

# Galatians—A Trial Translation

*By Gerald O. Hoenecke, et al.*

## The Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Galatians

### Chapter I

<sup>1</sup>) Paul, an apostle—not from men nor by a man, but by Jesus Christ and God the Father, who raised Him from the dead—<sup>2</sup>) and all the brethren who are with me, to the churches of Galatia: <sup>3</sup>) Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, <sup>4</sup>) who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of our God and Father, <sup>5</sup>) to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

<sup>6</sup>) I cannot understand that you are so soon turning away from Christ, who called you in grace, to a different gospel, <sup>7</sup>) which is not another; only there are some who are troubling you and are intent on perverting the gospel of Christ. <sup>8</sup>) But though we, or an angel from heaven, were to preach any other gospel to you than that which we have preached to you, let him be accursed. <sup>9</sup>) As we have said before, so say I now again, If anyone preaches any other gospel to you than that which you have received, let him be accursed. <sup>10</sup>) For am I now seeking the approval of men, or of God? Or am I trying to please men? If I were still a man-pleaser, I should not be a servant of Christ.

<sup>11</sup>) For let me impress upon you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached by me is not something human. <sup>12</sup>) For I too did not receive it from a man, nor was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.

<sup>13</sup>) For you have heard of my former conduct in Judaism, that beyond measure I was persecuting the church of God and laying it waste. <sup>14</sup>) And I was advancing in Judaism beyond many of my companions in my own nation, being more exceedingly zealous for the traditions of my fathers. <sup>15</sup>) But when it pleased God, who from my mother's womb set me apart and called me through His grace, <sup>16</sup>) to reveal His Son in me, that I might preach Him among the Gentiles, then at once, instead of conferring with flesh and blood <sup>17</sup>) or going up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me, I went away into Arabia and returned again to Damascus.

<sup>18</sup>) Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to become acquainted with Cephas, and remained with him fifteen days. <sup>19</sup>) But of the other apostles I saw none, only James, the brother of the Lord. <sup>20</sup>) [Now in the things which I write to you, behold, before God, I am not lying.] <sup>21</sup>) Afterwards I came into the regions of Syria and Cilicia. <sup>22</sup>) And I was still unknown by sight to the churches of Judea which are in Christ. <sup>23</sup>) Only they kept hearing, Our former persecutor is now preaching the faith which once he was engaged in destroying. <sup>24</sup>) And they glorified God in me.

### Chapter II

<sup>1</sup>) Then after fourteen years I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas and took Titus with me also. <sup>2</sup>) Now, I went up by revelation, and I laid before them the gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, also privately before their recognized leaders, lest by any means I should be running, or had run, in vain. <sup>3</sup>) But even Titus, who was with me, though a Greek, was not compelled to be circumcised, <sup>4</sup>) and that because of false brethren stealthily brought in, who slipped in to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage. <sup>5</sup>) To them we did not yield submission even for an hour, that the truth of the gospel might remain with you.

<sup>6</sup>) Moreover from their recognized leaders [whatever they were makes no difference to me; God does not regard a man's person]—these, I say, who were recognized added nothing to me. <sup>7</sup>) On the contrary, when they saw that I had been entrusted with the gospel for the uncircumcised, just as Peter for the circumcised <sup>8</sup>) [for He who worked effectually for Peter in an apostolate among the circumcised worked also for me among the Gentiles], <sup>9</sup>) and when they perceived the grace which was given to me, James, Cephas, and John, who were

considered to be pillars, gave to me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship, that we should go to the Gentiles and they to the circumcised, <sup>10)</sup> Only they would have us remember the poor, the very thing I was also eager to do.

<sup>11)</sup> But when Cephas came to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was plainly in the wrong. <sup>12)</sup> For before certain men came from James, he used to eat with the Gentiles; but when they came, he began to withdraw and to separate himself, fearing those who were of the circumcision party. <sup>13)</sup> With him also the rest of the Jews acted insincerely, so that even Barnabas was carried away by their hypocrisy.

<sup>14)</sup> But when I saw that they were not walking uprightly with regard to the truth of the gospel, I said to Cephas before them all, If you who are a Jew, live like a Gentile, and not as do the Jews, how is it that you compel the Gentiles to live as do the Jews? <sup>15)</sup> We who are Jews by nature and not sinners of the Gentiles, <sup>16)</sup> because we know that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but alone through faith in Jesus Christ, we too believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law, because by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified. <sup>17)</sup> Now, if in seeking to be justified in Christ we ourselves also were found to be sinners, is therefore Christ a servant of sin? By no means! <sup>18)</sup> For if I build up again the very things which I tore down, I show myself to be a transgressor. <sup>19)</sup> For I through the law died to the law, that I might live to God. <sup>20)</sup> I have been crucified with Christ; now it is no longer I who am living, but Christ is living in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God who loved me and gave Himself for me. <sup>21)</sup> I will not nullify the grace of God; for if righteousness is through the law, then Christ died in vain.

### Chapter III

<sup>1)</sup> O foolish Galatians, who bewitched you that you should not obey the truth, you before whose eyes Jesus Christ was vividly portrayed as crucified? <sup>2)</sup> This only do I want to learn from you, Did you receive the Spirit by the works of the law or through the message of faith? <sup>3)</sup> Are you so foolish? Having begun in the spirit, are you now trying to finish in the flesh? <sup>4)</sup> Did you experience so many things in vain? if indeed it is in vain. <sup>5)</sup> Does He then who supplies you with the Spirit and works miracles among you do so by the works of the law or through the message of faith?

<sup>6)</sup> Thus Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him for righteousness. <sup>7)</sup> Know therefore that men of faith, these are the children of Abraham. <sup>8)</sup> And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles through faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, "In thee shall all nations be blessed." <sup>9)</sup> So then men of faith are blessed together with believing Abraham. <sup>10)</sup> For as many as rely on the works of the law are under the curse; for it is written, "Cursed is every one who does not abide by all things which are written in the book of the law to do them." <sup>11)</sup> But, that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God is evident, for "The just shall live by faith." <sup>12)</sup> And the law has nothing to do with faith; on the contrary, "The man who does them shall live by them." <sup>13)</sup> Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us [for it is written, "Cursed is every one who hangs on a tree"] <sup>14)</sup> that the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles in Jesus Christ, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.

<sup>15)</sup> Brethren, I speak after the manner of men: even a man's testament, once it has been confirmed, no one sets it aside or adds to it. <sup>16)</sup> Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. It does not say, "And to seeds," as of many, but as of one, "And to thy Seed," which is Christ. <sup>17)</sup> This is what I mean, A testament confirmed beforehand by God in Christ cannot be annulled by the law which came four hundred thirty years later, so as to make the promise of no effect. <sup>18)</sup> For if the inheritance is by the law, it is no longer by promise; but God gave it to Abraham by promise.

<sup>19)</sup> Why then the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the Seed should come, to whom the promise had been made, and it was ordained through angels by a mediator. <sup>20)</sup> Now a mediator is not of one; but God is one. <sup>21)</sup> Is the law then against the promises of God? By no means! For if there had been a law given which could produce life, then indeed righteousness would be by the law. <sup>22)</sup> But the Scripture has bound up

everything under sin, in order that the promise through faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe.

<sup>23)</sup> Moreover before this faith came, we were kept in custody under the law, being shut up unto the faith which should later be revealed. <sup>24)</sup> So then the law was our custodian until Christ came, that we might be justified by faith. <sup>25)</sup> But now that faith has come we are no longer under a custodian. <sup>26)</sup> For you are all the children of God through faith in Christ Jesus. <sup>27)</sup> For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. <sup>28)</sup> There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. <sup>29)</sup> And if you are Christ's, then are you Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

#### Chapter IV

<sup>1)</sup> I say, as long as the heir is a child under age, he does not differ in any way from a slave, though he is owner of the whole estate, <sup>2)</sup> but is under guardians and stewards until the time set by the father. <sup>3)</sup> Even so we, when we were minors, were held in slavery under the elements of the world. <sup>4)</sup> But when the fulness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, put under the law, <sup>5)</sup> to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. <sup>6)</sup> And because you are sons, God sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. <sup>7)</sup> So then you are no longer a slave, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.

<sup>8)</sup> Formerly indeed, when you did not know God, you were in slavery to those who by nature are not gods; <sup>9)</sup> but now having come to know God, or rather to be known by God, how is it that you turn again to the weak and beggarly elements, whose slaves you want to be once more? <sup>10)</sup> You strictly observe days, also months, and seasons, and years. <sup>11)</sup> I fear for you, lest I have spent my labor on you in vain.

<sup>12)</sup> Become like me, brethren, please, for I too am like you. You did me no wrong. <sup>13)</sup> In fact, you know it was because of an ailment of the body that I came to preach the gospel to you the first time, <sup>14)</sup> and you did not disregard nor loathe what was a temptation for you in my body, but received me as an angel of God, even as Christ Jesus. <sup>15)</sup> Where is then the blessedness you spoke of? For I bear you witness that if possible you would have plucked out your own eyes and given them to me. <sup>16)</sup> Have I then become your enemy by telling you the truth? <sup>17)</sup> Their interest in you is not honest. No, indeed, they want to alienate you, in order that you might show an interest in them. <sup>18)</sup> Now it is always good to be interested in a good cause, and not only when I am present with you. <sup>19)</sup> My little children, for whom I am again suffering birth pains until Christ be formed in you, <sup>20)</sup> I would like to be present with you even now and to change my voice, for I am at a loss in regard to you.

<sup>21)</sup> Tell me, you who want to be under the law, do you not hear the law? <sup>22)</sup> For it is written that Abraham had two sons, the one by the slave-woman, the other by the free-woman. <sup>23)</sup> However the one by the slave was born according to the flesh, but the one by the free-woman by the promise. <sup>24)</sup> These things are an allegory, for these women are the two covenants, the one from Mount Sinai, bearing children for slavery, which is Hagar. <sup>25)</sup> Now this Mount Sinai is in Arabia, and corresponds to the Jerusalem of today; for she is in slavery with her children. <sup>26)</sup> But the Jerusalem above is free, which is our mother <sup>27)</sup> For it is written:

Rejoice, O barren one, you who do not bear;  
break forth and shout, you who never have  
birth pangs;  
for the desolate one has many more children  
than she who has a husband.

<sup>28)</sup> Now we, brethren, like Isaac are children of promise. <sup>29)</sup> But as at that time he who was born according to the flesh persecuted him who was born according to the spirit, even so it is now. <sup>30)</sup> Yet what does the Scripture say? Cast out the slave-woman and her son, for the son of the slave shall surely not be heir with the son of the free-woman. <sup>31)</sup> So then brethren we are not children of the slave-woman, but of the free.

#### Chapter V

<sup>1</sup>) Stand fast therefore in this liberty for which Christ made us free, and do not let yourselves again be put under a yoke of slavery. <sup>2</sup>) Behold, I, Paul, say to you, that if you submit to circumcision, Christ will profit you nothing. <sup>3</sup>) And I testify again to every man who submits to circumcision that he is under obligation to perform the whole law. <sup>4</sup>) You have been cut off from Christ, whoever of you want to be justified by the law, you have fallen away from grace. <sup>5</sup>) For we in spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith. <sup>6</sup>) For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision avails anything nor uncircumcision, but faith working through love.

<sup>7</sup>) You were running well; who hindered you from continuing to obey the truth? <sup>8</sup>) This persuasion is not from Him who called you. <sup>9</sup>) A little leaven leavens the whole lump. <sup>10</sup>) I have confidence in you through the Lord that you will not be otherwise minded; but he who is troubling you will bear his judgment, whoever he may be. <sup>11</sup>) But as for me, brethren, if I am still preaching circumcision, why then do I suffer persecution? In that case the offense of the cross has been removed. <sup>12</sup>) If only your troublemakers would also mutilate themselves.

<sup>13</sup>) For, brethren, you were called to liberty; only do not use your liberty as an opening for the flesh, but through love serve one another. <sup>14</sup>) For the whole law is fulfilled in one word, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. <sup>15</sup>) But if you bite and devour one another, take heed that you are not consumed by one another. <sup>16</sup>) But I say, Walk in the spirit, and you will not fulfill the lust of the flesh. <sup>17</sup>) For the flesh desires what is against the spirit, and the spirit what is against the flesh, for these are opposed to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish. <sup>18</sup>) But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law. <sup>19</sup>) Now, the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, licentiousness, <sup>20</sup>) idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strifes, jealousies, wrath, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, <sup>21</sup>) envyings, murders, drunkenness, carousings, and the like, of which I tell you in advance, as I have also told you before, that those who do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. <sup>22</sup>) But the fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, <sup>23</sup>) meekness, self-control; against such there is no law. <sup>24</sup>) And those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and lusts.

<sup>25</sup>) If we live in the spirit, let us also walk according to the spirit. <sup>26</sup>) Let us not be conceited, provoking one another, envying one another.

## Chapter VI

<sup>1</sup>) Brethren, if nevertheless a man is overtaken in a trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of meekness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted. <sup>2</sup>) Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ. <sup>3</sup>) For if anyone thinks he is something, when he is nothing, he deceives himself. <sup>4</sup>) But let everyone test his own work, and then his boasting will be based on himself alone and not on a comparison with another. <sup>5</sup>) For everyone will have his own load to bear.

<sup>6</sup>) And let him who is taught in the Word share all good things with him who teaches. <sup>7</sup>) Be not deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that will he also reap. <sup>8</sup>) For he who sows to his flesh will out of the flesh reap corruption; but he who sows to the spirit will out of the spirit reap life everlasting. <sup>9</sup>) And let us not grow weary in well-doing, for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not. <sup>10</sup>) As we therefore have opportunity, let us do good to all men, but especially to those who are of the household of faith.

<sup>11</sup>) See with what large letters I am writing to you with my own hand. <sup>12</sup>) It is such as want to make a good showing in the flesh who are compelling you to be circumcised, and only in order that they might not suffer persecution for the cross of Christ. <sup>13</sup>) For actually those who accept circumcision do not do so to observe the law, but they want you to be circumcised that they may glory in your flesh. <sup>14</sup>) But as for me, God forbid that I should glory except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom the world is crucified to me, and I to the world. <sup>15</sup>) For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision is anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation. <sup>16</sup>) And as many as walk according to this rule, peace be upon them and mercy, yea, upon the Israel of God.

<sup>17</sup>) Henceforth let no one trouble me further, for I bear on my body the marks of Jesus.

<sup>18</sup>) The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, brethren. Amen.

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The above represents the revision of our Galatians translation. Since it was two years ago that the first installment of this translation appeared, it may be well to repeat at this time that our assignment was, not a completely new translation, but a translation “in the nature of a revision of the Authorized Version.”

This will also explain why some of the suggested changes were not incorporated in what is offered by us, though all suggestions received were given due and careful consideration by the committee.

For all the comments and help that came to us, orally as well as in writing, we wish to express our deep appreciation. It is our hope that this translation represents at least in a measure what was intended by the Synod and that it might find a profitable use among us.

Wisconsin Synod Committee on Bible Translation