

GALATIANS

1:12-24 | STUDY GUIDE

Credentials

GALATIANS 1:12, "For I did not receive it from any man, nor was I taught it, but I received it through a revelation of Jesus Christ." (ESV)

- Paul's authority comes from one source
- This is a cornerstone of Paul's ministry

GALATIANS 1:13, "For you have heard of my former life in Judaism, how I persecuted the church of God violently and tried to destroy it." (ESV)

- Judaism = way of life developed in Intertestamental period
 - Derived from "Judah"
 - Intertestamental = between Old and New Testament
 - 400-year stretch after the prophet Malachi up to John the Baptist
 - Tumultuous changes in leadership, foreign nations taking over Israel (oppression), resulted in a scattering
- Paul was "zealous" for God
 - Like many Jews, he simply did not recognize after so long a period of exile and oppression, that the Savior had come
 - Furthermore, the more zealous the Jew, the more they would have resisted the evil they saw so prevalent in the Roman Empire (with good reason) and it would have looked heretical to incorporate Gentiles
- "Former life of Judaism" does not make Paul anti-Jewish
 - In fact, to declare someone to be the Messiah or pronounce that the resurrection has come only made sense within the context of ancient Messianic prophecy

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GALATIANS 1:15, "But when he who had set me apart before I was born, and who called me by his grace, was pleased to reveal his Son to me, in order that I might preach him among the Gentiles, I did not immediately consult with anyone..." (ESV)

- Paul's radical conversion is unique in that:
 - He is called to the Gentiles
 - Paul was an outstanding Pharisee—in many ways it might have seemed logical to preach to the Jews
 - He avoids seeking the approval of man
 - Instead of immediately going to the elders or early church leaders, he waits three years before ever meeting Peter and even then only spends about two weeks with him

GALATIANS 1:20, "(In what I am writing to you, before God, I do not lie!)" (ESV)

- Parenthetical clause
 - This is an oath
 - Galatians is a different sort of letter

GALATIANS 1:22, "And I was still unknown in person to the churches of Judea that are in Christ." (ESV)

- We don't typically think of Paul as "unknown"
 - As a Pharisee, he was making a name for himself
 - As a Christian, he draws all attention to God
- Paul establishes—before everything else—that his commission was from God and not the apostles or any human emissary

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES: N.T. Wright, Galatians, Matthew Pawlak, Sarcasm in Paul's Letters, Archeological Study Bible