Galatians 1: No Other Gospel

June 26, 2026

Galatians · Chapter One · A Grace Reading

No Other Gospel

Paul opens this letter with alarm, not thanks — because the Galatians were trading pure grace for a mixture of law and grace. This reading follows a grace-centred lens, framed by what students of the letter broadly agree on.

Main focus: Grace as the gospel · unmerited favour
↓ start with the one key idea
The hinge of the chapter

The one line everything turns on

● Core insight
Paul says the Galatians were called “in the grace of Christ” (v.6). So when they turn to a “different gospel,” what they are leaving is grace itself — which means grace is the true gospel.

The point is straightforward: people today sometimes treat grace as if it were the dangerous, “different” gospel. Galatians 1 says the opposite. Grace is the original message Paul preached; the counterfeit is anything that adds law back into it. Get that backwards and you’ve misread the whole letter.

What actually went wrong in Galatia

Not open sin — a mixture

The churches weren’t drifting into paganism. Teachers had arrived telling Gentile believers that faith in Jesus was good, but not enough — they also had to keep the law of Moses and be circumcised to be acceptable to God. Tap to compare the two messages.

Attack 01 · his authority

“Paul is a second-hand apostle.”

If his message was just a watered-down version handed to him by others, it could be overruled. Paul answers: my calling came straight from Christ.

Attack 02 · his gospel

“Grace isn’t enough.”

Add law to faith, they said. Paul answers: that isn’t a fuller gospel — it’s a different one, and a different gospel is no gospel.

The main focus

Eight keys to Galatians 1

Eight things this chapter draws out. Together they form a grace reading of why Paul was so fierce — and so freeing.

Read it for yourself

Verse by verse, through grace

Each block pairs a plain-English paraphrase with a grace note. Tap to expand.

11 units · Galatians 1:1–24
The argument from geography

Paul’s travelling path is his evidence

In verses 15–24 Paul traces where he went after meeting Christ. The route is the point: he had almost no contact with the Jerusalem apostles — so his gospel of grace could not have been borrowed from them. Tap a stop on the path.

Words that carry the weight

Six terms to unlock the chapter

The agreed, uncontested meanings behind Paul’s key words. Tap a term.

The one idea to keep

Grace is not a watered-down gospel and not a loophole. It is the person of Jesus and His finished work — and the God behind it is a good, happy Father. So don’t begin in grace and drift back to law. Continue in the grace that called you.

Framing facts reflect points broadly agreed among readers of the letter (e.g. Lightfoot, Guzik, Hansen): Pauline authorship, the Judaizer crisis, the missing thanksgiving, and the defence of Paul’s God-given apostleship and gospel of grace. Scripture is paraphrased, not quoted.

Galatians 1 · No Other Gospel · a grace reading for slow study

'+k.h+'

'+k.p+'

'+k.ref+''; keysEl.appendChild(el); }); var verses = [{r:"1:1\u20132", t:"Who's writing, and to whom", k:"Authority", para:"From Paul \u2014 an apostle commissioned not by any human committee but directly by Jesus Christ and God the Father, who raised him from the dead \u2014 and from all the believers with me, to the churches of Galatia.", note:"Paul's authority is God-given, not man-given. That matters because what's at stake isn't his reputation \u2014 it's the gospel of grace itself, which he's about to defend."}, {r:"1:3\u20135", t:"Grace, peace, and a rescue already done", k:"The gospel in miniature", para:"Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ \u2014 who gave himself for our sins to rescue us out of this present evil age, exactly as God willed. Glory to him forever.", note:"**Grace note:** the greeting is the whole gospel in one breath \u2014 grace (unmerited favor), peace, and a rescue Christ already finished. Grace here is the person of Jesus and His finished work, not something we add to."}, {r:"1:6\u20137", t:"Astonished at how fast they're drifting", k:"Grace is the true gospel", para:"I'm stunned that you're so quickly abandoning the One who called you by grace, swapping it for a 'different gospel' \u2014 which isn't really another gospel at all, just a distortion pushed by people unsettling you.", note:"**Grace note:** they were called \u201Cin the grace of Christ,\u201D so to leave for a different gospel is to leave grace. The law-grace mixture (\u201CGalatianism\u201D) is the counterfeit; grace is the original, true gospel."}, {r:"1:8\u20139", t:"The double curse", k:"Guarding pure grace", para:"Even if we \u2014 or an angel out of heaven \u2014 were to preach a gospel other than the one we gave you, let that messenger be cursed. I said it, and I'll say it again: anyone preaching a different gospel, let him be cursed.", note:"The curse

guards the purity of grace; even an angel adding law to it is anathema. **Grace note:** preach the pure gospel of grace, and be doubly blessed."}, {r:"1:10", t:"Whose approval is he chasing?", k:"Pleasing God, not men", para:"So \u2014 am I now angling for human approval, or for God's? If pleasing people were still my aim, I wouldn't be a servant of Christ.", note:"**Grace note:** pleasing people means preaching law, because law gives man a role and glory. Grace gives God the glory. A bondservant of Christ preaches grace."}, {r:"1:11\u201312", t:"Not man's gospel", k:"Revealed, not relayed", para:"I want you to be clear: the gospel I preached isn't a human invention. No one handed it to me and no one taught it \u2014 it came through a revelation of Jesus Christ.", note:"The gospel of grace came by revelation, not by committee \u2014 so no human authority can revise it or add requirements to it."}, {r:"1:13\u201314", t:"His violent past", k:"The unlikeliest grace-preacher", para:"You've heard what I was: I persecuted God's church with fury and tried to destroy it, outpacing my peers in zeal for my ancestral traditions.", note:"The former zealous law-keeper is the last man who would casually invent a grace gospel. His turnaround is only explainable by grace breaking in."}, {r:"1:15\u201316", t:"Set apart before birth", k:"Pure unmerited favor", para:"But God, who set me apart before I was born and called me by sheer grace, was pleased to reveal his Son in me so I'd preach him among the Gentiles. Right away, I didn't consult anyone.", note:"**Grace note:** God called Paul \u201Cby his grace\u201D before Paul had done anything to earn it \u2014 in fact while he was still the church's enemy. That's unmerited favor."}, {r:"1:16\u201317", t:"Into Arabia, not up to Jerusalem", k:"No human sign-off", para:"I didn't run to the apostles in Jerusalem for approval. Instead I went off into Arabia, and later returned to Damascus.", note:"The grace gospel needed no human clearance. \u201CArabia\u201D here is the Nabatean region near Damascus \u2014 the point is simply that Paul did not go to Jerusalem to be authorized."}, {r:"1:18\u201320", t:"Fifteen days with Peter", k:"Too brief to be 'taught'", para:"It was three years before I even went up to Jerusalem to get to know Peter, and I stayed just fifteen days. The only other apostle I saw was James. I swear before God I'm not lying.", note:"A two-week visit, sworn under oath, is far too short to have been trained in a gospel. It confirms the message came from Christ, not from the Jerusalem leaders."}, {r:"1:21\u201324", t:"Known only by the change", k:"Grace on display", para:"Then I traveled into Syria and Cilicia. The churches of Judea had never even met me \u2014 they only kept hearing, 'The man who used to persecute

us is now preaching the faith he tried to destroy.' And they praised God because of me.", note:"The transformation itself preached the gospel. People glorified God over a persecutor turned preacher \u2014 grace visible in a changed life."}]; var vEl=document.getElementById('verses'); verses.forEach(function(v){ var el=document.createElement('div'); el.className='v'; el.innerHTML= ''+ '
'+ '
'+v.k+'
'+ '
'+v.para+'
'+ '
'+v.note+'
'+ '
'; var head=el.querySelector('.v-head'), body=el.querySelector('.v-body'), plus=el.querySelector('.v-plus'); head.addEventListener('click',function(){ var open=el.classList.contains('open'); if(open){ el.classList.remove('open'); body.style.maxHeight=null; plus.textContent='+'; head.setAttribute('aria-expanded','false'); } else { el.classList.add('open'); body.style.maxHeight=body.scrollHeight+'px'; plus.textContent='\u2013'; head.setAttribute('aria-expanded','true'); } }); vEl.appendChild(el); }); var mode='both'; document.getElementById('vx-toggle').addEventListener('click',function(e){ var b=e.target.closest('button'); if(!b) return; this.querySelectorAll('button').forEach(function(x){x.classList.remove('active');}); b.classList.add('active'); mode=b.dataset.m; vEl.querySelectorAll('.v').forEach(function(v){ var note=v.querySelector('.note'); note.style.display=(mode==='para')?'none':'block'; if(v.classList.contains('open')){ var body=v.querySelector('.v-body'); body.style.maxHeight=body.scrollHeight+'px'; } }); }); var stops = [{n:"01", nm:"Damascus road", ref:"Acts 9 · Gal 1:15–16", d:"The risen Christ confronts Paul mid-journey. In a moment the persecutor is called and commissioned. This encounter — not a syllabus — is the source of the grace gospel he preaches."}, {n:"02", nm:"Arabia", ref:"Gal 1:17", d:"Paul withdraws into Arabia (probably Nabatea). Acts never mentions it; we get no details. The silence is the message — he sought no human teacher during the most formative stretch."},

{n:"03", nm:"Back to Damascus", ref:"Gal 1:17 · Acts 9:23–25", d:"He returns and preaches so boldly that he has to be lowered over the city wall in a basket to escape. Still no trip to Jerusalem for approval."}, {n:"04", nm:"Jerusalem", ref:"Gal 1:18–20", d:"Only after three years, and only for fifteen days, meeting just Peter and James. Long enough to get acquainted; far too short to be trained. Paul seals it with an oath."}, {n:"05", nm:"Syria & Cilicia", ref:"Gal 1:21–24", d:"He moves on, still a stranger to the Judean churches by sight. They know him only by the astonishing report — and they glorify God for it."}]; var stopsEl=document.getElementById('stops'); var detail=document.getElementById('stop-detail'); var dotsEl=document.getElementById('route-dots'); var xs=[60,210,360,510,660]; stops.forEach(function(s,idx){ var cx=xs[idx]; var g=document.createElementNS('http://www.w3.org/2000/svg','g'); g.innerHTML=''+ ' '+s.n+''; dotsEl.appendChild(g); var btn=document.createElement('button'); btn.className='stop'; btn.dataset.i=idx; btn.innerHTML=' STOP '+s.n+' '+s.nm+' '; btn.addEventListener('click',function(){ selectStop(idx); }); stopsEl.appendChild(btn); }); function selectStop(idx){ var s=stops[idx]; stopsEl.querySelectorAll('.stop').forEach(function(b){ b.classList.toggle('active', +b.dataset.i===idx); }); dotsEl.querySelectorAll('circle').forEach(function(c){ var on=(+c.dataset.i===idx); c.setAttribute('fill', on?'#8A6014':'#231D17'); c.setAttribute('r', on?'12':'9'); }); detail.innerHTML=' '+s.ref+'

'+s.nm+'

'+s.d+'

'; } selectStop(0); var terms = [{term:"grace", greek:"charis", k:"v.3, 6, 15", def:"Unmerited favor \u2014 a gift you could never earn. Paul even swaps the customary Greek letter-greeting (charein) for charis, so the hello itself preaches grace. The whole chapter rests here."}, {term:"gospel", greek:"euangelion", k:"v.6\u20139, 11", def:"\u201CGood news\u201D \u2014 an announcement of something already accomplished. There is only one true announcement about Christ; rivals that add requirements aren't fuller gospels, just counterfeits."},

{term:"different / another", greek:"heteron vs allo", k:"v.6\u20137", def:"Paul says they're turning to a heteron (different-kind) gospel, then adds it's not even allo (another of the same kind) \u2014 his way of saying the law-mixture is no real gospel at all."}, {term:"accursed", greek:"anathema", k:"v.8\u2139", def:"The strongest curse-word available: devoted to destruction. By aiming it even at himself or an angel, Paul makes the gospel of grace untouchable by any authority."}, {term:"revelation", greek:"apokalypsis", k:"v.12", def:"An \u201Cunveiling\u201D \u2014 truth disclosed directly by God rather than relayed by people. It's Paul's claim to a first-hand grace gospel that no one can edit."}, {term:"Judaizers", greek:"the agitators", k:"v.7", def:"The teachers \u201Ctroubling\u201D the churches by mixing law into grace \u2014 urging Gentile believers to be circumcised and keep Moses' law to be accepted by God."}]; var chipsEl=document.getElementById('chips'), gloss=document.getElementById('gloss-panel'); terms.forEach(function(t,i){ var c=document.createElement('button'); c.className='chip'; c.dataset.i=i; c.textContent=t.term; c.addEventListener('click',function(){ selectTerm(i); }); chipsEl.appendChild(c); }); function selectTerm(i){ var t=terms[i]; chipsEl.querySelectorAll('.chip').forEach(function(b){ b.classList.toggle('active', +b.dataset.i===i); }); gloss.innerHTML='
'+t.k+'

'+t.term+' \u00B7 '+t.greek+'

'+t.def+'

'; } selectTerm(0); })();