

Free from
Bondage
God's
Way

KAY ARTHUR



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HOW TO GET STARTED...



Sometimes it's hard to read instructions. You simply want to get started, and only if all else fails will you read the directions. I understand, but in this case, don't do it! These instructions are part of getting started, and they will help you greatly.

FIRST

As you study the books of Galatians and Ephesians, you will need four things in addition to this book:

1. A Bible that you are willing to mark in. Marking is essential because it is an integral part of the learning process and will help you remember and retain what you learned. An ideal Bible for this purpose is *The New Inductive Study Bible (NISB)*. The *NISB*, available in the New American Standard Version, comes in a single-column text format with larger, easy-to-read type, and is ideal for marking. The page margins are wide and blank for note-taking.

The *NISB* is unique among all study Bibles in that it has instructions for studying each book of the Bible, but it does not contain any commentary on the text. The *NISB* isn't compiled from any particular theological stance since its purpose is to teach you how to discern truth for yourself through the inductive method of study. Inductive Bible study simply means that the Bible itself is the primary source for study. (The various charts and maps that you

will find in this study guide are taken from the *NISB*.) Whatever Bible you use, just know you will need to mark in it, which brings us to the second item you will need.

2. A fine-point, four-color ballpoint pen or various colored fine-point pens (such as Micron pens) for writing in your Bible. The Micron pens are best for this purpose. Office supply stores should have these.

3. Colored pencils or an eight-color Pentel pencil.

4. A composition notebook or loose-leaf notebook for working on your assignments and recording your insights.


SECOND

Though you will be given specific instructions for each day's study, there are basic things you'll want to look for and do as you study each book chapter by chapter. Let me list them for you. Read through the list but don't be overwhelmed. Eventually, each step will become a habit.

1. As you read each chapter, train yourself to ask the "5 W's and an H": who, what, when, where, why, and how. Asking questions like these helps you see exactly what the Word of God is saying. When you interrogate the text with the 5 W's and an H, ask questions like this:

- a. **What** is the chapter about?
- b. **Who** are the main characters?
- c. **When** does this event or teaching take place?
- d. **Where** does this happen?
- e. **Why** is this being done or said?
- f. **How** did it happen?


2. The "when" of events or teachings is very important and should be marked in an easily recognizable way in

your Bible. I do this by putting a clock (like the one shown here)  in the margin of my Bible beside the verse where the time phrase occurs. You may want to underline or color the references to time in one specific color.

Remember, time may be expressed in several different ways: by mentioning an actual year, month, or day, or by mentioning an event such as a feast, a year of a ruler's reign, etc. Time can also be indicated by words such as *then, when, afterward, at this time*, etc.



3. There are certain key words that you will want to mark in a special way in the text of your Bible. This is the purpose of the colored pencils and the colored pen. Developing the habit of marking your Bible in this way will make a significant difference in the way you study and in how much you remember.




A **key word** is an important word that is used by the author repeatedly in order to convey his message to his reader. Certain key words will show up throughout the book as a whole, while other key words will be concentrated in certain chapters or segments of the book. You will want to mark key words and their pronouns (*he, his, she, her, it, we, they, us, our, you, them, their*) as well as any synonyms in a distinguishable color or way.

For instance, one of the key words in Galatians is *gospel*. I put a hot-pink megaphone like this  *gospel* around the word *gospel* and then color it in with green. I use the megaphone because God tells us we are to proclaim the *gospel*.

You need to devise a color-coding system for key words so that when you look at a page of your Bible, you will instantly see where a particular word is used. When you start marking key words in various colors and symbols, it is easy to forget how you are marking certain words. You

may wish to use the bottom portion of the perforated card in the back of this book to write the key words on. Mark the words the way you plan to mark them in your Bible and then use the card as a bookmark.

Like *gospel*, *covenant* is also a key word in the study of Galatians. I mark the word *covenant* the same way throughout my Bible: I color it red and box it in yellow. I mark the word *grace* blue and box it in yellow. *Grace* will be a very important word in Galatians and Ephesians. And references to the devil and his cohorts can easily be seen in my Bible because I mark these with a red pitchfork . You will mark some references to the devil in Ephesians. Marking words for easy identification can be done by colors, symbols, or a combination of colors and symbols. However, colors are easier to distinguish than symbols. If I use symbols, I keep them very simple. For example, I color *repent* yellow but put a red arrow over it also: *repent* . The symbol conveys the meaning of repent: a change of mind.

When I mark the members of the Godhead (which I do not always mark), I color every reference to the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit in yellow. I also use a purple pen and mark the Father with a triangle , symbolizing the Trinity. I mark the Son this way , and the Holy Spirit this way .

When you are instructed to mark a key word, the word is the New American Standard translation of the word. However, if the King James Version (KJV), the New King James Version (NKJV), or New International Version (NIV) translates the word differently, the word used in those translations is given to you in a note.

4. Because locations are important in a historical or biographical book of the Bible and in the first two chapters of Galatians, you will also find it helpful to mark these in a

distinguishable way. I simply underline every reference to location in green (grass and trees are green!), using my four-color ballpoint pen.

I also look up the locations on maps so I can put myself into context geographically. You'll do this in the first two chapters of Galatians. (If you have a *New Inductive Study Bible*, you will find the pertinent maps placed right in the text where you need them as a ready reference.)

5. When you finish studying a chapter, record the main theme of that chapter on the AT A GLANCE chart provided for you under the appropriate chapter number. (If you have an *NISB*, you will want to record the chapter themes on the AT A GLANCE chart at the end of each book in your Bible. Then you will have a permanent record of your studies right at your fingertips.)

6. If you are doing this study within the framework of a class and you find the lessons too heavy, then simply do what you can. To do a little is better than to do nothing. Don't be an all-or-nothing person when it comes to Bible study.

Remember, any time you get into the Word of God, you enter into more intensive warfare with the devil (our enemy). Why? Every piece of the Christian's armor is related to the Word of God. And our one and only offensive weapon is the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God. The enemy wants you to have a dull sword. Don't cooperate! You don't have to! How well you will see this in your study of Ephesians.

7. Always begin your studies with prayer. As you do your part to handle the Word of God accurately, you must remember that the Bible is a divinely inspired book. The words that you are reading are truth, given to you by God that you might know Him and His ways. These truths are

divinely revealed: “For to us God revealed them through the Spirit; for the Spirit searches all things, even the depths of God. For who among men knows the thoughts of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so the thoughts of God no one knows except the Spirit of God” (1 Corinthians 2:10,11).

Therefore, ask God to reveal His truth to you, to lead you and guide you into all truth. He will, if you will ask.

THIRD

This study is designed to put you into the Word of God on a *daily* basis. Since man does not live by bread alone but by every word that comes out of the mouth of God, we each need a daily helping.

The assignments for each week cover seven days; however, the seventh day is different from the other days. On the seventh day, the focus is on a major truth covered in that week’s study.

You will find a verse or two to memorize and STORE IN YOUR HEART. Then there is a passage to READ AND DISCUSS. This will be extremely profitable for those who are using this material in a class setting, for it will cause the class to focus their attention on a critical portion of Scripture. To aid the individual and/or the class, there’s a set of QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION OR INDIVIDUAL STUDY. This is followed with a THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK which will help you understand how to walk in the light of what you learned.

When you discuss the week’s lesson, be sure to support your answers and insights from the Bible itself. Then you will be handling the Word of God in a way that will find His approval. Always examine your insights by carefully observing the text to see what it *says*. Then, before you

decide what a Scripture or passage *means*, make sure you interpret it in the light of its context.

Scripture will never contradict Scripture. If it ever seems to, you can be certain that somewhere something is being taken out of context. If you come to a passage that is difficult to deal with, reserve your interpretations for a time when you can study the passage in greater depth.

Books in the New Inductive Study Series are survey courses. If you want to do a more in-depth study of a particular book of the Bible, we suggest you do a Precept Upon Precept Bible study course on that book. You may obtain more information on these courses by contacting Precept Ministries International at 800-763-8280, visiting our website at www.precept.org, or filling out and mailing the response card in the back of this book.

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.

GALATIANS

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*.¹ I mark the word *Law* like this , 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.