

The New Inductive Study Series

FREE FROM BONDAGE GOD'S WAY

by Kay Arthur

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Notes

FREE FROM BONDAGE GOD'S WAY

- We're listening to the messages of others, but we're not learning the Bible.
- We can quote truth, but we really can't explain it...and we're having trouble living it out.
- We're ready to state our theological position, but we can't defend it by reasoning from the whole counsel of the Word of God.

Many are being led astray by every wind of doctrine and cunning craftiness of men (Ephesians 4:14).

We live in a time when many who proclaim Christ don't hunger and thirst for sound doctrine. Instead they love to have their ears tickled. They want to hear some new revelation, some new insight—something different. Something that appeals to their senses and their desires.

“Capture my attention with a good story.” “Don't go too deep. I've had to think all day.” “Show me how this will meet my needs...solve my problems...give me a quick fix without too much commitment on my part.”

“What I want is a solution. And I need it now!” What is the problem?

Mankind is in bondage. Some people are in bondage to Satan, and thus to self and sin. Others are in bondage, held captive by the enemy's lies, because they don't know truth. Still others are in

bondage to the law or to a legalistic style of Christianity that snuffs the life and joy out of their walk with the Lord Jesus Christ.

What—*who*—can set us free? That, Beloved, is what this study of Galatians and Ephesians is all about. “It was for freedom that Christ set us free” (Galatians 5:1). Therefore, no child of God is to live in bondage. Jesus came to set the captive free. Freedom comes from knowing truth. Truth is a person—Jesus is the way, the truth and the life (John 14:6). And His word is truth. Thus, Jesus prayed, “Sanctify them in the truth; Your word is truth” (John 17:17).

This, my friend, is also my prayer for you as you begin this study of Galatians and Ephesians. I pray that you will know, through the Word of truth, the freedom that is yours in Christ Jesus—and that by faith you will walk in that freedom.

Week 1

Saved by Grace but in Bondage to the Law?

DAY ONE

In this first week you will discover the purpose of this epistle (letter) to the Galatians. Asking pertinent questions will help you pinpoint its purpose. Who wrote Galatians? Why was it written? To whom was it written? And what is so important about the book of Galatians? Why did God want this epistle to be part of the Word of God?

When you answer these last questions, you will see why you need to understand the message of Galatians and live accordingly.

This study is going to be wonderfully freeing! When you study a book of the Bible, it is always best to first read it straight through without stopping. In doing this, you gain a sense of the entire message of the book, which provides you with a good overview. If you have time today, read through Galatians but do not mark anything. Then return to the first chapter and simply complete today’s assignment.

Read Galatians 1:1-10 and color every reference to the recipients of this letter in one color. Watch for and mark the pronouns *you* or *us* as they refer to the recipients of Galatians. Marking references to the recipients allows you to go back later and note from each what you learn about them. This exercise will help you see the author’s purpose for writing this much-needed epistle. You will see then that Christians today deal with the same problems the Galatians had.

In your notebook, begin a list of what you learn from marking these references to the recipients. As you finish each day’s assignment, look back at any references to the recipients you have marked. Read them carefully; add what you learn about those who received this letter to the list in your notebook. At the end of the week, you will be amazed at all you have learned about these people!

As you read 1:1-10, also mark the word *grace* in one distinctive way and the word *gospel* in another. These two key words will help unlock the purpose and meaning of the book of Galatians.

Today and this week, also watch for answers to the following questions:

- a. **Who** wrote Galatians?
- b. **To whom** was Galatians written?
- c. **Why** was Galatians written? **What** is its purpose?

Record the answers in your notebook. Then transfer them to the GALATIANS AT A GLANCE chart (page 44). You will continue to add information to this chart as we work our way through the book. This information will then always be at your fingertips!

DAY TWO

Read Galatians 1:11–2:21. Continue to mark the words *grace* and *gospel*, but also add to these the word *Law*. I mark the word *Law* like this Law , because it reminds me of the Ten Commandments written on stone tablets.

At this point you may want to start your bookmark mentioned in the section “How to Get Started.”

Also don’t forget to mark the references to the recipients and to add to your list what you learn about them from simply observing the text.

DAY THREE

Today read Galatians 3. At this point add another key word, *Spirit*, and continue marking all the key words. Remember, I color references to the Holy Spirit yellow and put a diagram like this around it.

Don’t forget to add *Spirit* to your bookmark. Add any insights on the recipients to your list. Remember, your goal is to discover what you can about Galatians and to understand why this epistle was written.

DAY FOUR

On this fourth day, read Galatians 4. If the following key words are used, mark them: *grace*, *gospel*, *Law*, and *Spirit*.

As you read and mark, think about what you are reading and marking. The Bible is God’s handbook for life. God wants to speak to your heart, and He will—if you will listen.

DAY FIVE

Read Galatians 5 today and mark any key words. Don't forget to mark the references to the recipients and to add what you learn about them to your list.

DAY SIX

Read Galatians 6 today and once again mark the references to the recipients and the key words on your list. When you finish, go through the book of Galatians and notice every time you have marked the word *gospel*. In your notebook, make a list of what you learn from Galatians about the gospel.

DAY SEVEN

Store in your heart: Galatians 1:8. Read and discuss: Galatians 1:1-10 and what you marked with respect to the Galatians. Go over the lists you made about the recipients and about the gospel.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION OR INDIVIDUAL STUDY

- Who wrote the epistle to the Galatians?
- What do you learn about the Galatians? What were they dealing with? What had happened to them? As you give your answer, support it from the text of Galatians. Tell where you got your insight.
- Do you know any people who are having to deal with the same issues that the Galatians faced?
- The title of this study book on Galatians and Ephesians is *Free from Bondage God's Way*. Do you sense that the Galatians were under any sort of bondage? If so, what was it? Can you relate in any way?
- What did you learn about the gospel from marking every reference to it in the book of Galatians?
- From the book of Galatians, what do you see as your own responsibility with respect to the gospel?

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK

When we seek to put people under a legalistic set of rules such as “do not handle, do not taste, do not touch” (Colossians 2:21), are we distorting the gospel of Jesus Christ? Do such rules put people under a form of bondage that keeps them from understanding and walking in the grace of God?

Is it by the law that someone gains favor in the sight of God? Is it by the law that someone maintains his Christian testimony? Is it by the power of the law that a child of God controls the desires of his flesh?

These, Beloved, are questions you need to think about. You need God's answers to these questions because I'm sure you don't want to distort God's gospel in any way.

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