

HEARING THE WORD



NIGEL BARGE

Galatians 4⁸ – 6¹⁸

Work Book

Hearing the Word Galatians 4⁸–6¹⁸ Work Book

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Nigel Barge, January 2014

Scripture Quotations taken from

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Resources

The New Bible Dictionary 3rd edition, published by Inter Varsity Press
The New Bible Commentary 21st century edition. A commentary on every
Bible book, IVP

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Hearing the Word: A Tool for Bible reading



LOOK – What does it *say*?

- 1) The Text
 - a) What questions does it raise - *Who, What, When, Where, Why, How?*
 - b) What surprises you?
- 2) The Context?
 - a) the surrounding text
 - b) the Book of the Bible
 - c) the whole Bible
 - d) the place in the Bible Story



LEARN – What does it *mean*?

- 1) What type of writing is it?
- 2) Answer the questions
- 3) Summarise the passage



LISTEN – What is the *message*?

- 1) Which is the main point?
- 2) Which is the key verse?



LIVE – How should we *respond*?

- 1) What does it show about God, (Father, Son, Holy Spirit) :
 - a) His nature and character?
 - b) His grace*
 - c) Jesus / his salvation**
- 2) What should I do?

* God's undeserved generosity is evident throughout the Bible, and it is perfectly expressed in Jesus.

** The Bible, from 'the fall' onwards, describes God's plan of salvation through his Son. Thus, *all* the Scriptures speak in some way of Jesus (Luke 24:27).

READING ‘LETTERS’ IN THE BIBLE

Whatever we read, we adjust to its style, sometimes without noticing. We approach a newspaper, a car manual, a cookery book, a scientific report and a Shakespeare play in different ways. We take into account the purpose for which it was written and how the writer uses words. Since the Bible also has many styles – law, poetry, history, wisdom, prophecy, letters and visions – we must allow for the style if we are to discern what God is saying.

The New Testament contains letters written by five Apostles to various parts of the church of their day. They are part of the Word of God and as such they not only *were* authoritative for the church then, but they *are* authoritative for the church of all time.

Since Galatians is written *as a letter*, in the first instance it must be read as such. We need to take into account that letters are:

- a) *Relational.* A letter is addressed to a particular person or group of people and its contents apply to them. So in the Bible, we must first remember that Paul (or James/Peter/John/Jude) is addressing named individuals or churches, in the first century. It is only once we have grasped what they are saying to *them*, *then* that we may generalise as to what God might be saying to *us*, *now*. The two will *always* be consistent.
- b) *Occasional.* Letters are one side of a ‘conversation’ between two people. They refer to matters in which details of situations and people are assumed to be common knowledge. A third party reading a letter needs to ‘read between the lines’ to work out the other side of the story. We have to understand the situation to which this Bible letter was written, so as to grasp how the writer was addressing *it*. Only then may we ask how God might apply this Word to our own circumstance.
- c) *Dated.* Letters are written at a particular time and place, and within a particular culture. So in the Bible, the letters of the first century are expressed within the habits and traditions of that day. In discerning what God might be saying to us, now, we need to separate any instructions which are ‘time-bound’ from principles that are *timeless*.
- d) *To be read as a whole.* When we open a letter from a friend nowadays, we read the whole thing. We recognise it as a single communication whose contents are all related. So with letters in the Bible: every part must be viewed in the context of the whole letter. Thus, it is best practice to read a Bible letter *right through*, before analysing its parts.

BACKGROUND TO GALATIANS

The Author

Paul, first known by his Hebrew name, Saul, became the foremost preacher of the Gospel in the NT. He was born in Tarsus, (*map, p11*) with the status of free citizen of Rome, educated in Jerusalem and spoke four languages. He studied the Hebrew Scriptures under a well-respected Jewish scholar, Gamaliel (Acts 22:3) and as a young man was violently opposed to Christianity. While on his way to Damascus to imprison Christians, Jesus appeared to him, and his life was dramatically changed. **Read** the narrative in Acts chapter 9, and two accounts in his own words, Acts 22:4-16: 26:9-18.

Later, Paul was brought to Antioch in Syria to teach new Christians who, as Gentiles, had no background knowledge of the Jewish Scriptures. The Church there was very keen to spread the Gospel to Gentiles, and they sent Barnabas and Paul on what is known as Paul's first missionary journey (**Read** Acts 13, 14). People followed Jesus in four towns in present-day Turkey: another Antioch (i.e. not the Syrian one), Iconium, Lystra & Derbe.

Luke, the author of Acts, was a doctor who met Paul on his *second* missionary journey then travelled with him (Acts 16:10). In Acts chapters 9, 11 and 15 Luke says Paul visited Jerusalem *three* times, whereas Paul in Galatians mentions only *two*. Was one mistaken? No! Obviously, Paul wrote Galatians *after* his second visit and *before* the third: that is, between vv 1 and 3 of Acts 15, or Galatians 2:10/11, soon after the end of the first missionary journey.

The Destination of the letter

There is controversy about exactly who the Galatians are. By the *South Galatian* theory, Paul wrote to these new Christians in Antioch, Iconium, Lystra and Derbe. (Acts 13:14 - 14:23) The problem is that the local name for the area of this Antioch was *Pisidia*, and the others three, *Lycaonia*. The ethnic area called Galatia was further north. The *Roman* province of Galatia, however, covered a far bigger area, including Pisidia and Lycaonia.

We hold to the South Galatian theory for three reasons:

- a) Paul, the Roman citizen (Acts 22:25-29), would use Roman boundaries.
- b) The Galatian letter is the least 'temperate' of all Paul's letters(!), understandable if this was his *first* reaction to serious disorder among the *first* churches he planted.
- c) His opening remark: *I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting the one who called you to live in the grace of Christ ...* (Gal 1:6) would not fit later letters, by which time bitter experience would have removed the element of surprise.

The Date of writing

If the South theory is correct, Galatians was written after the first missionary journey and before the Council of Jerusalem, in AD 48 or 49, Acts 15:2b. Paul refers to Barnabus (2:1,9,13) as if the Galatians knew him; he was present on Paul's first missionary journey, but not later (Acts 15:39) Since the Gospels began orally, it is probably also the first written book of the NT.

The Occasion

Initially Paul and Barnabus preached in the synagogue at Pisidian Antioch (13:14ff). When the Jewish leaders rejected the message, they turned to the Gentiles (13:46ff). Some Jews pursued them to the towns of Iconium, Lystra and Derbe in an attempt to stifle the church. However, after the very young churches had been born, the tactic seems to have changed: *try to turn all Christian converts into Jews, and the church into a sect of Judaism.*

Paul's good news was that sinful human beings can be made right with God by grace, received by faith. Forgiveness was a free gift of God, offered on the basis of what Jesus did for sinners, not what a sinner might do to try to earn it. In particular, one could not earn it by keeping the Law or becoming a Jew. Within the church there was a Jewish lobby (*The Judaisers*). From their background as Pharisees, they were teaching Gentile believers that faith alone was *not* enough – you had to keep the Law as well. They wanted everyone to be circumcised *first*, and keep all Moses' laws, e.g. food laws. Gal 2:12; Acts 15:5. Paul and Barnabas resisted this forcibly. This letter is the first step. '**The only thing that counts is faith (in Jesus) expressing itself as love**' Gal 5:6b. They went on to argue the case at the first Council of Jerusalem (Acts 15:4-29), when Apostles and church leaders had to gather to resolve the issue. They ruled in Paul's favour, and issued a letter upholding the principle, *omitting* any obligation to be circumcised or keep the Jewish law, but *asking* Gentile Christians to observe four features of it, for church unity 15:28,29.

Later Paul would begin his second missionary journey by re-visiting the four towns, delivering the Council's announcement to the churches, which were strengthened in faith and grew in numbers. (Acts 16:2).

The tone of the letter

There is a hint of desperation. Paul, after his first, thrillingly-successful missionary foray, sees it all going 'pear shaped'. The four infant churches are like his 'baby' 4:19. His authority is being challenged and he vigorously defends it. (Note how often he uses 'I' - 18 times in 1:11-24 !)

The message of this letter is vital – it contends for the very heart of the Gospel. The letter's crude, explosive tone lends weight to the suggestion that this 'shot from the hip' is Paul's reaction to his first major doctrinal oppos-

ition – the whole future of the church seemed to be at stake.

The tone is :-

- a) Assertive (1:1) It is clearly an apostolic pronouncement from God
- b) Urgent (1:6) There is no ‘flannel’ – he cuts to the quick.
- c) Serious (1:8) It is a matter of eternal life and death.
- d) Forceful (3:1) He berates the stupidity of the Galatians
- e) Explicit!! (5:12) He speaks in the strongest (and crudest!) terms
- f) Abrupt (6:17,18). Having emphatically made his point he closes the letter (– and hurries to post it?!)

History

God had promised Abraham a land and ‘seed’, usually translated ‘descendants’. Abraham believed him, put his trust in him and God treated him as right with Himself (Genesis 12&15). God gave Abraham and his descendants a sign to mark this faith – circumcision of all the males (Genesis 17).

God told him that future generations would possess the land (Genesis 15:13ff). But years passed; Abraham and his wife Sarah grew old and were still childless. So aged 86 he decided to make it happen himself. He took his wife’s maid, Hagar and, as was the custom then, tried to have an heir by her. A son *was* born – Ishmael. God, however did not acknowledge him as the child of the promise and told Abraham to wait longer (Genesis 16). Eventually, aged 99, he and Sarah had a miracle son, Isaac (Genesis ch 18+21).

Isaac, his son Jacob and their family lived among the people of Canaan in the land that was promised to them. Through Jacob’s son Joseph, God moved his people from Canaan to Egypt to avoid a famine (Genesis 37-47). There they grew to become a large nation whom the Egyptians enslaved.

Centuries after Abraham, Moses was used to save his descendants from Egypt (Exodus 1-13) leading them back to take possession of the Promised Land. During their long journey through the wilderness, God met with Moses at Mount Sinai, and gave him the Law (Exodus 19 – 40).

Paul stresses: **The Promise was given *before* The Law.** It was therefore not the keeping of the Law that earned God’s favour. Instead, his promise (deliverance from Egypt etc) came from his undeserved grace.

A commendation?!

The great reformer, Martin Luther said of it “The epistle to the Galatians is *my* epistle. To it I am as it were in wedlock. It is my Katherine (his wife).”

A possible time-line

'Bold' indicates **known** dates and times; the others are deduced from Scriptural clues.

This assumes 'Galatians' was written to *Antioch, Iconium, Lystra, Derbe*.

4BC Death of **Herod the Great**; Jesus was born before this point, Matt 2:1,19.

AD26 Start of Jesus' public ministry at earliest ('about 30 years old' Luke 3:23) He spent 2 Passovers in Jerusalem (John 2:23; 12:1), minimum 1 year, maximum 3.

29 **Death of Jesus**

30 Death of Stephen (Acts 8:1) Saul converted (Acts 9:1ff), entered Damascus, then left for Arabia, then returned there (Gal 1:17).

33 After **3 years** (Gal 1:18) (= many days, Acts 9:23) (presumably, counting from his conversion) Saul escaped Damascus, visited Jerusalem; met Barnabas and Peter. After **2 weeks**, Saul went to Tarsus in Cilicia (Acts 9:30, Gal 1:21).

No data on Saul for about 13 years.

46 Saul from Tarsus to Antioch: '1 year' teaching (Acts 11:25, Gal 1:21).

47 After **14 years**, Paul to Jerusalem 'following a revelation' (Gal 2:1,2) = Agabus prophesied famine (Acts 11:27ff), taking gifts (cf Gal 2:10).

47 or 48 Barnabas and Saul *aka* Paul began 'first missionary journey' Cyprus & South Galatia = Antioch, Iconium Lystra, Derbe; back to Syrian Antioch (Acts 13,14).

48 or 49 Peter arrives Syrian Antioch; followed by men from James (the circumcision party). Paul confronts Peter re eating with Gentiles Acts 15:1; Gal 2:11-16. Paul writes **Letter to the 'Galatians'** – 'so quickly deserting...!' (1:6)

48 or 49 **Council of Jerusalem (Acts 15:2ff)** discussing: 'Gentiles must be circumcised and required to obey the law of Moses' 15:5.

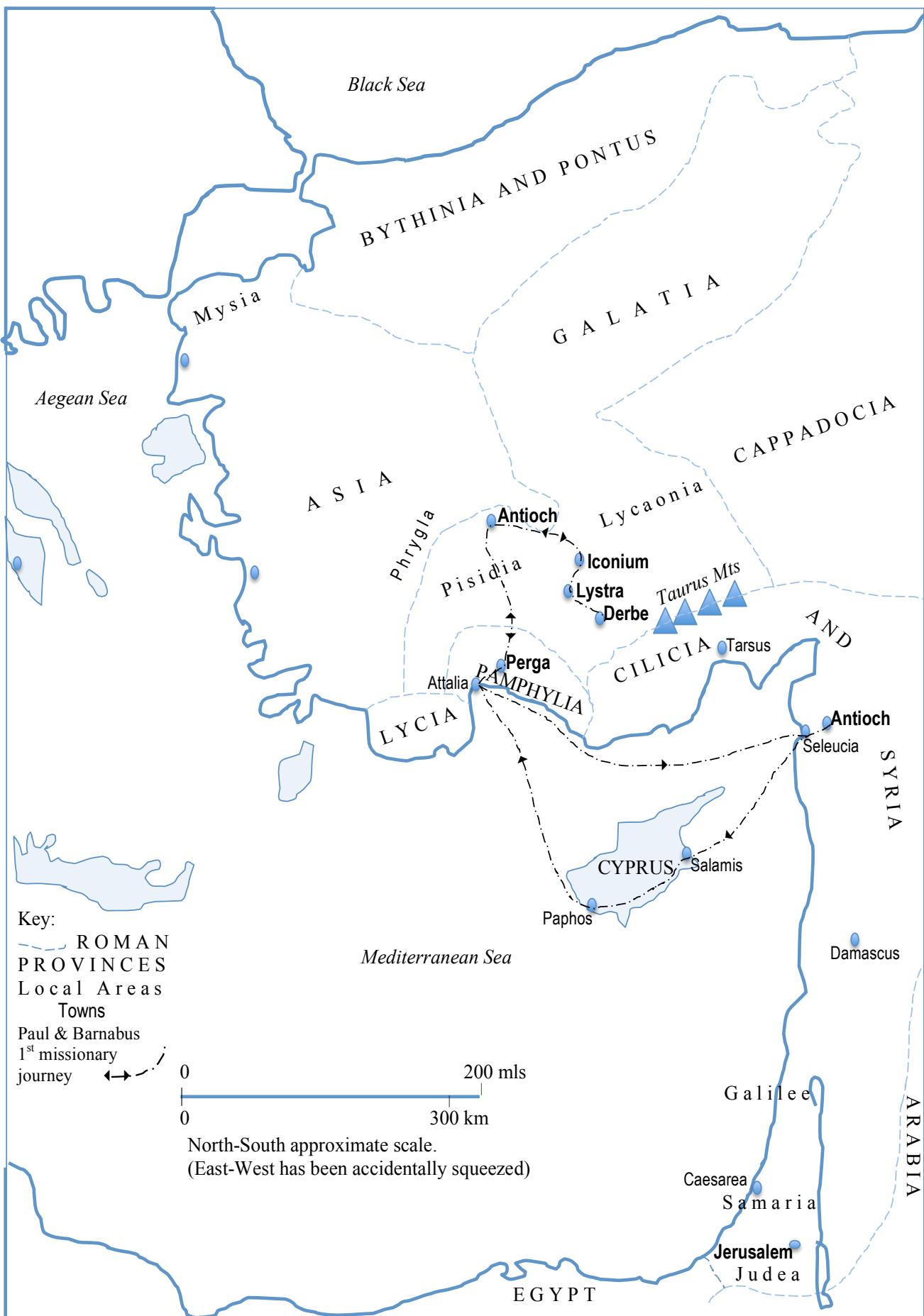
The structure of the letter to the Galatians

Study A Page

A	An assertive address	1: 1 – 4	1
B	Paul's credentials		
	There's only one Gospel...	1: 5 – 10	
	... Given by God, agreed by Apostles,	1:11 – 24	2
	... For Jew and Gentile alike.	2: 1 – 10	3
C	Justified by faith, not by Law	2:11 – 21	4
	Spirit given in response to faith, not Law	3: 1 – 14	5
	Grace precedes Law	3:15 – 25	6
	Sons of God by faith	3:26 – 4:7	7

D	Living by faith	Study B	Page
	Free from weak and miserable principles	4: 8-20	1
	Children of freedom	4:21-31	2
	Free to love	5: 1-15	3
	Fruit of freedom in the Spirit	5:16-26	4
	Guarding freedom	6: 1-10	5
E	A potent Signature	6:11-18	6
			27

Paul's First Missionary Journey: Cyprus and South Galatia



Free from weak principles

Background information and Word List

Paul sees pagan worship as a kind of slavery to beings that were not God. The new Christians were no longer slaves, but sons and heirs of God (4:7); they should not replace pagan ritual with Jewish, or it would re-enslave them.

They were observing (13) probably - days (Sabbaths) months (new moons) seasons (Feast of Passover, Pentecost tabernacles) years (sabbatic every 7th Year)

The illness in v13 may refer to an event at Perga near the coast (Acts 13:13). *Something* seems to have prevented Paul preaching there, and persuaded John Mark to go home. Some think the area was swampy and malarial, giving fever and migraine. If it had something to do with Paul's eyesight (4:15 see also Acts 23:1-5; Gal 6:11). Whatever it was, the party immediately moved inland, to Antioch.

9	<i>know God</i>	Scripture uses 'know' in a far deeper way than intellectual knowledge alone, e.g. of the intimate marriage bond between husband and wife.
	<i>principles</i>	Basic beliefs
11	<i>wasted</i>	<i>lit</i> in vain, to no purpose.
12	<i>brothers</i>	i.e. brothers in Christ. (Cf 1:11; 3:15)
13	<i>illness</i>	<i>lit</i> bodily weakness, unspecified. See above
19	<i>little children</i>	diminutives in Greek and Latin show deep affection

Bible Connections (But remember, the rest of the NT was *not yet written!*)

8	<i>"Remember you were slaves in Egypt and the Lord your God redeemed you"</i> (Deut 15:15) {sign above John Newtons mantle piece!}	
9	<i>principles</i>	see v3
10	<i>special days etc</i>	see Colossians 2:16
13	<i>first preached</i>	Acts 13:16-49
	<i>first</i>	On first missionary journey, Paul retraced his steps, so Lystra, Iconium and Antioch got a second visit Acts 14:21.
	<i>illness</i>	although Paul was used in miraculous healing Acts 14:8
19	<i>childbirth metaphor</i>	- later used 1 Thessalonians 2:11,12; 1 Peter 2:2

LOOK

1) The Text

What questions does the passage raise?

What surprises or confuses you?

2) The Context

What other parts of the Bible – surrounding passage, individual book, whole Bible, or Bible story – might help you understand this passage?

LEARN

- 1) How do you answer the questions the passage raises?

- 2) How do you resolve issues that surprised or confused you?
- 3) Give an overall ‘picture’ of the passage in a few sentences.

LISTEN

- 1) What is the lesson or the main point?
- 2) Which verse best sums up the message of the passage? v.

LIVE

- 1) What does it show about God (Father, Son, Holy Spirit)?
 - a) His nature and character?
 - b) His grace?
 - c) Jesus and His salvation?

Now underline the application of the Main Point.

- 2) What should I do?

Now underline the application of the Main Point.

Background information

Paul uses a style of argument familiar to Rabbis. He refers again to Abraham. In 3:6-9 he stressed his faith, in 3:16-18 his 'seed'. Now 4:22 Paul refers to his two sons, but only one born as a result of God's promise (see History on p 4, and Genesis 15; 16; 17:15-19; 21:1-21). Hagar and Ishmael did not share in the promise and were excluded. Those who believe in Christ are in succession to the freeborn child.

A Covenant is an agreement between two people, or a king and the subjects, usually with one side superior. God made covenants with Adam, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, the Israelites, and David. Abraham made one with Abimelech Gen 21:27, Joshua with the Israelites Josh 24:25, David with Jonathan 1 Sam 18:3 etc. God promised a New Covenant Jeremiah 31:31 whereby he would write his law in his peoples' hearts.

Word List

22	<i>born in ordinary way</i>	i.e. Ishmael, Abraham's son by Hagar.
23	<i>born...of a promise</i>	i.e. Isaac, Abraham's son by Sarah.
24	<i>Mt Sinai</i>	The Israelites went here after leaving slavery in Egypt (Exodus 19 ff) where God gave Moses the law (10 commandments etc) . Located in Arabian peninsula, exact site uncertain.
25, 26	<i>Jerusalem</i>	Literally, a city in Israel, central to Judaism. Figuratively, a picture of all the people of God, Heaven, Revelation 21:2.

Bible Connections

22	<i>Abraham</i>	Genesis chapters 12:1 - 25:11.
29	<i>persecuted</i>	Ishmael 'mocked' Sarah and Isaac. Genesis 21:9
30	<i>get rid...</i>	Genesis 21:10

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Freed to be free!

Background information

Freedom has a long history in the minds of the people of God. When Israel was enslaved in Egypt, God sent Moses to set them free. If, later, an Israelite found himself enslaved, e.g. to a creditor for not paying debts, the law provided for the *Goel*, the kinsman redeemer, to pay the debt and set the relation free. So freedom from slavery, oppression and exploitation is the obvious usage.

But Paul saw that the Law had become a metaphorical slave-master, demanding obedience. In contrast, since Christ had fulfilled the demands of the law, by dying to redeem those who were under the law (4:4), faith in him brings pardon to sinners. In gratitude for this relationship with Christ, they express love for God and others *instinctively*, not from slavish observation of the Law.

Word List

1	<i>yoke</i>	lit. Bar that joins two animals e.g. oxen, to pull cart or plough.
2,3	<i>circumcision</i>	The physical act, administered as a sign of the Covenant in Exodus had implications for keeping the rest of God's written laws.
4	<i>justified</i>	be put right in God's eyes
5	<i>righteousness</i>	being right with God
6	<i>love</i>	Gk <i>Agape</i> (pron. <i>a-ga-pay</i>) Existing Gk noun given new meaning by Jesus: sacrificial love, even for an enemy.
7/8	<i>persuaded</i>	not to be persuaded by the truth. This persuasion is not-
12	<i>emasculate</i>	priests and devotees of Goddess Cybele in neighbouring Phrygia practised self-castration.
13	<i>sinful nature</i>	Gk <i>sarx</i> , lit. <i>flesh</i> ; but means human nature in its natural state of rebellion against God.

Bible Connections

6	<i>faith... love</i>	see v23,
14	<i>Love your neighbour.</i>	Leviticus 19:18, quoted in the Gospels, by Jesus and others: Matt 5:43; 22:34-35; Luke 10:25-37; and by Paul again in Romans 13:8-10.
	<i>Love God</i>	Deuteronomy 6:5; Matt 22:37; Mark 11:30
	<i>Love one another</i>	i.e. fellow believers, John 13:34; 15:9,12,17;
	<i>Love enemy</i>	Matt 5:44; Lk 23:34; Acts 7:60; Rmns 12:17-21

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The fruit of freedom in the Spirit

Background information

Paul develops the thought of the sinful nature from v 13. There is conflict between what the sinful nature wants and what the Spirit wants. Paul encourages the Galatians to live by (*lit 'walk in'*) the Spirit (active)(16,25) and be led by the Spirit the Spirit (passive) (18). This means resisting the works of the flesh (19ff) (sinful nature) and allowing the fruit of the Spirit to grow (22ff). Crucified the flesh (25) and live by the Spirit (26)

Word List

16

sinful nature Gk *sarx*, flesh; meaning human nature -rebellious to God

19 *sexual immorality* i.e. any sex outside of heterosexual, monogamous marriage

impurity Gk *akatharsia* - pus in unclean wound, life unfit for God

debauchery Gk *aselegia* –readiness for any Godless pleasure

20 *witchcraft* lit ‘use of drugs’ - +ve - could be medicinal. –ve - came to be associated with witchcraft and sourcery

hatred (or *enmity*) cf between Serpent and woman (Genesis 3:15)

strife +ve = rivalry for a prize. –ve = quarrellings, wrangling

jealous Gk *zelos*- +ve = desire for excellence, -ve = desire for that to which one has no right

selfish ambition Gk *Eristhea* (cf *Eriθos* – a hired hand) Came to be used as ‘canvassing for political power’

factions Gk *Hairesis* meaning ‘choice’. +ve = a gp of followers, -ve = ‘tribes at war’ (eg Rangers and Celtic!)

21 *envy* Gk *Phthonos* - not ‘desire to have’ (= jealousy), but ‘grief at someone else’s good’

orgies Gk ‘*Komos*’ +ve group of friends accompanying a victory, – ve unrestrained revelry

live lit ‘*go on doing*’ – ie habitual sin rather than isolated lapse

22 *love* Gk *agape* - self giving, unilateral commitment

joy (Psalm 33:11Philippians 1:4,25, 4:4)

peace Peace with God through Jesus (Romans 5:1)

patience Gk *Makrothumia* eg way that Romans conquered world. Never made peace with enemy even in defeat

God with man (Romans 2:4; 9:22; 1 Peter 3:20)

kindness Gk *Chrestos* mellow – wine, easy – Christs yoke (Mt11:30)

goodness total moral rightness eg clearing of Temple (John 2:14ff)

23 *gentleness* Submissive to God's will (Mathew 21:5) / teachable (James 1:21) / considerate (Ephesians 4:2)

24 *Kingdom of God* unchallenged rule of God.

Bible Connections (But remember, the rest of the NT was *not yet written!*)

19 *virtues* similar lists in e.g. Rom 1:29-31, Mark 7:21,22. So maybe Jesus was in part quoting from an older, Jewish source.

22 *fruit* Jesus: Matt 7:16 – ‘A tree can be recognised by its fruit.’ John 15:1 - ‘I am the vine... in me... bear much fruit.’ Harks back to Isaiah 5:1-7 – Israel is my vineyard.

Spirit produces promised in Ezekiel 37:1-14; Jeremiah 31:33

Kingdom of God 1 Cor 6:9; Ephesians 5:5

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Guarding Freedom

Background information

After the thrilling climax of life in the Spirit replacing the outward ritual and formality of law-keeping, Paul gives some practical applications in 6:1-10.

How should the church deal with a repentant offender, perhaps those take in by the ‘circumcision group’? (2:12; 5:7-12) The keynote is getting them back into the grace of Jesus. Cf the Corinthians were to win back the erring brother 2 Cor 2:5-11

It is a plea for humble, gentle with the victims, consistent with the Gospel of grace, in a church that supports one another.

Word List

1	<i>Someone</i>	<i>Singular</i> ; so may refer to actual individual, or ‘anyone’.
	<i>caught</i>	Either detected doing something wrong, or doing wrong on a sudden impulse. The latter might fit someone persuaded to accept circumcision, if not the Judaisers.
	<i>You...spiritual</i>	Plural; probably, ‘those living by the rule of the Spirit’ = If unfallen, help lift the fallen. Or, the boasters’ self-chosen title = Since you <i>claim to be</i> spiritual, act spiritually in this by restoring....
	<i>Restore</i>	To former condition, (used of mending nets, Mt 4:21). Verb is <i>plural</i> , so applies to whole church.
	<i>Watch yourself</i>	Verb is <i>singular</i> again, ie. Be responsible for yourself.
2	<i>Carry</i>	Paul uses same verb in 6:17. Cf John would later use it of Jesus shouldering his cross, John 21:17.
	<i>Burden</i>	<i>Gk baros</i> - Oppressive, difficult weight to bear
4	<i>take pride</i>	lit ‘boast’ - a negative except ‘in the Lord’ cf 1Cor1:31
4-6	<i>‘But let each one test his own work, and then his reason to boast will be in himself alone and not in his neighbour. For each man will have to bear his own load’</i> (RSV)	
5	<i>load</i>	<i>Gk phortiov</i> = amount to carry c.f. ships freight
7	<i>mocked</i>	<i>Gk mukterizo</i> lit. ‘turn nose up’, sneer

Bible Connections (But remember, the rest of the NT was not yet written!)

1	<i>restore</i>	c.f. 2 Corinthians 2:5-11
	<i>law of Christ</i>	To love... see foot of Study 3.
7	Judge and you will be judged. (Matthew 7:1)	

LOOK

1) The Text

What questions does the passage raise?

What surprises or confuses you?

2) The Context

What other parts of the Bible – surrounding passage, individual book, whole Bible, or Bible story – might help you understand this passage?

LEARN

1) How do you answer the questions the passage raises?

- 2) How do you resolve issues that surprised or confused you?
- 3) Give an overall ‘picture’ of the passage in a few sentences.

LISTEN

- 1) What is the lesson or the main point?
- 2) Which verse best sums up the message of the passage? v.

LIVE

- 1) What does it show about God (Father, Son, Holy Spirit)?
 - a) His nature and character?
 - b) His grace?
 - c) Jesus and His salvation?

Now underline the application of the Main Point.

- 2) What should I do?

Now underline the application of the Main Point.

Study 6

Galatians 6: 11-18

Listen to me – grace not Law!

Background information

Paul probably dictated most of this letter; by 6:11 he was writing in his own hand. Verses 11-18 looks a lot longer than our signatures nowadays, but he recaps his main points so the Galatians have no doubt the whole letter is from him.

In his own handwriting (from small and even, to big and untidy?) may have been a defining characteristic of his own writing due to faulty eyesight (c.f. 4:13; Acts 23:1-5).

Word List

12	<i>outwardly</i>	<i>Make a good showing</i> occurs only here in NT.
13,14	<i>boast</i>	Speak proudly of (usually) one's own achievement.
14	<i>through which crucified to me</i>	(The cross) or 'through whom' (Jesus) Now that Christ has died for me, I treat myself as dead to the appeal of merely worldly benefits.
15	<i>new creation</i>	The entirely new life that God produces when Jesus by his Spirit comes to live in a person as their Lord.
16	<i>peace</i>	A consequence of being at peace with God through Jesus dying for our sins.
	<i>mercy</i>	When God out of love does <i>not</i> give us the punishment we <i>do</i> deserve for our sins. Cf <i>grace</i> below.
	<i>Israel of God</i>	Unique phrase. Name given to Jacob because 'he struggled with God' and overcame (Genesis 32:28). It includes all the people who belong to God, whether in the nation and religion of Israel, or not.
17	<i>marks of Jesus</i>	<i>gk stigma</i> – very unusual word cf 'moment of time' (Lk 4:5) word for branding of a slaves. Refers to scars of stoning in Lystra as a servant of Jesus? (Acts 14:19)
18	<i>grace</i>	When God out of love <i>gives</i> us blessings we <i>don't</i> deserve.

Bible Connections

11	<i>own hand</i>	1 Corinthians 16:21
12	<i>outwardly</i>	Matthew 23:25

LOOK

1) The Text

What questions does the passage raise?

What surprises or confuses you?

2) The Context

What other parts of the Bible – surrounding passage, individual book, whole Bible, or Bible story – might help you understand this passage?

LEARN

- 1) How do you answer the questions the passage raises?

- 2) How do you resolve issues that surprised or confused you?
- 3) Give an overall ‘picture’ of the passage in a few sentences.

LISTEN

- 1) What is the lesson or the main point?
- 2) Which verse best sums up the message of the passage? v.

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- 1) What does it show about God (Father, Son, Holy Spirit)?
 - a) His nature and character?
 - b) His grace?
 - c) Jesus and His salvation?

Now underline the application of the Main Point.

- 2) What should I do?

Now underline the application of the Main Point.

Sharing the Word

Use

‘Hearing the Word’ can be used alone, with one other person, or in a group

Preparing for a group

Time put in alone beforehand will greatly benefit time spent together.

Work through the stages - LOOK, LEARN, LISTEN, LIVE.

Write down your own questions and answers *

A format

If you have 45 mins together, you might like to try dividing it up like this.

(If longer or in a large group, you can extend the times)

1) Drink, bite to eat, chat	(10 mins)
2) A Bible reading	(2 mins)
3) A Bible study	
a. Any questions? (Whether answer is known or not!) (Don’t answer any, till all questions noted!)	(2 mins)
b. Any relevant cross references?	(2 mins)
c. Discussion of answers	(13 mins)
d. Conclusion	(10 mins)
i. A Key verse and Main Point?	
ii. What does it show about God / Jesus?	
iii. What should I do?	
4) Sharing (Trials and joys – family, work, self)	(5 mins)
5) Prayer	(1 min)

Remember!

As we gather round God’s Word

- a) Listen to the views of others
- b) Make room for the novice. They can join in too when you start by listing ‘Any questions’
- c) Don’t let the ‘knowledgeable’ dominate. Encourage everyone to think for themselves.
- d) Try to include others’ especially, ‘seekers’ in your sharing together.

* The **process** is explained and practised in a four-hour course, suitable for all, called **‘An Introduction to ‘Hearing the Word’**. Email: office@tpc.org

“I can read the Bible for myself!”

To show that the Bible is accessible to all,
the Rev Nigel Barge, minister of Torrance Parish Church,
has devised a tool called ‘Hearing the Word’.
The Manual explains the basic principles of Bible reading,
teaches them by means of an interactive course,
and practices them on a single passage, Mark 10:35-45,
Participants follow in a Workbook: *Hearing the Word - Introduction*,
which includes the next six passages in Mark,
so they may follow on for themselves.

As the principles apply equally to all, the course will both
instruct the novice and refresh the ‘hardened’ Bible student!

