



MESSAGE

STUDY GUIDE

GROUP MATERIAL

SONGS

# God's Disruptive Invasion, Christ's Radical Rescue

Bible Reading: Galatians 1:1-5; 6:12-15, 18

[Watch LIVESTREAM here at 10am](#)

[Join our post-sermon discussion on Zoom at 11am](#)

[Join our citKids Connect discussion at 11am](#)

## Galatians' Back-story

### Paul's Opponents—Rival 'Influencers,' 'Agitators' (Gal. 1:7; 5:10; 6:12-13)

- A. Promoting Circumcision for (male) Gentile Christians (Gal. 6:12)
- B. Jesus as an 'add-on, topping up' the old order—the Jewish Law-keeping lifestyle
  1. "Paul responds...furiously to a [law-keeping 'gospel'] where...Christ is merely an add-on to the Sinai...covenant [of Moses], so that Christ 'tops up,' rather than displaces the saving function of the [Law]." —Michael Bird

### Paul's Letter-Introductions & Endings Hint at Tone & Themes (Gal. 1:1-5)

- A. Paul's 'matter-of-fact' Tone (Gal. 1:1-2)
- B. Introduction—Hints of Major Themes (Gal. 1:1-5)
- C. Paul's 'masterful, 'striking' Letter-Ending (Gal. 6:11-18)

## Christ's Redemptive Death to Rescue us from the 'Present Evil Age' (Gal. 1:4)

- A. Christ "gave himself for our sins to rescue us from this present evil age, according to the will of our God & Father."  
(Gal. 1:4)
- B. Redemption—Christ "gave himself for our sins" (Gal. 1:4a)
- C. 'Rescue from the Present Evil Age'—Key to the whole letter
1. Commentators say this statement... 'strikes the keynote of the epistle' (Lightfoot)
  2. 'strikes the first chord in a theme that reappears... throughout the letter' (Dunn)
  3. 'serves as one of the topic sentences for the whole... letter' (Martyn)
  4. 'signals a central theme of the entire letter' (Schreiner)
  5. 'anticipates the argument of the letter' (Moo)
  6. 'highlights a[n]... important theme in the letter' (Longenecker)."
- D. C. A Decisive Cosmic Shift—launching new age/new creation (Gal. 6:15)
- E. D. Living in the Overlap of the Ages (1 Cor. 10:11; Gal. 1:4)
1. "God's raising Jesus... was the launching... of the 'age to come'—with the result that 'the present [evil] age' & 'the age to come' were now continuing in an uneasy & uncomfortable parallel"—N. T. Wright
  2. "Paul believed the present [evil] age & the future age co-existed... [Believers] live... 'between the times,'... [in] the overlap of the present & future ages." —John Bertone
- F. E. Rescue—Deliverance from the Present Evil Age (Gal. 1:4b)
1. Not Rescued to 'go to Heaven' Hymn: "He died that we might be forgiven, he died to make us good; that we might go at last to Heaven, saved by his precious blood.'
  2. Delivered from Sin's Power & Cosmic Powers
- G. F. The Christ Event—God's 'Invasion' of His Creation
1. The 'hinge-point'
  1. "Paul & his readers stand at the... hinge point where the old age & the new age have met." —Richard Hays
  2. God's 'Invasion'
  3. 'Invasion' in the context of Cosmic Warfare
  1. "Galatians [details] an invasion of the future into the present... [Via] resurrection... God does for Jesus in the middle of history precisely what Jews thought he'd do for Israel at the end of history." —Michael Bird
- H. G. God's Disruptive Invasion—"A Fundamental Break" at "the Fullness of Time" (Gal. 4:4)
1. "A new dispensation in history has been inaugurated & this new age... [is] a fundamental break with all that has gone before" —Graham Stanton
  2. Paul: "If you get circumcised... you're... joining the family of Abraham as it was in the pre-Messianic age."—N. T. Wright

## V. Christ's Cross & New Creation (Gal. 6:12-15)

- A. "Jesus' death & resurrection permeates... [changes everything] Paul says... 'The world has been crucified to me through the cross, & I to the world.' For Paul [this is]... the solution to [the Galatians'] problem; so he writes, 'both circumcision & uncircumcision mean nothing; what matters... is a new creation.'"—Todd Still