

*A Study
on the
Epistle
to the
Galatians*

Jesse C. Jones

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Bible Study Guides for the New Testament

Writing a book was not on my mind when this effort was initiated some years ago. In fact, it began when a member of my Sunday School class commented that his son had talked about committing suicide the previous week. As a result, I felt an urge to see what the Bible had to say about hope, with a view toward helping his son cope with his suicidal feelings. The result of that effort was an article entitled: “Hope and the Miraculous Three Pound Computer,” located in Chapter 6 of the book [After the Big Bang](#). My next writing endeavor was a fallout from a Sunday School class discussion about temptations, or trials, and their purpose in our lives. An article entitled “The Trials of Job” located in Chapter 7 of the same book resulted from that effort. After this I began to feel a prodding from the Lord to continue studying and writing. The chapters in this book document what I subsequently learned about two of God’s greatest and most marvelous creations: earth and mankind, who He made to exercise dominion over it.

Some of the material presented in these New Testament Bible Study Guides conflicts with commonly held viewpoints, and differs as well on the definitions of some words used to explicate them. One thing I have learned through this effort is that the meaning of many of the words used in the Bible is not uniformly agreed to by expositors, and in many cases, not agreed to by the various versions of the Bible. For example, in the KJV of the old testament (OT), the word “soul” is used over 780 times. Vine’s Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words notes that in over 400 of these uses, the Hebrew word used is misinterpreted. I mention this not to heap criticism on the KJV, for it is my personal Bible, and I love it dearly, but to point out the importance of consulting Hebrew and Greek sources, and good conservative lexicons, when trying to understand difficult scripture. The meaning of some words is not absolutely clear even then. Nevertheless, this is the process I have followed in this effort.

I am a retired engineer: my education and work experience sparked a great interest in details. I found that to understand the technical difficulties and problems that arise in the operation of complex machines, a good understanding of the details of the design is absolutely necessary. What is

presented herein is an analysis of important details in God's creation of the earth and man: his habitat and milieu. However, no description is completely adequate to portray the unbelievable complexity and efficacy of tripartite man. Scientists and engineers have tried to duplicate the various subsystems in God's design of man for years, with limited success. Part of the problem is that we do not understand many of the operational details, but the greatest impediment is probably the fact that man is composed of three parts: spirit, soul, and body, two of which (spirit and soul) are immaterial, and are thus largely beyond the scope of scientific and medical analysis. The third part, the highly complex body, is strongly influenced by these two immaterial parts. God has given mankind a great challenge in trying to understand tripartite man. What better model could we find for our study than our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ: spirit, soul and body in perfect relationship. When Jesus came to earth He emptied Himself, and was formed in the likeness and fashion of a man. Like us, He was a tripartite being, but without a sin nature. Thus, He was the perfect man, the ideal for all to emulate.

I read a book several years ago by Watchman Nee in which he made the observation that one of the primary ways God speaks to us is through our

intuition. After that I began to try to follow the guidance I received in this manner, and what is presented herein is largely a result of that attempt. I hasten to add that all readers will not agree with my conclusions. I have learned much about God's creation, and His design of man through this effort: that may be the primary purpose He had in mind. My hope is that readers will find new ideas in these words that drive them to the absolute authority: God's Word - the Bible.

As references I have used the King James Version (KJV), the New International Version (NIV), the New Living Translation (NLT), the Revised Version (RV), and Recovery Versions of the bible, as well as the Interlinear NIV Hebrew - English Old Testament (OT), and the Interlinear Greek - English New Testament (GNT). I have also used Vine's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words, Vincent's Word Studies in the New Testament, Moulton's Analytical Greek Lexicon, the Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon, and Webster's New World Dictionary for word interpretation. Unless otherwise noted, scripture passages quoted are from the KJV.

The John A. Dickson New Analytical Bible and Dictionary, Authorized King James Version, Chicago 1950, was a primary reference source. This Bible was given to my wife and I in 1957, and is one of my dearest treasures. It has been rebound once, and is in need of a repair job at the present time. Thus, the reader can appreciate the usage it has had over these 62 years, most of which has been during the last 25 years. The book introductions have been generally quoted from this source, with changes (mostly grammatical) made only when considered necessary.

Finally, I want to recognize the lady that takes everything I have written, and makes the necessary changes for placing it on the internet. Ms. Sandra Crosnoe is the daughter of two of my, and my deceased wife's, dearest friends, Ted and Jimmie Crosnoe (also deceased). When God moved us (my wife and I), to a Methodist Church in Pasadena, Texas, in 1962, Ted, Jimmie, and their two daughters were among the group of several families in the church that were touched by God in a mighty way that led to a weekly Bible study, that resulted in many changed lives. As the years passed by, and the families went in different directions, we were not able to maintain the close relationship we had in Pasadena. We settled in Lubbock, Texas, in 1982, and I got the call to start

writing on the Bible. Sometime after that Sandra was in Lubbock and we got together for dinner. When she learned of my involvement in writing on the Bible she immediately volunteered to help in making it available by publishing it on the internet. She may not have known what she was getting into, for God has not ceased from giving me Bible subjects to study and write about. This series on the New Testament has been our greatest undertaking, and Sandra's help (as always) has been essential. She has corrected my grammar, argued with me on interpretation, prepared the pictorial cover pages, and generally polished the appearance of the various books in ways that I could never have accomplished on my own. Without her help, this (and other) documents would never have been made available to the general public. I do so appreciate all her work. I believe Ted and Jimmie will give her a "well done" when she joins them in heaven. Her personal website is [Finding Gems and Sharing Them](#).

These bible study guides are available at no charge to read, print, download and share on a platform called Scribd (no membership is required to read/download). They are all listed and linked as a group in [Bible Study Guides by Jesse C. Jones on Scribd](#). Upon completion, most of them will contain study

questions in the Appendix. Other works available are listed and linked with [Books for Believers and Seekers](#). If you hit a pop-up page on Scribd asking you to become a member to read free, simply click the 'x' in the upper right corner to remove the pop-up and continue to our links on Scribd. My personal website is [Revealed by Fire - Jesse's Studies](#) if you wish to see my latest articles and updates.

It is my sincere hope that these works will guide you to a personal ongoing relationship with Jesus and a life led and anointed by the Holy Spirit.

JESSE JONES

A Study On The Epistle To The Galatians

From the John A. Dickson New Analytical Bible

“Twelve of the Pauline epistles were addressed to individual churches or to individuals. This is the one ‘circular letter’ addressed, not to a particular church, but to a group of churches: ‘Unto the churches of Galatia.’

It was on his second missionary journey that Paul’s intention only to pass through Galatia was frustrated by illness. He was kindly received and cared for by these people in a way he could never forget. Because of these circumstances he entertained for these people a tender and sympathetic regard. They welcomed his message and were responsive to his teachings.

During his absence these people were led astray by Judaizing teachers, the enemies of Paul, that the benefits of the Gospel could only be appropriated by meeting the requirements of Judaism—that through this door only could they enter the Christian fold. That the promises were made to Abraham, and the law as a divine institution was not a temporary expedient, but was abiding and

was not abrogated. It was to correct these false doctrines and to win these people back to the purity of the Gospel that Paul wrote this epistle.”

It is difficult to determine exactly when this Epistle was written. It is thought that it could not have been written before 49/50 AD, when Paul’s second missionary journey began, and probably was written after 52 AD, when his third journey began, and Paul visited Galatia a second time. Galatians has long been considered as a great charter of Gospel liberty.

Paul Describes His Calling and Early Activities

Paul opens his epistle by identifying himself as an apostle of Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for the sins of all mankind and was raised from the dead by God the Father to deliver them from this present evil age. In this Epistle Paul and the brethren with him ask for His grace and peace to be on the churches of Galatia.

He then chastises them for being so easily influenced by accepting another gospel, which is not really another gospel but merely a perversion of the gospel of Christ. If any come preaching a gospel other than that which you have received from Paul and his associates, let him be accursed. For the gospel preached by Paul was not received from man, but by revelation of Jesus Christ.

Paul was once a believer in Judaism, and was more of a zealot than most. He persecuted the church of God and ravaged it. But when God called him to bring the message of Jesus Christ to the nations, he did not confer with flesh and blood, nor did he go the other apostles before him, but he went to Arabia, and there spent time with God, later returning to Damascus. After three years he went to Jerusalem where he spent fifteen days with Peter, but he saw no

other apostles except James, the Lord's brother. After this he came into the regions of Syria and Cilicia where he was unknown by face unto the churches of Judaea which were in Christ. But they had heard that the one who persecuted them in times past was now preaching the faith which he once tried to destroy.

Confrontation Between Peter & Paul Regarding Circumcision

Fourteen years after Paul's first visit to Jerusalem, mentioned in Chapter 1, he returned with Barnabas and Titus. If we add the three years spent in Damascus (also mentioned in Chapter 1), this would have been fifteen years after Paul's encounter with Jesus on his way to Damascus to arrest Christians. This visit to Jerusalem was probably the one described in Acts 15, in which Paul and others were sent to Jerusalem to resolve the difficulties that had arisen associated with the question of requiring circumcision for acceptance into the body of believers (thought to have been about 50 or 51 AD).

Paul confronted Peter in regard to his duplicity in eating with Gentiles, but later, when he was in the presence of Jews, he drew back and separated himself from them. Paul's position was that: "*. . . a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ . . . for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified. I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness comes* by the law, then Christ is dead in vain.*" This dilemma was resolved with the acceptance of both Paul's gospel of uncircumcision for the Gentiles, and Peter's gospel of circumcision for the Jews.

What Caused The Galatians to Leave the Faith

O foolish Galatians who bewitched you so you do not obey the truth? Before your very eyes Jesus Christ has been crucified as a criminal. He ministered the Spirit and worked miracles among you. Did He do these things by works of the law or by the hearing of faith? Do you not know that those of faith are the children of Abraham, and that the scripture foretold the justification of Gentiles through faith when Abraham was advised that all nations would be blessed through him. This promise was made to Abraham some 430 years before the law was established, and a promise by God cannot be nullified by law written some 430 years later. Jesus Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, for He was made a curse for us: it is written, cursed is everyone that hangs on a tree (wooden cross).

Now it is evident that no one is declared righteous by God through legalism. If we have believed into Christ and received His Holy Spirit we have received justification by faith without works of the law. Through faith in the promises of God, Abraham was blessed; and in the same way others obtain this privilege. Let us consider effects of Abraham's faith; for who can escape the

curse of the holy law any other way? The curse is against all sinners, and therefore against all men; for we all are born in sin, and are guilty before God. If, as transgressors of the law, we are under its curse, it must be vain to look for justification by it. Only those who are just and righteous are freed from death and wrath, and placed in God's favor; and it is only through faith that we can become righteous (Hebrews 4:2). Thus we see that justification by faith is not a new doctrine, but it was taught in the church of God long before the times of the gospel. It is, in truth, the only way wherein sinners were ever justified. Though deliverance is not to be expected from the law, there is a way open to escape the curse, and regain the favor of God. Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law; being made sin for us. The sufferings of the Son of God warns sinners to flee from the wrath to come more than all the curses of the law; for how can God spare any man who remains under sin, seeing that he spared not his own Son, when our sins were laid upon him? Yet, Christ freely invites sinners to take refuge in him.

“Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He sayest not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, and to thy seed, which is Christ.” In today's vernacular we often use the word “seed,” in a plural sense. If we consider the fact that believers are in Christ, and He is in believers, this scripture also extends these

promises to all that are “in” Christ. The covenant, which was confirmed in Abraham, cannot be disannulled (made to be of no effect), by the law confirmed 430 years later. If the inheritance comes from the law, it is no longer a promise, but we know that God gave it to Abraham through the promise. Why was the law given? It was given to Moses on Mt. Sinai because of the transgressions of the Jews, and would remain in force until the coming of Christ, the seed through whom the promise is given to them that believe. After faith came we were no longer under the law, for we were then children of God by the faith of Jesus Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, neither bond or free, neither male nor female, for we are all one in Christ Jesus. And if we are Christ’s, then we are also Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.

The Allegory of Agar and Sarah

Paul begins this chapter by explaining how we were all children in bondage under the influence of the world until God sent forth His Son Jesus to redeem us, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because we are now sons, God has sent the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, that we are no longer under the law, but are heirs of God through Christ. How is it then after you have known God, and are known by God, you turn to the world, and desire to be in bondage again? You observe days and months, and times and years. I fear for you, lest I have labored among you in vain.

Paul then refers to his “thorn in the flesh” and indicates that it is in some way connected to his eyesight. He comments about how they would have plucked out their own eyes, and given them to him; but now he wonders if he has become their enemy because he has told them the truth. He yearns for them to have Christ formed within their lives, and wishes he could be with them and to change their mind about legalism. He then tells them an allegory about Sarah and Hagar and their two sons.

For those readers that are not familiar with this term we need to describe the meaning of an allegory.

Webster's New World Dictionary gives this definition: "A story in which people, things, and happenings have another meaning, as in a fable or parable; allegories are used for teaching or explaining. The presenting of ideas by means of such stories; symbolic narration or description."

Much has been written about the allegory provided here in the fourth chapter of Galatians. In this narrative about Abraham's two offspring: Isaac, son of Sarah, representing the new covenant Jews, and Ishmael, son of Hagar, representing Jews of the old covenant who are in bondage to the law. The confusion this allegory presents for present-day believers is in the identification of Hagar, and her son Ishmael, representing the Judiazers, which were bondservants of the law. This is referred to as an allegory--literally, spoken in a double sense,--"Where more is meant than meets the ear." The allegorical sense doesn't exclude the literal sense, but is added to it. A distinction is drawn between the grammatical terms "type" and "allegory": the first implying that the narrative on which it is based is true, the second that it is fictitious. Isaac, and his mother Sarah, quite logically represent those of the new covenant, the children of promise and is thus true; while Hagar and her

son Ishmael represent the Judiazers in this allegory, but in historical fact represent the modern Arabic world (Genesis 16:10, 17:20, 25-13-16) and is thus fictitious. The justification for using the name of Hagar out of character (so to speak), is that the Hebrew word for Hagar is very similar to the Hebrew word for Sinai, and thus Hagar was deemed to be a logical choice to represent the law, which was given to the Jews by Moses when he descended from Mt. Sinai. This must surely be the reason for this story being identified as an allegory.

However, there are other reasons given by various biblical expositors to explain the use of Hagar and her son in this allegory. We know that Ishmael was destined to become the father of the Arabic, or Muslim nations, whose seed could not be numbered (Genesis 16:10). If we interpret this allegory in the light of today's world situation (Ishmael representing the Muslim nations and Isaac representing the Jews), we get an interpretation of Galatians 4:22-31 that seems to describe the present world situation exactly. This is not to suggest that the wording given by Paul in Galatians, is not correct, but that it was written in a different historical time, addressing a significant problem of that day, and using a grammatical technique (allegory) that provides flexibility in the use of names and situations. Verses 28-31 seem to be especially

applicable to today's world situation. *“Now we brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise. But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now. Nevertheless what saith the scripture? Cast out the bondwoman and her son: for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the free woman. So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman, but of the free woman.”*

Works of the Flesh, and Fruits of the Spirit

Jesus Christ will not be Savior of any who do not know Him, and are not known by Him. John Wesley is said to have used this verse to determine whether a follower had received the Holy Spirit or not: “*The Spirit itself [Himself] beareth witness with our spirit, that we are children of God,*” (Romans 8:16). When I received the Holy Spirit in 1963, this was the scripture that confirmed what had happened. Until that time I was totally unaware of the baptism of the Holy Spirit, and had no idea that God could or would talk to me spiritually and send His Spirit into my body. I was certainly not seeking this experience at that time, and in fact did not know that such a thing was even possible.

For a more detailed account of this event, I recommend a book entitled: [“A Man of God,” by Jesse C. Jones available on scribd to read/download free and linked on the author’s website \[jessecjones.wordpress.com\]\(http://jessecjones.wordpress.com\).](#)

In Chapter 5 Paul encourages the Galatians to be steadfast in Christ, taking heed of the warnings and persuasions of the gospel. He tells those who were trying to be declared righteous by God through legalism that they had severed themselves from Jesus Christ. In Christ neither circumcision nor

uncircumcision avails anything, but faith only, working through love. Ephesians 2:8 says, *“For by grace ye are saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God,”* (see also Hebrews 4:2). All true believers sanctified by the Holy Spirit, look forward to eternal life, and the reward of righteousness, not for the sake of their works, but because they love God, and they have sincere faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. But without faith working by love, all else is worthless, and compared with it, other things are of small value.

Brothers, you are called to be free, but don't let that freedom become an excuse to let your old nature back into the drivers seat to run your life. Walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. The flesh craves what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit craves what is contrary to the flesh. They are opposed to each other and often keep us from doing what we know God desires. The temptations of the flesh are enticing and destructive. But the Spirit of life in Christ has made us free from the law of sin and death.

The works of the flesh are these: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance [strife], emulations [jealousies], wrath, strife, seditions [divisions], envying, murders, drunkenness, reveling, and the like. **They which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.**

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness [kindness], goodness, faithfulness, meekness, temperance: against these there is no law. Those that belong to Christ have crucified the flesh with its affections and passions. Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another and envying one another, but instead walk in the Spirit. If we live our lives in this fashion these fruits will grow on us just as fruit grows on a tree.

Bearing One Another's Burden

Brethren, if someone is accused of a fault, you who are spiritual should restore them in a spirit of meekness, considering yourself, lest you also be tempted. Bear one another's burdens, thereby fulfilling the law of Christ. If a brother trespasses against you, he should be treated in accordance with the guidance offered in Matthew 18:15-35. If a man thinks highly of himself, when he is really nothing, he deceives himself.

Every man's work will be made manifest when He stands before Christ, for it will be tested by fire (see 1 Corinthians 3: 13-15). If a believer's work survives the refiner's fire, he will receive a reward. If any believer's work be burned, he will suffer loss: but he himself will be saved by fire (severe trial). A man must bear the weight of his own virtues and his own sins. Don't be deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man sows, that shall he also reap. If you sow to the flesh you will reap corruption; but if you sow to the Spirit you will reap life everlasting. Let us not be weary in doing well, for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not. Therefore, as we have opportunity, we should do good to all men, especially to those that belong to the household of faith.

Questions from the Book of Galatians

Chapter 1

1. Explain verse 16.

Chapter 2

1. Explain verse 7.
2. Explain the disagreement between Paul and Peter.
3. Explain Paul's relation to the law in verses 19-21.

Chapter 3

1. How can those which are of faith be the children of Abraham (refer to Romans 4:11-12)?
2. Explain verse 22.
3. Explain verse 27.

Chapter 4

1. Have you received the Holy Spirit since you believed (verse 6)? What evidence has been manifested in your life?
2. Explain verse 14.
3. Give an interpretation of the allegory given in verses 22-31 for today's believers. You will have to understand the meaning of the word "allegory".

Chapter 5

1. Explain verse 9.
2. What does Paul mean when he says “the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit lusts against the flesh”?
3. Identify the works of the flesh and the works of the Spirit.

Chapter 6

1. What is the meaning of verses 7 and 8.
2. Why do you think Paul added the phrase “and especially unto them who are of the household of faith,” in verse 10.

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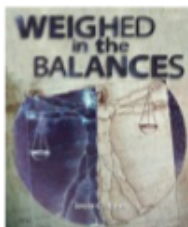
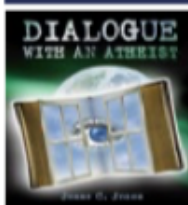
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