. The way his name comes up in the letter seems to assume that the Galatian Christians knew him. Barnabas was not with Paul on his other M.Js.

7. Southern Galatia was much more accessible than the northern region. System of Roman roads made travel much easier. Seems much more likely that the false teachers that Paul addresses t/o t/letter (Jewish Xns) would have a foothold in t/south (closer to Jerusalem with more Jews than the north).

As Guthrie notes in his classic NT Intro:

“. . . it is more readily conceivable that Judaizers had dogged Paul's steps to the regions of Pisidian Antioch than that they trailed him across the more obscure districts of the north. In any case, Acts makes abundantly clear that such Judaizers had been at work in the southern district and that their activity was the immediate cause of the council at Jerusalem.” [Guthrie]

8. No mention is made of the decision of the Jerusalem Council in Acts 15 – significant in light of the *sitz im liben*.

Not to say that there aren't good arguments for the north. Counter arguments, and so-forth.

III. The Post-Mark Date

A. When and Where was the Letter Written?

1. Northern

Those who hold the position that Paul wrote to the CH's in northern Galatia generally hold to a later date than those who bel. he wrote to t/CH's in t/south.

Becomes a ? of when did Paul est. these CH's. If he est. CH's in t/north it was after t/Jerusalem Council of Acts 15, prob. during his 2nd M.J.

Acts 16:6 **And they passed through the Phrygian and Galatian region, having been forbidden by the Holy Spirit to speak the word in Asia;** (Debate – Phrygia-Galatia region (south) or t/P.G. region of t/north.)

If Paul writes to CH's in northern Galatia, he likely wrote the letter while on his 3d M.J. sometime between AD 53-58.

2. Southern

This means that Paul established t/Galatian CH's during His 1st M.J. w/Barnabas (B4 split over JM). Gives earlier date of AD 49-50 probably before t/Jerusalem Council of Acts 15 (depends on 2:1 ff.).

Paul wrote Galatians during his 2d M.J. in AD 49 making it t/earliest of his letters.

B. Chronology

1. Starts in Antioch

In Acts 13 – Paul and Barn. sent out from Syrian Antioch (looked at that a few weeks ago):

Acts 13:1–3 **1 NOW** there were at Antioch, in the church that was there, prophets and teachers: Barnabas, and Simeon who was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul.**2** And while they were ministering to the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, “Set apart for Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.”**3** Then, when they had fasted and prayed and laid their hands on them, they sent them away.

Paul and Barn. went to Cyprus and from Cyprus to the Galatian cities in and around Pisidian Antioch / S. Phrygia-Galatia region.
Read about that in Acts 13-14.

Go to t/synagogues to evangelize. They were rejected by t/Jews in each city and turned to evang. t/Gentiles.

Acts 13:48 **And when the Gentiles heard this [Gospel], they began rejoicing and glorifying the word of the Lord; and as many as had been appointed to eternal life believed.**

After P&B left t/area some Jewish Xns (weren't Xns at all) arrived & began to teach that it was necess. to keep t/Law of Moses to be saved and as a mark of true discipleship.

Paul hears about it and writes this letter to t/CH's. (we'll come back to this shortly).

IV. The Stamp

Stamps are big business. Not only collectables, but the turnover of the stamp mill stamps that you stick on a letter and drop in the mailbox. Any big business is subject to corruption, in this case counterfeiters. They don't only counterfeit collectable stamps, but also first class postage stamps.

An article written a few years ago claimed that the US postal service loses nearly 135 million dollars per year in mail fraud. A 2009 annual report listed stamp counterfeiting as one of the 10 biggest threats to Postal Service revenue. [www.foxnews.com/us/2010/12/06/counterfeit-stamps-giving-postal-service-lickin/#ixzz2cK5gY7MC]

What does this have to do with Galatians? In referring to the stamp we're asking if the letter is genuine and not a counterfeit.

Obviously, you say it's genuine because it's in the Bible. We call that "canonicity". Remember, "canon" refers to the standard of what's in the Bible. Canon of Scripture in our English Bibles = 39 OT and 27 NT books.

A. Are there Issues Pertaining to Authenticity and Canonicity?

A = written by Paul the Apostle; C. = Genuine part of the NT Scriptures

1. No!

No, nada, none, squat, naught, zero, zip, goose egg, diddly squat, blank, nil, nullity, zilch.

NT scholar Richard Longenecker writes:

"The most uncontroverted matter in the study of Galatians is that the letter was written by Paul, the Christian apostle, whose ministry is portrayed in the Acts of the Apostles. The letter begins by naming him as its author (1:1). Furthermore, the nature of its theological argument, its distinctive use of Scripture in support of that argument, the

character of its impassioned appeals, and the style of writing all point to Paul as its author. If Galatians is not by Paul, then no NT letter is by him, for none has any better claim.” [Galatians, lvii-lviii]

Galatians was recognized by t/early, post-apostolic CH as belonging to t/canonical Scriptures very early and its cited by church fathers and apologists extensively.

V. The Text of the Letter

A. What is the Style and Structure of the Letter

1. Epistle (letter)

As we mentioned earlier, it follows t/customary form of ancient letters.

2. Amanuensis

The use of an A. (scribe/secre.) to write letters dictated by t/author was a common practice.

They were often paid professionals.

A 3d c. AD Latin payment schedule:

“To a scribe for best writing, 100 lines, 25 denarii; for second quality writing, 100 lines, 20 denarii; to a notary for writing a petition or legal document, 100 lines, 10 denarii.” [cited by Longenecker, lix]

Time of t/NT 1 Den. = 1 Days wage. This is t/3d c. Den. was worth a fraction of that (read 1 article which contends that t/Amer. Dollar has declined at t/same rate of t/same time as t/Rom. Denarius did eve as America declined morally culturally at much t/same rate as did Rome. We know t/end of t/story for Rome.

Paul commonly used an amanuensis. Here it may have been Barn.

He used a man named Tertius to pen Romans

Romans 16:22 I, Tertius, who write this letter, greet you in the Lord.

2 Thessalonians 3:17 I, Paul, write this greeting with my own hand, and this is a distinguishing mark in every letter; this is the way I write.

1 Corinthians 16:21 The greeting is in my own hand—Paul.

Colossians 4:18 I, Paul, write this greeting with my own hand. Remember my imprisonment. Grace be with you.

Galatians 6:11 See with what large letters I am writing to you with my own hand.

Verbal Plenary Inspiration. God so superintended the human authors of Scripture that in concert with their interests, literary style and individuality, they recorded w/o error, omission, or excess, His divinely inspired, inerrant Word in the orig. MSS.

VI. The Contents of the Letter

A. What Is the Letter About and Why was it Written?

1. Acts 15 and the Judaizers

1 AND some men came down from Judea and began teaching the brethren, “Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved.”

May be the same ones Paul refers to in Galatians 2:12

For prior to the coming of certain men from James, he used to eat with the Gentiles; but when they came, he began to withdraw and hold himself aloof, fearing the party of the circumcision.

2 And when Paul and Barnabas had great dissension and debate with them, the brethren determined that Paul and Barnabas and certain others of them should go up to Jerusalem to the apostles and elders concerning this issue. 3 Therefore, being sent on their way by the church, they were passing through both Phoenicia and Samaria, describing in detail the conversion of the Gentiles, and were bringing great joy to all the brethren. 4 And when they arrived at Jerusalem, they were received by the church and the apostles and the elders, and they reported all that God had done with them.

5 But certain ones of the sect of the Pharisees who had believed, stood up, saying, “It is necessary to circumcise them, and to direct them to observe the Law of Moses.”

6 And the apostles and the elders came together to look into this matter. 7 And after there had been much debate, Peter stood up and said to them, “Brethren, you know that in the early days God made a choice among you, that by my mouth the Gentiles should hear the word of the gospel and believe. 8 “And God, who knows the heart, bore witness to them, giving them the Holy Spirit, just as He also did to us; 9 and He made no distinction between us and them, cleansing their hearts by faith. 10 “Now therefore why do you put God to the test by placing upon the neck of the disciples a yoke which neither our fathers nor we have been able to bear? 11 “But we believe that we are saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus, in the same way as they also are.”

Decision was reached; letter written; Gospel went forth w/greater clarification and conviction.

Never stops false teachers who find all sorts of ways to pervert truth.

What we see today we've seen t/o history. Those who deny who God is in His Triunity // Person and Work of JC // Deny t/Gospel of grace.

Legalists on one hand and libertines on the other.

"The Gospel, like its blessed Master, is always crucified between two thieves -- legalists of all sorts on the one hand and Antinomians on the other; the former robbing the Saviour of the glory of his work for us, and the other robbing him of the glory of his work within us." [James Henley Thornwell, Antinomianism]

See that in Galatians. Both factions. Judaizing legalists and the Lordless antinomians.

2. Contents

What's in the letter? 6 chapters. Paul sets the stage in v. 6

He defends his authority in 1:11-2.

He outlines and defends Justification by faith in chapters 3-4 contending that a central purpose of t/Law is to lead us to X.

In chapter 5 he addresses t/free-gracers who say "believe and do as you please"

Galatians 5:13, 16 **13 For you were called to freedom, brethren; only do not turn your freedom into an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. 16 But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh.**

Addresses how to deal with a sinning brother in chapter 6 followed by more personal words of exhortation.

3. Modern Reinterpretations / NPP

2 Factions – Paul and Peter / Jerusalem and Antioch were opposed to each other.

Galatians isn't defending justification by faith, but is affirming justification by works.

Neither are correct.

Covered two words: Paul and Galatians. Now ready to actually dig into t/text which we will do, if t/Lord allows, next week.

Luther – Galatians. “My own epistle to which I have plighted my troth; my Katherine Von Bora.”

Great doctrine of Justification by Faith apart from works. . . .