



The end of Ephesians, continuing on to Galatians 1:1-8 on Papyrus 46(recto; c. AD 200)<sup>[1]</sup>  
When was Galatians written?

*“The original of the letter (autograph) is not known to survive. Papyrus 46, the earliest reasonably complete version available to scholars today, dates to approximately AD 200, around 150 years after the original was drafted. Biblical scholars agree that Galatians is a true example of Paul’s writing. The main arguments in favor of the authenticity of Galatians include its style and themes, which are common to the core letters of the Pauline corpus. George S. Duncan described its authenticity as “unquestioned. In every line it betrays its origin as a genuine letter of Paul. A majority of scholars agree that Galatians was written between the late 40s and early 50s, although some date the original composition to c. 50-60.”—Wikipedia*

There seems to be no doubt, even among skeptics, that the apostle Paul wrote the letter to the Galatians, so it had to have been written within his lifetime. On the other hand, critics and skeptics have claimed that events in the gospels are legends that gradually developed over

many decades, and are unreliable, and not inspired by God.

#### HOW GALATIANS FITS NEW TESTAMENT TIMETABLE

According to the scriptures, there was approximately a 17 year period between Saul's (Paul's) conversion and his second trip to Jerusalem. The often used execution date of Jesus of 33 CE does not allow for this 17 year time period.

30 CE, spring — **“The Messiah”**, Jesus, **“cut off”** in death (**Daniel 9:25; Matthew 27:50; Mark 15:37; Luke 23:46; John 19:30**).

circa 31-32 CE — Murder of Stephen (**Acts 7**)

circa 32 CE — Conversion of Saul, who later became the apostle Paul (**Acts 9:1-18**). Saul (Paul) spends **“some time” “in Damascus”** (**Acts 9:22,23 NRSV**).

circa 32-35 CE — Saul (Paul) spends about **“three years”** in **“Arabia,”** returns **“to Damascus”**, then goes **“to Jerusalem . . . for fifteen days”**, then goes to **“Syria and Cilicia”** (**Galatians 1:17-21**).

circa 49 CE — **“After fourteen years,”** Paul goes **“to Jerusalem”** again (**Galatians 2:1**), for the important meeting with the **“apostles and elders”** about whether Christians are required to keep the Mosaic Law (**Acts 15:1-4 LSB**).

#### WHEN WAS GALATIANS WRITTEN?

Galatians therefore seems to have been written sometime after the meeting about Christian requirements, likely in the early 50's, based on what Paul writes in **Galatians 2:1-10**, such as, **“I presented to them the gospel that I preach to the Gentiles”**, and **“not even Titus, who was with me, although he was a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised”**, and referring to **“when they recognized the grace bestowed upon me,**

**James and Cephas and John, who were reputed to be pillars, gave me and Barnabus their right hands in partnership, that we should go to the Gentiles”**

**(NAB)**. These references appear to be in relation to Paul’s trip to Jerusalem in [Acts 15](#) in 49 CE.

## THE IMPORTANCE OF GALATIANS

Galatians is vitally important for a number of reasons, but there are some major ones:

1. **“God the Father . . . raised [Jesus Christ] from the dead . . . who gave himself for our sins that he might rescue us from the present evil age in accord with the will of our God and Father” (Galatians 1:1-4 NAB).**
2. **“God sent his Son . . . to ransom’ humans “under the power of sin” to “receive adoption” through “faith in Jesus Christ”, and that is what makes people “children of God”, not fleshly distinctions (Galatians 3:22-29; 4:4-7 NAB)**
3. Christians are not under the Mosaic **“Law”**, but **“fulfill the law of Christ” (Galatians 3:17; 6:2 NAB)**. For Christians, **“the whole law is fulfilled in one statement, namely, ‘You must love your neighbor as yourself” (Galatians 5:14 NAB).**
4. God’s favor has thus shifted from fleshly Israel, represented by **“the present Jerusalem”**, to **“the [Christian] Israel of God”**, which is under **“the Jerusalem above” (Galatians 4:25,26; 6:15,16 NAB).**
5. This **“gospel”** should not be **‘perverted’**, or changed **(Galatians 1:6-9 NAB).**

Thus, Galatians, written in the early 50’s, presents the resurrection of Christ and its results, including the Christian arrangement, as being already well established facts. The gospels were not viewed as unreliable legends, but as factual, historical, sacred truth that is part of what is called, **“All Scripture is inspired by God” (2 Timothy 3:1^0).**