

# The General Electric Power Company Series

## Galatians | Ephesians | Philippians | Colossians

### Lesson #1 – Galatians 1

#### Main Idea

This is the first lesson in our GEPC series, where we'll start in Galatians. Along with Romans, the book of Galatians was instrumental in bringing about the Protestant Reformation. As a matter of fact, Galatians was actually Martin Luther's favorite book as reflected in his words, *The Epistle to the Galatians is my epistle. To it I am as it were in wedlock*. Galatians is an extremely important book because it identifies who we are in Christ and identifies the role to which we have been called. Christianity is not just a "me too" or "I think I'll do that" religion. Christianity is to be lived by those who have been called and can only be lived by those who are called.

In Galatians we read that false teachers (called Judaizers) were troubling the Christians in Galatia. They were insisting that the Gentile Christians had to be circumcised and abide by the ceremonial Jewish laws in order to be saved. The false teachers communicated that faith in Jesus alone was not enough to save the Gentile Christians. They must add their own works of the law to be saved. This false teaching of the Judaizers threatened the true gospel of salvation by God's grace alone through faith alone in Jesus. Paul wrote the epistle of Galatians to clearly communicate the message of the true gospel: **we are justified by grace through faith alone without works of the law.**

#### Outline for the Book of Galatians

- Greetings & Introduction. Galatians 1:1-10
- Part 1: Paul defended his apostolic ministry of the pure gospel. Galatians 1:11-2:21
- Part 2: Paul defended the gospel of justification and salvation by grace and faith alone. Galatians 3:1-4:31
- Part 3: Paul defended the freedom Christians have to love others and live by the Spirit. Galatians 5:1-6:10
- Concluding Summation. Galatians 6:11-18

#### Questions for Consideration

1. How does Paul identify himself in verse 1? Why might it have been important for him to do this, especially with regards to comments in verse 10 (i.e., the issue of being called)?
2. Apparently, the church in Galatia had been exposed to other forms of the Gospel.
  - a. Considering the tension in the church between the Jews and Gentiles at the time of the writing of this letter, what might have Paul been addressing?
  - b. What other "gospels" have crept in to influence cultures around the globe since the time of Christ?
3. What do Paul's words in verses 15-17 say about our own personal development?
4. How have you grown spiritually in looking back at 2024? What would your spouse or close friends say?
  - a. Your knowledge of God's Word – what have you learned that you did not know in 2023?
  - b. Have you impacted others to know Christ more deeply? Have you led anyone to (or closer to) Christ?
  - c. When things don't go your way, how do you respond?
  - d. Do you have any sins that you committed to the Lord, but with which you are continuing to struggle?
  - e. Have you deepened any relationships or developed any new relationships that did not exist in 2023?

**Homework:** Read Galatians Chapter 2. Why is it so important that we avoid legalism (and anything closely resembling it) in the church? What is the difference between legalism and setting high standards for yourself?



## Galatians 1 (New International Version, ©2010)

<sup>1</sup> Paul, an apostle—sent 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 brothers and sisters<sup>[a]</sup> with me,

To the churches in Galatia:

<sup>3</sup> Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, <sup>4</sup> who gave himself for our sins to rescue us from the present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father, <sup>5</sup> to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

### **No Other Gospel**

<sup>6</sup> I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting the one who called you to live in the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel— <sup>7</sup> which is really no gospel at all. Evidently some people are throwing you into confusion and are trying to pervert the gospel of Christ. <sup>8</sup> But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach a gospel other than the one we preached to you, let them be under God's curse! <sup>9</sup> As we have already said, so now I say again: If anybody is preaching to you a gospel other than what you accepted, let them be under God's curse!

<sup>10</sup> Am I now trying to win the approval of human beings, or of God? Or am I trying to please people? If I were still trying to please people, I would not be a servant of Christ.

### **Paul Called by God**

<sup>11</sup> I want you to know, brothers and sisters, that the gospel I preached is not of human origin. <sup>12</sup> I did not receive it from any man, nor was I taught it; rather, I received it by revelation from Jesus Christ.

<sup>13</sup> For you have heard of my previous way of life in Judaism, how intensely I persecuted the church of God and tried to destroy it. <sup>14</sup> I was advancing in Judaism beyond many of my own age among my people and was extremely zealous for the traditions of my fathers. <sup>15</sup> But when God, who set me apart from my mother's womb and called me by his grace, was pleased <sup>16</sup> to reveal his Son in me so that I might preach him among the Gentiles, my immediate response was not to consult any human being. <sup>17</sup> I did not go up to Jerusalem to see those who were apostles before I was, but I went into Arabia. Later I returned to Damascus.

<sup>18</sup> Then after three years, I went up to Jerusalem to get acquainted with Cephas<sup>[b]</sup> and stayed with him fifteen days. <sup>19</sup> I saw none of the other apostles—only James, the Lord's brother. <sup>20</sup> I assure you before God that what I am writing you is no lie.

<sup>21</sup> Then I went to Syria and Cilicia. <sup>22</sup> I was personally unknown to the churches of Judea that are in Christ. <sup>23</sup> They only heard the report: "The man who formerly persecuted us is now preaching the faith he once tried to destroy." <sup>24</sup> And they praised God because of me.

### **Footnotes:**

- a. [Galatians 1:2](#) The Greek word for *brothers and sisters* (*adelphoi*) refers here to believers, both men and women, as part of God's family; also in verse 11; and in 3:15; 4:12, 28, 31; 5:11, 13; 6:1, 18.
- b. [Galatians 1:18](#) That is, Peter.

