

The Epistle of Paul to the Galatians

An Urgent Corrective

Galatians 1:1-5

1. Paul's **Necessity** for Writing

A. The Problem was **Potent** (cf.6-7)

The problem that Paul is writing to address and to correct has to do with the purity of the gospel. A group of false teachers had apparently come to the churches shortly after Paul's departure and began teaching that the commands of the Law must be obeyed in order to attain or maintain a righteous standing with God.

B. The Problem was **Personal** (Gal. 4:13-19; cf. Acts 14:1ff; Rom 16:18-21)

The letter to the Galatians is most likely addressed to a group of churches in the southern part of the Roman province of Galatia. These are churches that Paul and Barnabas planted during his first missionary journey.

C. The Problem was **Perennial** (Gal. 1:6-10; 2:1-7, 11-21; cf. Acts 15)

Though Galatians was written less than 20 years after Jesus had ascended into heaven, the false teaching that Paul combats in this book had already been an ongoing problem that had to be continually dealt with.

2. Paul's **Authority** for Writing (v.1)

The authority that Paul has for writing this letter to the Galatians is that he is an apostle of Jesus Christ. Beginning in v.10 Paul will describe and defend his ministry as an apostle, but he opens the letter by stating that he is an apostle who was chosen and sent directly by Jesus Christ.

3. Paul's **Priority** in Writing (vs.3-5)

As long as the true gospel was preached, Paul was willing to endure mistreatment and scorn from those who were preaching the gospel (Phil. 1:12-18). The problem in these churches was that the attacks were primarily upon the gospel and secondarily an attack upon his own apostleship and authority. Paul ends his greeting with a benediction of blessing upon the churches as well as a summary statement of God's purpose and work in salvation.