

Bible Study—Fall 2012
The Crucial Points of the Truth in Galatians
(1)

Introduction and Being Rescued from the Present Evil Age

Galatians 1:4 Who gave Himself for our sins that **He might rescue us out of the present evil age** according to the will of our God and Father.

3:1 O foolish Galatians, who has bewitched you, before whose eyes Jesus Christ was openly portrayed crucified?

5:4 You have been brought to nought, separated from Christ, you who are being justified by law; you have fallen from grace.

Further Scripture Readings: Gal. 6:14-15; 3:23; John 10:1, 3; Acts 2:40, 36.

- I. The books of Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, and Colossians form a cluster of Epistles which make up the heart of the divine revelation in the New Testament:**
 - A. The essential subject of these four books is Christ and the church:
 1. Galatians reveals that Christ is versus religion with its law—Gal. 1:4.
 2. Ephesians reveals the church as the Body of Christ—Eph. 1:23.
 3. Philippians concerns the experience, the living out, of Christ—Phil. 1:21.
 4. Colossians unveils the all-inclusive and all-extensive Christ as the Head of the Body—Col. 2:9.
- II. Written before A.D. 60, Galatians is earlier than Ephesians, Philippians, or Colossians, in the earlier part of Paul's ministry, before he was imprisoned:**
 - A. Galatians was written to "the churches of Galatia," a province of the ancient Roman Empire where churches were established in a number of cities in that province:
 1. The churches in Galatia had been bewitched by the Judaizers (Gal. 3:1); distracted from Christ to Judaism—cf. 3:23-24.
 2. Because the Galatians were distracted from Christ to law, they were being brought to nought from Christ, they had fallen from grace—Gal. 5:4:
 - a. "Christ is become of no effect unto you" (KJV).
 - b. "You have been severed from Christ" (ASV).
 - B. The Galatians were seeking to be justified by law (5:4), were being constrained to practice circumcision (6:12, 15), and were trying to be perfected by the flesh (3:3).
 - C. Paul wrote this Epistle because the churches of Galatia were deserting the grace of Christ and backsliding to the observance of the law, "to a different gospel"—1:6 cf. John 1:17.
- III. The subject of the book of Galatians is, according to 1:4, that Christ "gave Himself for our sins, that He might rescue us out of the present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father"—cf. Eph. 2:2:**
 - A. The present evil age in 1:4, according to the context of this book, refers to the religious world, the religious course of the world—6:14-15.
 - B. Here the apostle emphasizes that the purpose of Christ's giving Himself for our sins was to rescue us from the present evil age.
 - C. Christ's death on the cross to deliver us from the present evil age was according to the will of God, the Father.

- D. This book was for the release from the custody of the law (Gal. 3:23) and to bring them out of the sheepfold (John 10:1, 3), according to the will of God.
- E. In his opening word Paul indicated what he was going to deal with: he wanted to rescue the churches, which were distracted by Judaism with its law, and bring them back to the grace of the gospel.

Hymn

1. Lord, You are my only goal!
You're my only hope!
I only care for You!
I never could replace You,
And I would never want to.
I have everything, Lord—
I have You!
2. Lord, I only live for You—
Not anything else!
In everything You're my source;
No more good intentions,
No more right or wrong.
I don't want a "good" life—
I want You!