

Galatians - Inductive Bible Study

1. **Step 1** - The first step of Inductive Bible Study is to begin with an unmarked Bible. Leave all helps and aids aside. You're going to see what the Word says for yourself. The key is observation. You need to look and look and look at the text (we have used the RSV translation).
2. **Step 2** - Pray and then read through the entire book in one sitting. Set aside enough time to read the book through without interruptions. Read it through rapidly without pausing to ponder; try and get the Big Picture. Read aloud.



Stop and do step 2

3. **Step 3** - Now read the book through again. What is the Big Idea (picture) of this book? Briefly sum up its message.



Stop and do step 3

4. **Step 4** - Read the text through again. This time, in order to get a handle on the book, we'll have to give each paragraph a title. What is a paragraph title? As a unit of thought a paragraph's main idea is important to grasp. A paragraph title helps the observer grasp the main thought of each paragraph. It is important to do this step well so that other observations take into consideration the paragraph's main thought. A paragraph title is three or four words or less that capture the point of the paragraph. The paragraph title must use the actual words of the Scripture text. This keeps you just doing observation. In other words, you can't use your own words; use only the words of the text. If possible use words in sequence.

1:1	_____
1:6	_____
1:10	_____
1:18	_____
2:1	_____
2:11	_____
3:1	_____
3:6	_____
3:10	_____
3:15	_____
3:19	_____
3:23	_____
4:1	_____
4:8	_____
4:12	_____
4:21	_____
*5:2	_____
5:13	_____
5:16	_____
5:25	_____
*6:6	_____
6:11	_____
6:17	_____
6:18	_____

*Notice that we have taken the liberty to change this paragraph group. The text has a paragraph for 4:21 and another paragraph for 5:1. We have combined them since this all has to do with the theme of freedom. We have done the same for 1:10 (leaving out the paragraph beginning 1:11) and also 6:6 and 6:7 (leaving out the paragraph beginning with 6:1 and 6:7). Remember paragraph divisions and chapter divisions are not inspired, but they were put in to help us. You can change them when you think a better arrangement is more logical.

If your Bible is not structured in paragraph form, but is written in columns, then the paragraphs are indicated by the paragraph numbers being in a bolder or larger print and the paragraph is indented.



Stop and fill in your Paragraph Titles

Here is an example of our Paragraph Titles for Titus:

- 1:1 Not from men
- 1:6 Pervert the gospel
- 1:10 Revelation
- 1:18 Not know by sight
- 2:1 Repute added nothing
- 2:11 Acted insincerely
- 3:1 Begun Spirit – ending flesh
- 3:6 Abraham who had faith
- 3:10 Cursed
- 3:15 Law: 430 years afterward
- 3:19 Why the law?
- 3:23 Law our custodian
- 4:1 No longer a slave
- 4:8 Slaves once more?
- 4:12 Again in travail?
- 4:21 Yoke of slavery
- 5:2 Fallen away from grace
- 5:13 Thorough love be servants
- 5:16 Flesh, spirit opposed
- 5:25 Live, walk, by spirit
- 6:6 Sows-reaps
- 6:11 Glory in the cross
- 6:17 Marks of Jesus
- 6:18 Brethren

Your Paragraph Titles should reflect the main thought of the paragraph. You don't have to have the exact titles that we have chosen, but they should catch the main idea of the paragraph. Read through your titles and see if they bring to mind the central thought of each paragraph.

5. **Step 5** - You have probably already guessed it! Read through the text again. This should be your fourth reading. In this reading look for compositional links and relationships between paragraphs. Which paragraphs would you group together and why? Where would you divide the book? How many subdivisions (sections) would you break your main division(s) into? As you think through how you would group your paragraphs together, use your Paragraph Titles on page 2 as a worksheet. Mark it up showing how you would group paragraphs together. Also decide what you would entitle the groupings that you have selected. For help refer to your Basics of Bible Study handout (Observation questions 9, 10, 16, 17 and Interpretation questions 4, 8, 18, 20, 21).



Stop and do step 5

Here is how we marked up our Paragraph Titles and grouped them together:

1:1	Not from men		Paul's Freedom
1:6	Pervert the gospel	How Paul received the Gospel	
1:10	Revelation		
1:18	Not know by sight	Meeting with the Apostles especially Cephas	
2:1	Repute added nothing		
2:11	Acted insincerely		
3:1	Begun Spirit – ending flesh	Series of questions	Basis of Freedom
3:6	Abraham who had faith		
3:10	Cursed	Abraham	
3:15	Law: 430 years afterward		
3:19	Why the law?	Why the Law?	
3:23	Law our custodian		
4:1	No longer a slave		
4:8	Slaves once more?	Slavery or Sonship?	
4:12	Again in travail?		
4:21	Yoke of slavery		
5:2	Fallen away from grace	Two warnings	Continuing in Freedom
5:13	Thorough love be servants		
5:16	Flesh, spirit opposed		
5:25	Live, walk, by spirit		
6:6	Sows-reaps	Out working of the Spirit	
6:11	Glory in the cross		
6:17	Marks of Jesus		
6:18	Brethren		

We divided the book at 3:1 and 5:2. This means that each division is about two chapters. Galatians is one of the easier books to divide because Paul is giving a logical argument in the letter.

Think of one verse that summarized the whole book. Write it here:



What title would you give the book of Titus? Write it here:



6. **Step 6 - The Horizontal Chart (*Overview & Big Picture Chart*)**. It is hard to do well in observation and interpretation without grasping the Big Picture, structure and framework of the book. As Leland Ryker in *The Bible as Literature* says, "Educational research has established that the biggest variable in a learner's ability to assimilate data is the presence or absence of a unifying framework within which to place individual parts."

Take the thinking you have done with your paragraph titles and turn it into what we call a rough Horizontal Chart. Here are some things to consider:

- a. List Divisions, Sections and Segments **OR** Divisions, Sections and Paragraph Titles.
- b. Make it proportional to the number of verses per paragraph or segments
- c. Include your Title and Key Verse



Stop and draw your Horizontal Chart

**See example of Galatians chart on next page.*

Galatians: Freedom

Key Verse 5:1

Paragraph Titles	Sections	Divisions	(Same breaks but four possible titles)		
1:1 Not from men	Source of Paul's Gospel	Strayed	Experiential Argument	Paul's Life	Paul's Freedom
6 Pervert the gospel					
10 Revelation					
18 Not known by sight (24)	Meetings with Apostles, especially Cephas	Straightened Out	Scriptural Argument	Abraham's Life	Basis of Freedom
2:1 Repute added nothing					
11 Acted insincerely (21)					
3:1 Begun spirit - ending flesh	?	Strayed	Experiential Argument	Paul's Life	Paul's Freedom
6 Abraham who had faith					
10 Cursed	Abraham	Straightened Out	Scriptural Argument	Abraham's Life	Basis of Freedom
15 Law: 430 years afterward					
19 Why the Law?	Why the Law?	Straightened Out	Scriptural Argument	Abraham's Life	Basis of Freedom
23 Law our custodian (29)					
4:1 No longer a slave	Slavery or Sonship?	Straightened Out	Scriptural Argument	Abraham's Life	Basis of Freedom
8 Slaves once more?					
12 Again in travail					
21 Yoke of slavery (31)					
5:2 Fallen away fro grace	Two Warnings	Staying on Course	Ethical Argument	Church's Life	Continuing in Freedom
13 Through love be servants					
16 Flesh, spirit opposed	Outworking of the Spirit	Staying on Course	Ethical Argument	Church's Life	Continuing in Freedom
25 Live walk: by spirit					
6:6 Sows-reap					
11 Glory in cross					
17 Marks of Jesus					
18 Brethren					

7. **Step 7 – The Vertical Chart.** Now that you’ve completed the Horizontal Chart you can begin to start on your Vertical Charts. You may want to just keep a rough Horizontal until you complete your Verticals in case you see any changes that you may want to make. A Vertical Chart is a blown up, detailed look at each small unit in the Horizontal Chart. The Horizontal is an overview of the book and a Vertical is a detailed look at each section (see Appendix for drawing up charts by hand).
- a. Look at your Horizontal Chart: How many Divisions do you have? Remember we divided the book at 3:1 and 5:2. Galatians has three main divisions, each of about two chapters in length. The first division at 3:1 coincided with a chapter break, but the second at 5:2 does not coincide with a chapter break. Begin to think in units of thought, not chapter breaks.
 - b. After the book was divided, each division was broken down into sections. Looking at your Horizontal Chart, how many Sections do you have in your first Division (1:1-2:21)? There are two Sections. One is from 1:1-17, entitled “Source of Paul’s Gospel.” The other is from 1:18-2:21, entitled “Meetings with the Apostles, especially Cephas.” In Galatians, you will have a Vertical Chart for every section. On your Horizontal Chart count up the number of sections in Galatians



Stop and count them. How many do you have?

Write your answer here:_____

**Did you count eight Sections? Since you have eight Sections, then you will have eight Vertical Charts. Notice that on your Horizontal Chart you have a column for Divisions, one for Sections, and another for Paragraph Titles. In determining the number of Vertical Charts for a book, you must look at the smallest breakdown of the book, excluding Paragraph Titles. The smallest breakdown in the book of Galatians is Sections, so the number of sections determines the number of Vertical Charts. In other books the smallest unit might be Divisions, whereas in larger books the paragraph column is replaced by a segment column and the number of Segments determines the number of Vertical Charts*

- c. In your first Section, 1:1-17, "The Source of Paul's Gospel," how many Paragraph Titles do you have? Write the number here:_____. There are three Paragraph Titles in the first section: 1:1-5, 6-9 and 10-17.

1:1-5	not from men
1:6-9	pervert the gospel
1:10-17	revelation

Now draw a rectangle on a blank sheet of paper. Center it in the middle of the page with ample space on each side. Draw it to scale – for example, if you are using graph paper and 3 sq. = 1 verse, then your rectangle will be 51 squares in length.



Stop and draw your rectangle for your Vertical Chart

Section off your rectangle, giving a proportionate space for each of the three paragraphs (1:1-5, 6-9, 10-17). The first paragraph has five verses, the second has four verses, and the third has eight verses. When you make it proportional then the first two blocks will be about the same size, but the third will be twice as big, since it has twice as many verses in its paragraph.

**See Example 1 – Please note that the quotation marks on the sample charts indicate directions - they are not to be included on your actual chart - they are just directions and explanations to help you in your chart-making process.*



Stop and draw your Vertical Chart

- d. Now write your verse reference number for each paragraph on your Vertical Chart. **See Example 2** for what yours should look like. Be sure and do your own work. Part of learning is writing it out no matter how simple it may seem!
- e. Now write your Paragraph Titles at the top of each paragraph section. You may want to write your Paragraph Titles in a different color and use another color to fill in your box. Or you may want to underline your Paragraph Titles. You can develop

your own color code system as you progress in your study. Be creative! Let the colors you use mean something. *See Example 3*



Stop and write your Paragraph Titles on your Vertical Chart

Now you are staring at this empty looking rectangle that is a Vertical Chart in the making. What next? Just take a minute and look at the chart and you can learn several things about Galatians. Read through the Paragraph Titles. Does the essence of the letter and its themes come to mind as you look over your titles?

- Can you remember points of Paul's argument from reading your Paragraph Titles?
- Can you see that the first and third paragraphs relate how and where Paul got his Gospel and sandwiched in between is the strong warning against a perversion of the Gospel.
- Just from the Paragraph Titles you can see that the first thing he mentions is that the Gospel is not from man.
- Paul jumps right into the main point of his letter. Did you notice that there is no thanksgiving, which is typical of Paul's letters? Why?
- Note the amount of space Paul gives to each topic. Twice as much is devoted to where he got his Gospel. There is even a contrast between Paul's Gospel and the Gospel discussed in 1:6-9.

- f. **Inside the Vertical Chart** - Ready to go on? Next you can begin to fill in your Vertical Chart. Everything within your Vertical Chart rectangle must be the **exact words** of the Scripture text. You are doing observation. Select several important phrases, lines or points from each paragraph that you want to include on your Vertical Chart. The goal is to select a few important things, not to write out the whole text of Scripture. Pay attention to sentence structure and it will help you see what the main points are in each paragraph. Observe lists and put them down in list fashion. Be careful to observe contrasts, repetitions, key words, summary statements and parallels. Before you write, you will want to read through the paragraph again and think about what you want to include. **Consider Observation questions in the Basics of Bible Study** **handout.**



Stop and fill in the *insides* of your Vertical Chart

*Do this **BEFORE** looking at **Example 4**. You learn better if you do the exercises yourself! Part of learning to make charts is writing and thinking through what to include. Remember that the example illustrations are not authoritative. They are just examples of how we have done Galatians.

- g. **Outside the Vertical Chart** – Now that you’ve filled in your Vertical Chart rectangle, you can now begin to add insights, interpretations and observations in the areas outside the Vertical Chart box. Remember inside the Vertical Chart rectangle you are to put only the words of the Scripture text. On the outside of the rectangles you can use your own words. Be creative and experiment with ways to illustrate your thoughts. Try and put your statements that are on the outsides of the rectangle parallel with the material on the insides. Analytical lists, summary statements or applications can be put on the bottom of the chart. Review your Basics of Bible Study handout and record your answers to some of these questions on the outsides of your Vertical Charts. Some questions will be more important than others. Record what you consider significant findings. Here are some suggestions as to what to include:
1. Key theme(s) in the book: for example you may trace the accusations leveled against Paul and Paul’s response to those accusations. The following are four main accusations made about Paul that can be traced through the letter (See Example Verticals):
 - a. Paul is not an Apostle
 - b. Paul has changed the Gospel
 - c. Paul is a man-pleaser
 - d. Paul’s teaching doesn’t lead to maturity
 2. Progression within the Vertical Chart. See BBS handout, Observation #16.
 3. Relate the contents of the Vertical Chart to the title that you gave the segment. For example, if you had a Vertical Chart entitled, “Miracles in Galilee” then you should list the miracles that occur in that Vertical Chart. You might also summarize the progression in the chart by stating that the religious leaders’ response to the miracles shows increasing hostility.
 4. Include elements of Structure and Composition. See your separate handout on this material. For example, Galatians is full of Contrasts: these should be included on your charts. See BBS handout, Interpretation #18
 5. Trace the author’s argument.

6. Interpret specific passages. Support your conclusions.
7. Form lists. There are various kinds of lists that can be included on the Vertical Chart. For example: Textual list – a list that is the text of the Scripture such as a list of all that Paul prays for a specific church in the opening of a letter. Other lists could include:
 - A listing of theological concepts
 - A listing of characters
 - A listing of events or places
 - A listing of key words, phrases or concepts
8. Record application of certain truths.

**Once again, the answers to the Observation and Interpretation questions in the BBS handout furnish the information for the outsides of your Vertical Chart.*



Stop and fill in the *outsides* of your Vertical Chart

**See Example 5 for a completed Vertical Chart*

CONGRATULATIONS! YOU HAVE JUST COMPLETED A VERTICAL CHART!

Now that you've completed your Vertical Chart for the first section of Galatians, you can complete the remaining seven Vertical Charts.

Here is a review of the steps:

1. Look at your Horizontal Chart.
2. What is the next section for which you will make a chart?
3. Section off your chart according to the number of paragraphs and make them proportional to the number of verses in each paragraph.
4. Write your reference numbers for each paragraph on your chart.
5. Put in your Paragraph Titles.
6. Fill in the insides of the Vertical Chart with two or three points using only the text of the Scripture.
7. Fill in around the outside of your Vertical Chart with insights.
8. Follow these steps for each remaining Vertical Chart.

THE FINISHED, POLISHED HORIZONTAL CHART

If you haven't drawn up your Horizontal Chart neatly, then now is the time to do that and when you've finished, you have completed your chart-making for the book of Galatians!

Appendix

Why Charts?

1. Charts are visual and quickly convey information.
2. Charts are concise – all the information is on one page for quick viewing.
3. Charts are a way to store information: Observations, Interpretations, Applications, Big Picture, etc.
4. Charts make a differentiation between observation and interpretation.
5. Charts teach one to think Big Picture before details.
6. It is a repeated system so the student knows what to do each time and the focus becomes the text of the Bible and the inductive approach.

How to Draw a Vertical Chart to Scale


1. Look at your Horizontal.
2. Determine the largest segment or section
3. Count the number of squares (lines) on your graph paper (or lined paper) from top to bottom.
4. Subtract some space at the top and bottom. This will give you the number of usable squares or lines.
5. Divide the number of usable squares (or lines) by the number of verses in your largest section. Round to the closest half:

For example: 45 usable squares or lines

22 verses (largest section in Philippians)

$45/22 = 2.045$ rounds to 2

Scale – 2 squares/verse

 *This will be your scale for all your Vertical Charts (you now have a visual of how sections vary in size). You can see how much space is devoted for various topics, events, people etc.*

6. Count the number of verses in each paragraph.
7. Multiply the number of verses in each paragraph by your scale:
For example: 12 verses (or lines) x 2 = 24. This shows that this paragraph will have 24 squares or lines
8. Center your chart in the middle of the page with space on both sides