

What were you thinking? ...

Paul's letter to the

Galatians

Study Series prepared by Graeme Offer

Foreword

The book of Galatians is somewhat unique in all of the letters of the New Testament. It is not one of Paul's letters that is *hard to understand* (1 Pet 3:15-16), and it is the **only** letter in the New Testament written to a **specific group** of churches. Not only that, but Paul is quite confrontational in his approach to them.

Throughout the studies, I have mostly quoted from the New International Version (NIV), and have attributed the quotations accordingly. Occasionally, I have used the New King James Version (NKJV) and sometimes used a word or two from the King James Version (KJV) where that version (in my opinion) better describes the point the author is trying to get across. On occasions where quotations appear that are not referenced, they are my paraphrase of what the verse says, and may or may not bear similarity to recognized translations.

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My usual teaching style is to hand out the outline for each lesson at the start of the lesson. I will often discuss last week's homework, or the background / introduction section as a way of getting the class "into gear" whilst I am handing out the notes at the start. The questions on the outline are designed to help us come to a grasp of the main issues that Paul wants the readers to understand, and to form an outline of the class. They are not designed to identify the micro-issues, although the class discussion may get into some of these. I hand out the notes at the end of the class. They are designed to answer all of the questions that were raised in the outline sheet – often in more detail than what was covered in the class. I almost never hand out the notes at the start of the class, and I have found that where I have done that it always results in people reading what is on the page and feeding that back during the class without really thinking about or sometimes even comprehending what is there. The notes also serve the very useful purposes of allowing those who may miss one of the classes to *catch up*, as well as providing a review of the material covered for those who were present.

I **always** set homework, and that includes a few thought provoking questions that goes beyond the things that we have covered in the class.

My prayer is that those who use this material will find it exciting, edifying, encouraging, and relevant to our present situation as together we consider Jesus, God's Messiah, and His relevance to our walk with God and our daily struggles to live the christian life.

Graeme Offer

Yorkeys Knob, Queensland, Australia.

goffer@netspace.net.au

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