

Bible Study Guide for

Exploring  
Galatians  
and  
Ephesians

GEORGE R. KNIGHT



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HAGERSTOWN, MD 21740

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Part I  
Galatians

*Lesson One*

# Galatians: A Bird's-Eye View

**Y**ou are about to begin a study of one of Paul's most vigorous letters. As with other Bible books, one of the best ways to begin is to read Galatians through in one sitting from a translation such as the Revised Standard Version, the New Revised Standard Version, the King James Version, the *New International Version*, or the *New American Standard Bible*. A first reading should take about one-half hour. Answering the question will, of course, take some additional time, but the amount depends upon individual goals in the study of this insightful book of the Bible.

## **I. First Impressions of Galatians**

A. As you complete each chapter in your initial reading, jot down in three or four sentences what you think the author is seeking to teach you in that chapter.

Chapter 1:

Chapter 2:

Chapter 3:

Chapter 4:

Chapter 5:

Chapter 6:

B: Now that you have read Galatians, write out your impressions of the book as a whole.

**II. First Impressions from *Exploring Galatians and Ephesians*.**

Read the “Introduction to the Book of Galatians” (pp. 17-26). On the basis of your reading:

A. Provide a one-sentence statement on the purpose of Galatians.

B. List the four major themes of Galatians

1.

2.

3.

4.

C. Outline the three main points in the structure of Galatians.

1.

2.

3.

D. Reflect on the relationship between the Jerusalem Council of Acts 15 and the letter to the Galatians.

E. In one paragraph indicate the relevance of the letter to the Galatians for our lives in the twenty-first century.

*Lesson Two*

# Paul a True Apostle, Round #1

Galatians 1:1-2:10

*Exploring Galatians and Ephesians*, Sections 1-6

A. Read Galatians 1:1-5 and section 1

1. What important ideas are in these verses?

2. How do these verses set the tone for the letter that follows?

3. After reading section 1, list those items that helped you to better understand Galatians 1:1-5.

B. Read Galatians 1:6-9 and section 2.

1. What appears to be the problem in these verses?

2. Who are the troublers of the church in this passage?

3. After reading section 2, discuss how tampering with the gospel and troubling the church go together?

C. Read Galatians 1:10 and section 3.

1. What is Paul being accused of here?

2. What do you think, given the passage's context, lies behind the accusation?

3. According to section 3, who in life are the real people pleasers? Why are their arguments so subtle?

D. Read Galatians 1:11-16a and section 4.

1. List the main points in Paul's argument in these verses.

2. According to section 4, why did Paul hate the Christian message so much?

3. How does Paul's experience, given the focal point of his hatred, illustrate the nature of true conversion?

Read Galatians 1:16b-2:1a and section 5.

1. What is the significance of the fact that Paul did not confer with flesh and blood? Why is that important in the context?



2. Why do you think the apostle had to “swear an oath” in verse 20?

3. After reading section 5, discuss the importance and significance of Paul’s “time argument” in Galatians 1:16b-2:1a.

F. Read Galatians 2:1-10 and section 6.

1. List the important points to Paul’s argument in these verses.

2. Three times in these verses the apostle talks about those who “seemed to be leaders.” What are the implications of that phrase in the flow of Galatians?

3. After reading section 6, note what Paul proved in Galatians 2 compared to what he had proved in Galatians 1.

4. According to section 6, what can we in the twenty-first century learn from Paul's experience in this passage?

*Lesson Three*

# Paul: A True Apostle, Round #2

Galatians 2:11-21

*Exploring Galatians and Ephesians*, Sections 7, 8

A. Read Galatians 2:11-13 and section 7

1. List the important points in these verses.

2. What was Peter's problem?

3. Why was Peter's problem so serious?

4. According to section 7, what are the deeper issues undergirding these verses?

5. Why did Paul get so upset, given what seems to be a trivial issue?

B. Read Galatians 2:14-21 and section 8

1. If you had to select the “most important” verse in this passage, which would you select? Why, given the context, did you choose that one?

2. What did Paul die to in verse 19?

3. Discuss the apostle’s meaning in verse 21?

4. Galatians 2:14-21 is a complex passage. List the ways that section 8 helped you understand it better.

5. Why, according to both the context and section 8, is justification by faith so important to the argument? How does justification relate to Gentileness, Jewishness, and church unity?

6. By the way, what is justification?

*Lesson Four*

# Faith, Law, and Covenant

Galatians 3

*Exploring Galatians and Ephesians*, Sections 9-14

A. Read Galatians 3:1-5 and section 9.

1. Why does Paul consider the Galatians to be foolish?

2. From these verses, how do we know for certain that the apostle is writing to born again Christians?

3. After reading section 9, discuss the problem of “good” works of the flesh. Discuss why they are so problematic.

B. Read Galatians 3:6-9 and section 10

1. Why is the illustration of Abraham so important to Paul’s presentation?

2. After reading section 10, compare and contrast the understanding of Abraham by Paul and the Judaizers.

3. List the three points that section 10 suggests that we can learn from Galatians 3:6-9.

C. Read Galatians 3:10-14 and section 11.

1. What do these verses teach about the function of the law?

2. What do they teach about the foundation of the gospel? What exactly did Jesus do for us?

3. Discuss the importance of the “great exchange” as presented in verses 10-14 and expounded upon in section 11.

D. Read Galatians 3:15-18 and section 12.

1. List the central idea in each of these 4 verses.

2. Discuss the meaning of verse 18.

3. According to section 12, what are the implications of the word “seed” in these verses?



E. Read Galatians 3:19–22 and section 13.

1. List the points Paul makes about the law in these verses.

2. How does law relate to promise in these verses in the context of Galatians 3:1–22?

3. According to section 13, what is the importance of verse 22? In what way does that verse help us understand the relationship between law and gospel?

F. Read Galatians 3:23–29 and section 14.

1. What is the function of law in these verses?

2. What is the function of faith in these verses?

3. According to these verses, what are the social results of salvation?

4. How do those social results inform our understanding of Paul's meaning in Galatians 2:11-21, and especially verse 16?

5. According to section 14, how do these verses contradict the non-biblical teaching that everybody at birth is a child of God?

*Lesson Five*

# Freedom Versus Slavery

Galatians 4

*Exploring Galatians and Ephesians*, Sections 15-18

A. Read Galatians 4:1-7 and section 15.

1. Discuss the contrast set forth between verses 1-3 and verses 4-7.

2. List the points that we can learn about Jesus from verse 4.

3. According to section 15, what can we learn from Paul's use of "Abba! Father!"?

B. Read Galatians 4:8-11 and section 16.

1. Paraphrase Paul's argument in your own words in these verses.

2. What is it that the Galatians are doing that so upsets the apostle?

3. List the way that section 16 helps us understand verse 10.

C. Read Galatians 4:12-20 and section 17.

1. Discuss Paul's relationship with the Galatian believers as reflected in these verses.

2. Summarize Paul's appeal in these verses.

3. Discuss the ways in which section 17 helps us understand Paul as a person with a pastor's heart.

D. Read Galatians 4:21-31 and section 18.

1. Who or what do the two sons represent in this passage?

2. Discuss, in its context, the meaning of verse 31.

3. According to section 18, why are verses 21-31 so difficult for modern people to understand?

4. According to the last part of section 18, what is the relevance of this passage for the twenty-first century?

5. How does that relevance relate to me individually?

*Lesson Six*

# Living God's Love

Galatians 5, 6

*Exploring Galatians and Ephesians*, Sections 19-25

A. Read Galatians 5:1-12 and section 19.

1. Summarize in your own words each of the three paragraphs in this section of Galatians.

2. What is the problem with circumcision in these verses?

3. What are the implications of verse 6 for Christian living?

4. Summarize the lessons of section 19 for Christian freedom.

5. According to section 19, what is the problem of adding “requirements” beyond grace to salvation?

B. Read Galatians 5:13-15 and section 20.

1. According to these verses, what is the paradox of freedom?

2. Use your Bible's marginal references or a concordance to find the two New Testament passages that in essence contain the same meaning as verse 14. List them and discuss the implications of those three verses for Christian living.

3. List the ways in which section 20 helped you understand Galatians 5:13-15.

C. Read Galatians 5:16-21 and section 21.

1. Summarize in your own words the meaning of verses 16-21 in their context.

2. What do you think Paul means in verse 16?

3. According to section 21, what is the role of the Holy Spirit in a Christian's life?

4. Discuss how section 21 clarifies Paul's use of "flesh"?

D. Read Galatians 5:22-26 and section 22.

1. Compare the fruit of the Spirit of verses 22-26 with the works of the flesh in verses 19-21.



2. What does it mean to crucify the flesh? Is that something we can do by ourselves? Explain.

3. List and discuss the ways section 22 helps us understand verses 22-26.

E. Read Galatians 6:1-5 and section 23.

1. List the implications of these verses for your daily Christian life.

2. What light does section 23 shed on the concept of comparing ourselves with other church members?

3. According to section 23, what does Galatians 6:1-5 tell us about the social dynamics of the Galatian churches?

E. Read Galatians 6:6-10 and section 24.

1. Summarize the implications of verses 6-10 for Christian living.

2. Discuss what appears to be the implications of verse 6.

3. In what ways does section 24 help us to better understand sowing and reaping?

F. Read Galatians 6:11-18 and section 25.

1. List the major ideas in these verses.

2. What are the implications of Paul's accusations against the Judaizers?

3. List three ways in which section 25 helps in understanding the meaning of Galatians 6:11-18.

G. Reread the entire book of Galatians.

1. How has your study of this book helped you understand it better?

2. If you could only write one sentence summarizing the meaning of Galatians for your life, what would you write? Why did you select that sentence?

Part II

# Ephesians

*Lesson Seven*

## Ephesians: A Bird's-Eye View

Paul's letter to the Ephesians is one of his most important contributions to Christianity. It has important insights on praise, salvation, and Christian living. Perhaps the best way to begin a study of Ephesians is to read the entire letter through in one sitting from a good translation, such as the Revised Standard Version, the New Revised Standard Version, the King James Version, the *New International Version*, or the *New American Standard Bible*. A first reading will take about one-half hour. Answering the questions will take some additional time, but the amount depends upon a person's goals in the study of this important letter.

### **I. First Impressions of Ephesians.**

A. As you complete each chapter in your initial reading, jot down in three or four sentences what you think the author is seeking to teach you in that chapter.

Chapter 1:

Chapter 2:

Chapter 3:

Chapter 4:

Chapter 5:

Chapter 6:

B. Now that you have read Ephesians, write out your impressions of the book on the whole.

**II. First Impressions from *Exploring Galatians and Ephesians*.**

Read the “Introduction to the Book of Ephesians” (pp. 163-171). On the basis of your reading:

A. Provide a one-sentence statement of the purpose of Ephesians.

B. List the major themes of Ephesians.

C. List the two major content sections of Ephesians.

1.

2.

D. Reflect on the relationship between Ephesians, Colossians, and Philemon.

E. In one paragraph indicate the relevance of the letter to the Ephesians for our lives in the twenty-first century.

*Chapter Eight*

# Praise and Prayer

Ephesians 1

*Exploring Galatians and Ephesians, Sections 1-4*

A. Read Ephesians 1:1, 2 and section 1.

1. List the facts about the letter that can be discovered from these two verses.

2. After reading section 1 provide definitions for the following biblical words:

a. apostle:

b. saints:

c. faith:

d. grace:

e. peace:

3. What do these two verses tell us about the authority of this letter?

B. Read Ephesians 1:3-10 and section 2.

1. What is your first impression after reading these verses?

2. List the important theological ideas in these verses.

3. List what God has done for us in these verses.

4. After reading section 2, discuss the meaning of predestine.

5. Reflect upon God's past, present, and future blessings on believers found in verses 3-10 and reflected upon in section 2.

C. Read Ephesians 1:11-14 and section 3.





3. What exactly did Paul pray for in these verses? List the various items.

4. After reading section 4, discuss the three major items that that reading contributed to your understanding of verses 15-23.

*Chapter Nine*

# Before and After Christ

Ephesians 2

*Exploring Galatians and Ephesians, Sections 5-9*

A. Read Ephesians 2:1-3 and section 5.

1. What is the natural state of humans before they are saved by grace through faith? List the descriptors found in verses 1-3.

2. Discuss what Paul means by “children of wrath” in these verses?

3. List the important ideas you gleaned from reading section 5 that help you understand these verses better.

B. Read Ephesians 2:4-10 and section 6.

1. Describe the plan of salvation as reflected in these verses.

2. Which part of that salvational process in these verses is past, which is present, and which is future?

3. In light of section 6, what do these verses tell us about God?

4. According to section 6, what is the one thing that humans contribute to their salvation?

C. Read Ephesians 2:11, 12 and section 7.

1. List the items in these verses that describe the condition of the Gentiles before they come to Christ.

2. What are the implications of the words “no hope”?

3. After reading section 7, discuss the physical barriers between Jews and Gentiles in the Temple complex.

D. Read Ephesians 2:13-18 and section 8.

1. According to these verses, what has Christ done to unify the human family?

2. How did He do it?

3. How specifically did section 8 help you understand the passage dealing with “nullifying the law of the commandments”?

E. Read Ephesians 2:19-22 and section 9.

1. List and describe the various elements of the church that make it like a building.

2. How do verses 19-22 connect with verses 13-18 and 11 and 12? What is their relationship? What has happened in the first 22 verses of this chapter?

3. How does section 9 help you understand verse 19-22.

*Chapter Ten*

# Ministering the Mystery

Ephesians 3

*Exploring Galatians and Ephesians*, Sections 10, 11

- A. Read Ephesians 3:1-13 and section 10.
1. List what we can learn about Paul in these verses.
  2. From a reading of these verses, what do you think the “mystery” is?
  3. What do these verses tell us about the mystery?
  4. List and discuss what we can learn about ministry in these verses.

5. How does section 10 help us better understand what Paul means by mystery?

B. Read Ephesians 3:14-21 and section 11.

1. List in order the exact requests for the believers that Paul prays for in verses 14-21.

2. Discuss what can be learned about prayer from these verses.

3. After reading section 11, discuss what we can learn about God from verses 14-21.



*Chapter Eleven*

# The Importance of Church Unity

Ephesians 4:1-16

*Exploring Galatians and Ephesians*, Sections 12-14

A. Read Ephesians 4:1-6 and section 12.

1. List exactly what Paul is asking of the Ephesians in these verses.

2. In the overall context of Ephesians and the specific context of verses 1-3, what is the significance of the repeated use of the word “one” in verses 4-6?

3. After reading section 12, list and discuss the characteristics that lead to peace and unity.

B. Read Ephesians 4:7-11 and section 13.

1. What do these verses mean by “ascending” and “descending” and “captives”?

2. What does verse 8 teach about the distribution of spiritual gifts?

3. In what way does a reading of section 13 enrich our understanding of “ascending,” “descending,” and “captives”?

4. In what ways does section 13 help us understand the diversity of spiritual gifts?

C. Read Ephesians 4:12-16 and section 14.

1. According to these verses, what is the purpose of spiritual gifts?

2. How are the “body” of verse 16 and the gifts related?

3. List and discuss how section 14 helped you to better understand these verses.

*Chapter Twelve*

# The Importance of Living a Christian Life

Ephesians 4:17-5:21

*Exploring Galatians and Ephesians*, Sections 15-19

A. Read Ephesians 4:17-24 and section 15.

1. After reading verses 17-24, describe in your own words what God wants to do in a Christian's life.

2. These verses highlight the intellect before people come to Christ and after. List the intellectual aspects of both states as you read these verses.

3. List and discuss three ways that a reading of section 15 enriches your understanding of verses 17-24.

B. Read Ephesians 4:25-32 and section 16.



2. After reading section 17 discuss the extent to which a Christian can imitate God.

3. With the discussion of section 17 in mind, discuss the concept of “love” in Ephesians 1-5:2.

D. Read Ephesians 5:3-14 and section 18.

1. List the elements of walking in the light set forth in verses 3-14.

2. Discuss the meaning of light and darkness in these verses.

3. After reading section 18, discuss why the admonitions of verses 3-14 were so important to Paul's first readers.

4. Why are they important today?

E. Read Ephesians 5:15-21 and section 19.

1. List the admonitions set forth in verses 15-21.

2. Which of those admonitions do you need to take more seriously? Why?

3. After reading section 19 discuss the concept of discovering God's will.

*Chapter 13*

# The Importance of Fighting the Powers of Darkness

Ephesians 5:21-6:24

*Exploring Galatians and Ephesians*, Sections 20-25

A. Read Ephesians 5:22-33 and section 20.

1. Discuss what husbands can learn from these verses.

2. What can we learn about Christ being the head of the church in these verses?

3. After reading section 20, discuss what we can learn about the responsibilities of wives from these verses.

B. Read Ephesians 6:1-4 and section 21.

1. What can we learn about the relationship of parents and children in these verses?



2. What do these verses teach us about the Ten Commandments?

3. How does section 21 help us understand the status of children in the ancient world? How does Paul's teaching differ from the mentality of the times?

C. Read Ephesians 6:5-9 and section 22.

1. What can we learn about being a good employee from these verses?

2. What can we learn about being a good employer?

3. After reading section 22, list and discuss the place of Christ in these instructions.

D. Read Ephesians 6:10-17 and section 23.

1. Just who is Paul talking about in verse 12?

2. List the various spiritual armaments discussed in these verses and discuss how each can be used in combating the evil one.

3. In what specific ways did a reading of section 23 help you understand these verses?

E. Read Ephesians 6:18-20 and section 24.

1. List and discuss what these verses teach us about prayer.

2. What do these verses tell us about Paul?

3. Discuss how section 24 relates prayer to the armor of verses 10-17.

F. Read Ephesians 6:21-24 and section 25.

1. Discuss what we can learn from these verses.

2. In what way does section 25 help us understand the role of Tychius?

3. Discuss Paul's use of "peace," "faith," "grace," and "love" in verses 23 and 24 in the context of the message of Ephesians.

G. Reread the entire book of Ephesians.

1. In what ways has your study of this letter helped you understand it better?

2. If you could write only one sentence summarizing the meaning of Ephesians for your life, what would you write? Why did you select that sentence?

