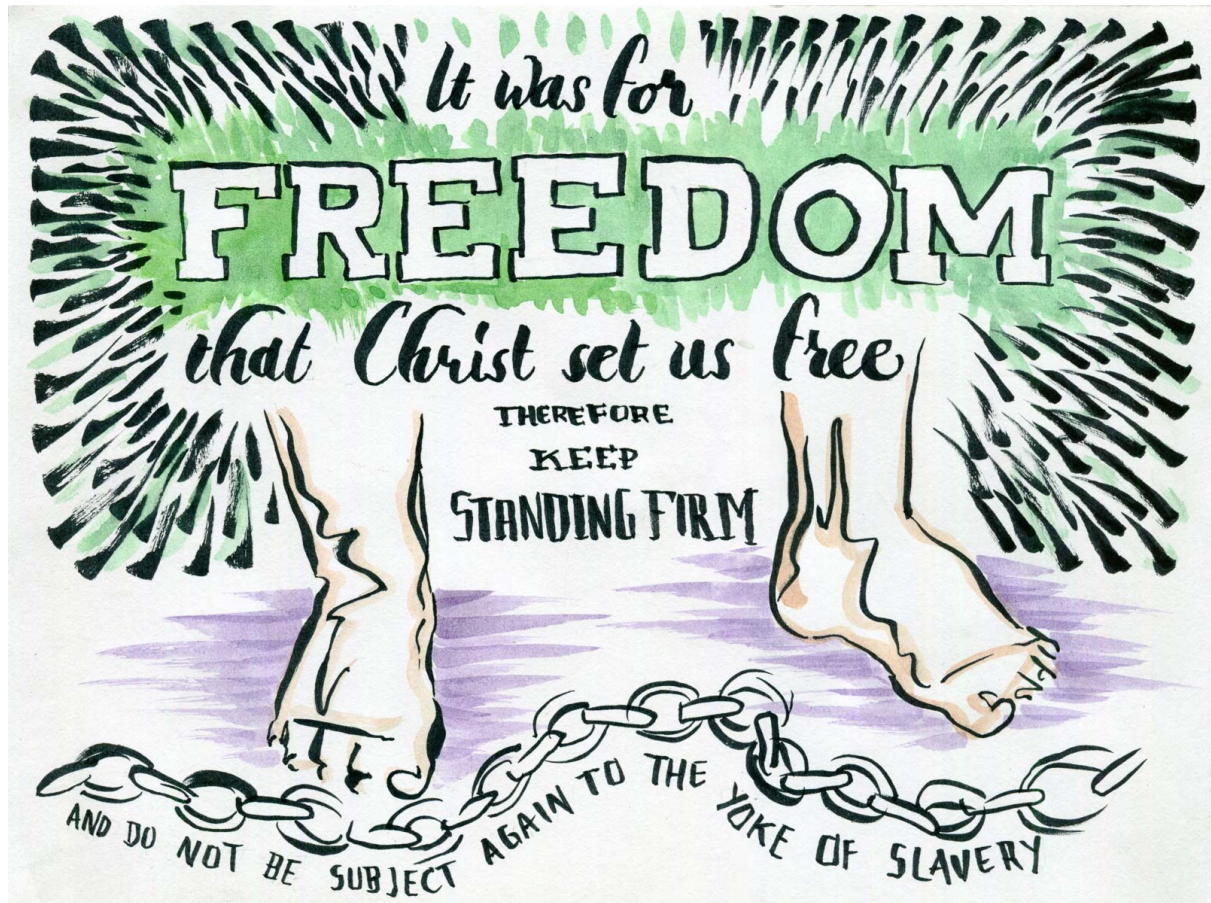


Paul's Letter to the Galatians



St. John's West Brunswick
(2026)

Session One: Galatians 1:1–24

* What key ideas or passages come to mind as you think of Galatians?

Initial Greetings (1:1–5)

1. Paul typically begins his letters with words of praise and thanksgiving. Why might they not be present in this letter?

2. What is the contrast that Paul uses to identify himself in v.1, and what significance might that have for how we are to read this letter?

3. What do you understand by grace and peace (v.3). How are these two words related to Paul's gospel of salvation?

4. Some see the crucifixion of Jesus as no more than the tragic end to a promising career. What do we learn about the death of Christ from 1:4–5?

Paul's Rebuke (1:6–10)

5. Paul attributes the problem to a group of troublemakers within the churches. What were they doing and why was it so damaging?

6. How does Paul react and why is his response so strong? Can you think of similar situations in today's church?

7. Paul insists here that there is only one gospel and that this gospel does not change. What is the gospel according to Paul?

Paul's Story (1:11–24)

8. In the face of those who present a 'different gospel' (v.6), Paul now turns to defend the validity of his own ministry. What does Paul claim about his message, and how does he support his claim?

9. What reasons do people give nowadays to question Paul's authority? How would you respond?

Session Two: Galatians 3:1–14

Evidence from Experience (3:1–5)

1. What are the Galatians doing which leads Paul to call them 'foolish' (v.1)?
2. What does he remind the Galatians of in regard to their conversion, and what implication does that have for how they are to understand the role of the law of Moses?
3. What else is Paul arguing here?

Evidence from Abraham (3:6–9)

4. How did Abraham become righteous (vv.6, 9)?
5. What did God outline to Abraham? How is this of significance to us today?

Evidence from Scripture (3:10–14)

6. Paul now expands on the two alternatives he discussed in 2:16. Why are those who 'rely on works of the law' (3:10) in trouble?
7. Galatians 3:10 quotes Deuteronomy 27:26. How does this provide evidence that a person cannot be righteous through the OT law? How then is it possible for anyone to escape the curse of 3:10 and 13 and enjoy the blessing of 3:14?
8. Why does this does not happen automatically. What then do we have to do?

Session Three: Galatians 4:1–31

Brought by Christ into Sonship (4:1–7)

1. How does Paul characterise humanity's condition under the law? How does this work out in practice?
2. In what sense did God send his Son 'at the right time'? Why was he sent? In what ways was Jesus uniquely qualified to do the task set for him?
3. Those in Christ have a new status through faith in him. What further blessing does the sending of the Spirit bring?

The Temptation to Return (4:8–11)

4. What is the difference between knowing God and being known by God (vv.8-9)? Why are both important?
5. What was the basic mistake made by the Galatians? What practical steps can we take to avoid falling into the same trap?

Two Kinds of Teachers (4:12–20)

6. What does he mean in v.12?
7. The Galatians once received Paul as they would have received Christ Jesus himself (v.14). Why had their attitude changed and what can we learn from this?
8. What do we learn about Paul's attitude to, and goal for, the Galatians in vv.19-20? How was this different to that of the false teachers?

Two Kinds of Lives (4:21–31)

9. In Paul's analogy, what do Hagar and Sarah stand for? How is this relevant today?
10. 'Now you, brothers and sisters, like Isaac, are children of promise' (v.28). What two implications for the Christian community does Paul draw from this?

Session Four: Galatians 5:1–26

Where This Teaching Will Lead (5:1–6)

1. What might be some ways in which we might fall from freedom back into slavery (v.1)?

2. Using this passage, how would you answer someone who said that Paul's emphasis on faith in Christ means that we are free to live as we please?

Where These Teachers Are Headed (5:7–12)

3. What marks of false teaching does Paul outline in this passage? Why is it so difficult to keep preaching the truth?

4. Paul's attitude to the false teachers (v.12) sounds harsh. Why might he have said this? How important is it today to address false teaching in the church?

How to Live in True Freedom (5:13–26)

5. How does v.13 relate back to v.1?

6. Maintaining Christian freedom involves us in constant conflict between the 'flesh' and the 'Spirit'. What does Paul mean by these two words?

7. What strikes you most about the list in vv.19-21? What part of the fruit of the Spirit do you find hardest (vv.22-23)?

8. What does it mean to crucify the flesh (v.24) and to walk by the Spirit (v.25). What do these two phrases mean in practice?

Session Five: Galatians 6:1–18

The Way of the Spirit (6:1–5)

1. 5:26 seems to be a hinge verse, rounding off chapter 5 but also leading into chapter 6. How does 5:26 shed any light on Paul's warnings in 6:1-5? What leads Christians to treat each other wrongly?
2. How do you explain the connection between the instruction to 'carry each other's burdens' (v.2) and 'each one should carry their own load' (v.5)?
3. Verse 1 is an example of a burden being borne. What guidelines does Paul give? How can we apply these today?

Why We Should Live by the Spirit (6:6–10)

4. Paul's final few instructions are linked by the common theme that we reap what we sow. How is v.6 is relevant for us?
5. What does it mean to 'sow to [please] their flesh'? In what ways can we 'sow to [please] the Spirit'?
6. In what areas do you find yourself growing 'weary in doing good' (v.9)? What does Paul say to encourage us?

Defined by the Cross (6:11–18)

7. What does Paul mean by 'the world has been crucified to me and I to the world' (v.14)?
8. Paul opposes those who concentrate on outward show at the expense of what really matters—'a new creation' (v.15). What point is he trying to make?

* Looking back over this letter, what major lessons stick in your mind?