

Galatians

I. Comparison of Galatians and Romans

- A. Galatians and Romans cover similar themes
 - 1. The theme of justification by faith, citing Genesis 15:6
 - 2. The non-applicability of Jewish law to salvation
 - 3. The struggle between flesh and spirit
 - 4. The need to walk in the Spirit

- B. Differences between the two books
 - 1. Obviously, the length, and therefore the greater development of ideas in Romans
 - 2. Galatians was written to Paul's own converts, while Romans was written to a church which Paul had never visited
 - 3. Galatians is far more emotional, as if written in a stressful situation
 - 4. Romans is the most impersonal and unemotional of Paul's epistles
 - 5. Galatians was concerned about Judaizers ("false brethren"), while Romans is concerned about attitudes between Jewish and Gentile brethren
 - 6. In Galatians, Paul defends the legitimacy of his apostleship; in Romans, he does not seem to feel the need to do so.

II. Galatians

- A. Galatians was probably the earliest of Paul's letters
After first missionary journey, prior to Jerusalem Council (Acts 14:26—15:2)
 - Paul had established these churches during his first missionary journey
 - Since there is no mention of the Jerusalem decree, it must not have yet been given

- B. Background:
Right after Paul and Barnabas had established the Galatian churches, Judaizers had followed them around and tried to undermine Paul's version of the Gospel, and Paul's own credentials as an apostle. They were influencing Paul's converts to adopt Jewish ceremonial laws (circumcision, festivals, etc.), which means, in effect, to become proselytes to Judaism.

- C. Paul's response:
Defense of his apostleship
Defense of his rejection of Jewish law
Denouncing Judaizers as a danger to the church

- D. Structure of the book
 - 1. Autobiographical (chs.1-2)
 - 2. Theological (chs.3-4)
 - 3. Practical, instructional (chs.5-6)