

The Book of Galatians

12

Morning Devotions

Read a Scripture passage of your choice. Talk with the Lord as you read his Word. When you are finished, go back and select one or two verses which you believe God is using to speak to you and meditate thoughtfully and prayerfully on what he is saying.

Morning Study

This morning we begin reading the book of Galatians. Let's first acquaint ourselves with the background of the people to whom Paul is writing this letter.

Galatia proper, the strip of country to the north of Asia Minor, was peopled largely by Celts from Gaul. But under the Roman Empire, it became a province stretching south to include portions of Lyconia, Pisidia and Phrygia. Many of the population of the province were of Grecian origin. In a more degraded position, were the Phrygians. The large population of Jews in the region indicates that it was on a trade route and favorable for traffic, and so closely connected with the spread of the Gospel. The Galatians had little religion of their own and easily adopted the mythology of the Greeks.

Read Acts 16:6; 18:23

Paul preached the Gospel in Galatia, but soon after he left, some of the Judaizing party from Jerusalem came. The Judaizers were Jewish Christians who were set on spreading a Judaisitic form of Christianity (read [Acts 15:1-35](#)). Part of their motivation may have been a desire to avoid the persecution of Zealot Jews who objected to their fraternizing with Gentiles (see [Galatians 6:12](#)). They declared that Paul was not really an apostle and that, desiring to make the Gospel more appealing to the Gentiles, he had removed from the message the legal requirements as given by God to Moses. Their representatives travelled everywhere in the wake of Paul, undermining his work. They believed and taught the necessity of circumcision and the keeping of the Mosaic Law for spiritual life and maturity. Paul's purpose in writing to the Galatians was to refute this teaching, which the Galatians had received whole-heartedly (note [Galatians 1:6-7](#)).

With this background, now read Paul's letter right through in one sitting. As you read, look for the keynote of Paul's message to them – and to us today!

MEMORY VERSE

I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

Galatians 2:20

Here are a few suggestions that may help you to memorize your memory verse:

- ➡ Ask the Lord to help you remember his Word (see [John 14:26](#)).
- ➡ Use the version of the Bible you are most familiar with. What you normally read in your Bible is what you need to be memorizing.
- ➡ Don't just memorize the contents of the verse; memorize its "address" (the verse reference) as well. You can do this by following this pattern: Step 1: **reference**; Step 2: **verse content**; Step 3: **reference**. Then repeat steps 1-3. Note that you are quoting the reference twice as many times as you quote the actual verse content. This gives the verse a clear "reference tag."
- ➡ After you have read your memory verse out aloud several times, try going through your memory verse *without* reading your computer screen.
- ➡ Look up your memory verse in your Bible. Look at its immediate context and read the verses that come before and after your memory verse.
- ➡ Print out your memory verse or jot it down on a piece of paper. Take this paper with you when you go to work or do other daily activities. Meditate on the meaning of the verse throughout the day.
- ➡ During your noon appointment with the Lord, take out your memory verse and go over it again. Talk to the Lord about what this verse means to you personally.
- ➡ In the evening (at either your evening study or your evening devotions), see if you can quote your memory verse from memory. Then, without looking at the memory verse itself, see if you can find it in your Bible.
- ➡ The next day, before you begin committing a new verse to memory, rehearse your previous day's memory verse and see if you can remember it (without cheating!).
- ➡ Finally, at the end of the week (possibly on the Sunday), collect all your week's memory verses, rehearse them and see if you can recall them without reading them. Spend a little extra time on any verses you have difficulty recalling.
- ➡ Remember: Don't just memorize a verse. Put it into practice ([James 1:22](#)). It is not being able to quote a verse from memory that counts. It is His Word *abiding* in your heart that counts ([John 15:7](#)). When you actually apply a verse consistently to your daily life, that is when you *truly* know that verse!