

THE BOOK OF

Galatians

BIBLE STUDY GUIDES FOR SMALL GROUPS

RELATIONAL BIBLE STUDY SERIES

CREATED BY STEVE CASE

Straight from God

OPENING QUESTION

Who do you trust for information and experiences about God?

READ Galatians 1:1–24.

1. What authority does Paul have to write this letter to the Galatians?

- A. God told Paul to write it.
- B. Paul is an apostle.
- C. He received the endorsement of the Jerusalem leaders.
- D. His Damascus Road experience.
- E. Paul had a lot of pen pals.
- F. He started the Christian Churches in Galatia.
- G. The need to stop heresy.
- H. Paul received his religious input directly from God.
- I. Other.

2. “Grace and peace to you from God the Father and Jesus Christ” means:

- A. It’s like saying, “Happy Sabbath,” or “God bless.”
- B. This was the code used to identify yourself as a follower of Jesus.
- C. “Grace” is the NT key word, and “Peace” is the OT key word.
- D. Paul makes sure that Jesus gets put in the same category as God.
- E. It’s important to identify the source of grace and peace.
- F. Apostles have the power to pass these along.
- G. Jesus is just a conduit for God the Father.
- H. These are supernatural gifts from God that Paul highly values.
- I. Other.

3. Why does Paul get agitated about new Gospel interpretations (vs. 6-g)?

- A. He had ego issues.
- B. There’s only one true Gospel.
- C. It wasn’t exactly the same thing Paul had taught.
- D. It was the opposite of what Paul had taught.
- E. It put religious practice higher than religious belief.
- F. It put religious belief higher than religious practice.
- G. It wasn’t based on Jesus.
- H. He was conservative, and this “new Gospel” was liberal.
- I. Other.

4. What is the Gospel?

- A. Jesus.
- B. Any “good news” (Greek: *euangelion*).
- C. Jesus died for your sins.
- D. Jesus provides power to live a godly life.
- E. Jesus will return.
- F. Eternal life is in Jesus.
- G. God loves you.
- H. Any message from God.
- I. Other.

5. To what extent are your beliefs and practices affected by your past?

- A. To a large extent I have continued in the way I’ve been reared.
- B. I had to leave my early upbringing in order to find Jesus for myself.
- C. It’s been a journey with a variety of changes.
- D. Each generation must find God for itself.
- E. We build on the shoulders of those who went before us.
- F. I’m an Adventist because I grew up as an Adventist.
- G. My background provided a foundation; I’ve built on that.
- H. I hardly ever think about it.
- I. Other.

6. How committed are you to your religion?

- A. I’m more “spiritual” than “religious.”
- B. Deep down, I’m very committed.
- C. I can’t imagine myself being anything else.
- D. I’m very involved in the life of the church.
- E. Each religion has its problems, but this is the best I’ve found.
- F. I find that I need to make periodic commitments to keep it alive.
- G. You could say that I’m a “cultural Adventist.”
- H. Other.

7. Over your lifetime, how has your understanding of the Gospel changed?

8. How do you determine which version of the Gospel to believe?

Are You Okay?

OPENING QUESTION

How can you tell that someone is an Adventist?

READ Galatians 2:1–21.

1. What is the Gospel to the Gentiles (vs. 2) vs. the Gospel to the Jews?

- A. There's no difference.
- B. Gentiles don't need to be circumcised.
- C. For Jews, Jesus is the Messiah.
- D. For Gentiles, Jesus is the Savior.
- E. Gentiles have no hang ups about the Jewish system and culture.
- F. Jesus fulfills everything in Judaism for the Jews.
- G. The Gospel is the same, but it needs cultural context.
- H. Gentiles appreciate a loving God; Jews want a powerful God.
- I. Other.

2. What would have happened if the evangelistic teams were paired as: Paul and Peter; Barnabas and John; Titus and James?

- A. It would be no different.
- B. It wouldn't work—mixing Gentile evangelists with Jewish evangelists.
- C. There's no way of knowing since it didn't happen that way.
- D. Such teams would have a Jewish emphasis or a Gentile emphasis.
- E. The New Testament writings would be different.
- F. God would have sent more revelations.
- G. That would be like teaming a non-SDA with an SDA.
- H. Other.

3. What do you do differently when people from your church are around?

- A. Nothing.
- B. Nothing that I'm aware of.
- C. Everything.
- D. Some things; but they aren't really important.
- E. I'm on my best behavior.
- F. I talk differently.
- G. I eat or drink differently.
- H. It just feels different.
- I. Other.

4. What are some of your blind spots with fellow believers?

- A. I don't have any blind spots.
- B. How would I know?
- C. It's easy for me to talk "Adventese."
- D. Expecting fellow believers to think the same way I do.
- E. Sometimes I refer to "us" and "them."
- F. A feeling of being God's special people.
- G. Being confident that we have "the truth."
- H. A sense that we need to convert non-Adventists into Adventists.
- I. Other.

5. What does it mean to "die to the law" (vs. 19)?

- A. Give up on trying to perfectly follow every item in the law.
- B. Crucify the drive to earn salvation by obedience.
- C. Give up on trying to obey God.
- D. Replace obedience to the law with Christ's forgiveness.
- E. Change my focus from law to Christ.
- F. Copy Jesus rather than the written codes of conduct.
- G. Keep the law as a guide but not as a means of salvation.
- H. Other.

6. Why does Paul sound so opposed to the law?

- A. Paul has his own issues.
- B. Some people rely on the law instead of relying on Christ.
- C. Those promoting the law wormed their way into churches.
- D. Paul really wasn't opposed to the law; that's just how some read it.
- E. This was an issue only in the province of Galatia.
- F. The law hasn't saved anyone; but Jesus does.
- G. The law gives an external illusion of clarity, control, and limits.
- H. Other.

7. Do you sense that you are called to share Jesus with the "circumcised" or with the "uncircumcised" (or both)?

8. Paraphrase or explain *verse 20*:

How Faith Really Works

OPENING QUESTION

Share a time you were **not** treated the way you deserved to be treated.

READ Galatians 3:1–29.

1. When did you receive the Spirit into your life?

- A. No specific time or event, but I'm sure the Spirit is in my life.
- B. There was a specific moment when this happened.
- C. The day I got baptized.
- D. I'm not certain that I have received the Spirit.
- E. Each time I experience a spiritual revival.
- F. Must have been before I noticed some "fruits of the Spirit" in my life.
- G. From my birth (*Luke 1:15*).
- H. When I was "born again" (*John 3:5-6*).
- I. Other.

2. What is "our part" in the relationship we have with God?

- A. Just believe.
- B. Just trust.
- C. Just obey.
- D. Fight against our sinful nature.
- E. I don't know; this has been a struggle for me.
- F. Serve others.
- G. Spend time with God so the relationship thrives.
- H. Change/Replace bad habits with good habits.
- I. Other.

3. Are you a child of Abraham?

- A. Yes.
- B. No.
- C. Ishmael or Isaac?
- D. By faith I am.
- E. Through baptism I have become a child of Abraham.
- F. I'm a recipient of the promises given to Abraham.
- G. I'm a child of God.
- H. Father Abraham had many sons, and many sons had...
- I. Other.

4. Why did God give the law to his people?

- A. Give them guidance.
- B. Set expectations for the relationship he wanted with them.
- C. Reveal their need for a Savior—Jesus.
- D. Provide details about how far short we come compared to the ideal.
- E. Show how powerful sin is.
- F. Set the bar impossibly high, except for Jesus.
- G. Serve as a guardian until Christ came.
- H. I've wondered this many times myself.
- I. Other.

5. Do you follow God's law?

- A. Yes.
- B. No.
- C. I try to.
- D. I try really, really hard to.
- E. Sort of.
- F. The motive is more important than the actions.
- G. Actions speak louder than words.
- H. Other.

6. Where have you found it doesn't matter who you are (Jew/Gentile, slave/free, male/female, old/young, ethnicity, etc.)—you are "one in Christ"?

- A. I haven't found this to be my reality anywhere.
- B. At my church.
- C. In my house.
- D. At the Christian school.
- E. At my place of work.
- F. On a short-term mission trip.
- G. I don't think I'll truly experience this until heaven.
- H. When I get pulled over by a police officer.
- I. Other.

7. What do you see is the relationship between faith and law?

8. How does one "clothe" one's self with Christ (vs. 27)?

Whose Child is This?

OPENING QUESTION

What's one thing you've inherited by genetics? By your environment?

READ Galatians 4:1–31.

1. When do you inherit what God has for you?

- A. When I accept Jesus as my Savior.
- B. When Christ died for me.
- C. At Christ's Second Coming.
- D. When the Holy Spirit enters my life.
- E. I have it now, but I tend to forget that.
- F. Currently I have only a down payment; the rest comes later.
- G. I'm not even sure what the inheritance includes.
- H. Inherited by faith or by sight?
- I. Other.

2. What makes God your *Abba* (Daddy, vs. 6)?

- A. I must be born into God's family.
- B. I must be adopted into God's family.
- C. Intimacy.
- D. When my relationship with God is personal.
- E. It seems like I have to release my parents' version of God.
- F. I have to be able to speak Aramaic (*Abba*).
- G. This came to me in a whole new way once I became a parent.
- H. God doesn't seem like an *Abba* to me.
- I. Other.

3. What do you do that God likes?

- A. Everything.
- B. Nothing.
- C. I make financial contributions.
- D. Serve others.
- E. Help at church and/or school.
- F. Spend time with God.
- G. Obey.
- H. Forgive others quickly and abundantly.
- I. Other.

4. What angst do you have for young people’s relationship with God?

- A. They can be so immature.
- B. They just don’t get it.
- C. Young people today aren’t enough like me.
- D. Young people today are too much like me.
- E. I can’t always be there to guide or protect them.
- F. They have to find God for themselves.
- G. I understand my own parents’ angst better now.
- H. Young people today seem to have it together better than I did.
- I. Other.

5. In which ways are you persecuted (vs. 29)?

- A. Oh, nobody knows the trouble I’ve seen . . .
- B. People tease me.
- C. My life mirrors 2 *Corinthians* 11:23-28.
- D. I had a hang nail once, and it really, really hurt.
- E. Church politics.
- F. I’ve experienced financial and professional setbacks for Christ.
- G. I’ve been called names (like “conservative” or “liberal”).
- H. Other.

6. Which metaphors about God’s covenants resonate with you?

- A. Old and New.
- B. Hagar and Sarah.
- C. Obedience and Faith.
- D. Slave and Free.
- E. Stone and Flesh.
- F. Law and Grace.
- G. External and Internal.
- H. Other.

7. Are you “free from the law”? Explain.

8. Put an “X” where you are on the continuum below:

I am a child of the:

**SLAVE
WOMAN**

**FREE
WOMAN**

The Look of Freedom

OPENING QUESTION

Do you prefer a posted speed limit or the concept to drive a safe speed?

READ Galatians 5:1–26.

1. From what has Christ set you free?

- A. My past.
- B. A constant battle between good and evil.
- C. A life focused on do's and don'ts.
- D. Everyone else's expectations for me.
- E. Perfectionism.
- F. Being dominated by church culture.
- G. Being dominated by my sinful nature.
- H. Obedience to the law.
- I. Other.

2. What “yoke of slavery” could easily wrap its arms around you?

- A. The relatively good reputation I've earned.
- B. Limiting my religious life to things I'm able to manage well.
- C. Legalism.
- D. Doing my own thing because I'm now free from the law.
- E. Circumcision.
- F. Shaping my life to fit the expectations of religious people.
- G. Doing more things for God rather than simply being with God.
- H. Following the 10 commandments more than following Christ.
- I. Other.

3. What's the difference: “Living by the law” or “living by the Spirit”?

- A. It's just a matter of semantics.
- B. The law is in stone and the Spirit is in the heart.
- C. The law spells things out; with the Spirit it's sort of nebulous.
- D. Mind versus heart (thoughts versus feelings).
- E. Source of motivation.
- F. “Thou shalt not” versus “Thou shalt.”
- G. Clear lines of demarcation versus multiple applications of principles.
- H. Following traditions compared to finding new ways to live for Christ.
- I. Other.

4. What is God's call to live in freedom?

- A. Live in America.
- B. Not think or worry about obeying God.
- C. Release obedience to God's rules in order to live by the Spirit.
- D. Be able to sing at the end of your life: "I Did It My Way."
- E. Not be dominated by my sinful nature.
- F. No longer living by all of the codes previously established.
- G. Focus on doing good rather than focusing on not doing bad.
- H. Other.

5. How would you sum up the whole law?

- A. Yuck!
- B. Thank you, Lord.
- C. The 10 commandments.
- D. The Sermon on the Mount.
- E. Everything God has said.
- F. Do justly, love mercy, walk humbly with God.
- G. Love your neighbor as yourself.
- H. Love God and love others.
- I. Other.

6. How much conflict do you have between your sinful nature and the Spirit's desires within you?

- A. None.
- B. It's perpetual.
- C. I struggled more with this in the past than I do now.
- D. The sinful nature is a bigger issue for adolescents.
- E. Only when I think about it.
- F. Sometimes one wins, and at other times the other one wins.
- G. I can't always tell which one is which.
- H. Other.

7. What desires has the Spirit put within you?

8. How will you follow the Holy Spirit's leading in every part of your life?

Boomerang

OPENING QUESTION

Agree or disagree: “What goes around, comes around.” Give an example.

READ Galatians 6:1–18.

1. What are the most common sins within the church?

- A. We don't have visible sins in my church.
- B. Hypocrisy.
- C. Pride.
- D. Sexual sin.
- E. Gossip.
- F. Selfishness (ego-centrism).
- G. Looking good on Sabbath, but not on other days of the week.
- H. Comparing ourselves with others.
- I. Other.

2. What's a good way to “bear each other's burdens” (vs. 2)?

- A. Donate financial assistance.
- B. Provide a listening ear.
- C. Stand up for another person and fight for them if necessary.
- D. It's usually not worth it.
- E. Consistently work out with weights at a health club.
- F. Whatever you do, do it gently and with humility.
- G. Pray for people who definitely need it.
- H. Build teamwork.
- I. Other.

3. What have you sown so far?

- A. A mixed bag of good and bad.
- B. I've given a lot of myself at work.
- C. spurts of major investment in family; followed by coasting.
- D. Financial investments.
- E. Spiritual growth through intentional discipleship.
- F. Personal relationship development.
- G. Physical fitness and a healthy lifestyle.
- H. My own bag of “wild oats.”
- I. Other.

4. What have you reaped so far?

- A. Not much.
- B. I'm expecting a pretty big payout in heaven.
- C. More than I've sown.
- D. An incredible spouse and family.
- E. Not what I expected.
- F. More friends than I can handle.
- G. If things don't change I'm going to feel ripped off.
- H. I feel stuck where I've sown because that's the only place I can reap.
- I. I'm waiting for more growth before making a final assessment.
- J. Other.

5. What competes with you "glorying only in the cross of Christ" (vs. 14)?

- A. Nothing.
- B. Everything.
- C. Work.
- D. Family.
- E. Sports.
- F. Me.
- G. My accomplishments.
- H. My reputation.
- I. Other.

6. How does "the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all" happen (vs. 18)?

- A. It just does.
- B. It's all up to God.
- C. It happens individually.
- D. It happens collectively.
- E. You have to ask for it.
- F. Saying it repeatedly.
- G. It's there, but it might not be appropriated.
- H. Other.

7. What sin are you most susceptible to? What person could help you?

8. When do you take action on the "opportunity to do good" (vs. 10)?

