



## Commentary on Galatians

*Martin Luther*

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A classic commentary on Galatians by one of the world's greatest expositors.

## Commentary on Galatians Details

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## Brian says

Despite being a bit repetitive in its main theme this 500 year-old commentary is a law & gospel classic.

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## Jimmy says

After reading the Bible, every Christian should at least one time in their life read something by Martin Luther to understand the man who has been responsible for the Protestant Reformation and the issue of justification that was at stake. Luther's commentary of Galatians was a delightful read. I was surprised that there was not a strong polemical taste to this work but instead one feels the pastoral heartbeat of Luther as he expounds the meaning of the text and often showing how a promise in Galatians should be applied to combating wrong thoughts and demonic discouragement. Again, a delightful read, but more than reading the words of Martin Luther this commentary made me read more carefully on my own the book of Galatians itself.

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## Amy says

A wonderful reminder of the power of justification by faith alone. From a spiritual perspective, I found the book uplifting, thought-provoking, and encouraging.

Yet, I think, what made this book particularly endearing was simply the delight of having one of my favorite people talk about one of my other favorite people. I'm not sure if I can properly explain. But it is the sense that Martin Luther writes about Paul as one writes about a mutual friend. I've read through the book of Galatians dozens of times and the New Testament scarcely less. Thus, Paul stands out as someone whose writings have influenced me from my earliest years. And since I spent the first 18ish years of my life in a Lutheran church, I also feel like Luther and I stand on pretty familiar ground. Both men impacted my spiritual walk. So to read about Luther talk about Paul and Paul's struggles and quote Paul's letter and contrast it with his other letters felt like chatting with one friend about a very dear mutual friend. And of course, all three of us share a mutual adoration for our best friend, Jesus. It sounds almost childish to put it that way, and yet I can think of no better explanation. Thousands of years span the timeline of Paul to Luther to Amy, and yet all three of us rejoice in justification by faith, not of our own works, but of God's!

I definitely recommend this one for a deeper look at Galatians. (Though I will offer this in warning, Luther is not one to pull his punches where the Pope or Catholic church is concerned!)

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## Jay Risner says

solid.

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## Jay Miklovic says

loved every page.

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### **Brian says**

I can't say I read every page, but I did read a lot of Luther's classic commentary on Paul's "epistle of freedom." Bold and bombastic, written with wit, verve, theological insight, and profound imagination, this is the book that led to the conversions of Charles Wesley and John Bunyan. While Luther is not as precise as Calvin, and sometimes even stretches exegesis to the breaking point, his grasp of the gospel of free grace makes the commentary well worth consulting.

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### **Brendan says**

5/5 For the book itself, Luther has stunning theological insights. His works overflow with a sense of Christ's grace.

3/5 for the translation. I trust he had a decent understanding of the text, Graebner has this odd desire to make Luther 'talk American' so throws random 1930's American slang into a work written by a sixteenth-century German. It's awful distracting to hear Luther talking about 'dollars'.

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### **Nathan says**

Fascinating read in light of the role Luther played launching the Protestant Reformation.

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### **David Woodbury says**

You don't pick up this book expecting a nail-biting page-turner, so as a "good" read I might give it two stars. For content, its contribution to my faith and understanding, I could give it four. So I merge the two and give it three. Stars don't suit the purpose with this book, though. In my old age I'm reading a shelf full of books -- a Kindle full a well -- catching up on what I've missed through decades of lending my mind to someone else (a career in corporate management). My mind returned to me from its captivity, though, weary but intact. And now I am cleansing it with the books that my soul craves. I had always wanted to know what Luther was all about, and I am glad I finally acted on that wish. Now, I've never been associated with the Roman Catholic church, but I recently read Garry Wills's *Why I Am A Catholic*. That did not persuade me toward joining the RC church, nor does the *Commentary on Galatians* draw me into the Lutheran Church. (I'm already a confirmed but disappointed Episcopalian.) The church of the early, early Christians, and more precisely, the humble faith of the early, early Christians is what persuades me. Martin Luther enlivens Paul in this Commentary. I have no doubt that, among all living people in Judea at the time of Paul's conversion, Paul himself was the most eloquent, persuasive, energetic, and dedicated voice that Jesus could have conscripted to speak for him after the Resurrection. But Paul was devoted to destroying Jesus's influence. Once he was forced to listen, though, and once he heard the haunting words, Why are you persecuting me?, he alone in all the world had the fortitude and intellect to reverse his own course and overcome the damage he had previously wrought. He is utterly alive and compelling in his own words through the Epistles and as

spoken of in the Acts. Compelling, but also theologically consistent. Martin Luther grasped all of this. And Luther expertly dissected the Epistle to the Galatians to effectively illuminate Paul's separation of the Law from faith. It struck me that early in the Epistle, and in the Commentary as well, the Law seemed almost explicitly to refer only to the Ten Commandments of Moses. At one point I felt that this conclusion was confirmed. But later, Luther expands the definition (meaning that Paul is understood to have done so also) to include all of the Law of Moses with its rites, rules, and rituals. I thought Luther might comment on the Ten Commandments as a body of law that is worthy unto itself. He did not. He also only weakly and slowly confirmed that the Law in its broad sense represents what one might follow voluntarily once one has grasped that righteousness comes by faith. For all the law, written to manage our behavior in all matters and all human intercourse, boils down to one commandment: Love your neighbor as yourself. And you can do that as intended only once you love God, and you can love God only by faith. It is interesting, in my studies of these and other volumes I have consumed, that the path to Grace is very, very straight and the understanding needed is very, very elementary. Throughout his ministry Paul struggled not to make something that is inherently complicated plain to the masses -- for it is not inherently complicated. He struggled to keep something that is inherently *simple* visible to the masses and to strip it of all the complication that was being built up around it. Faith is a leap. Works, done according to the Law, do not build a bridge across anything that must be crossed by faith alone. After this, I expect to read more of Luther. Currently, though, I am immersed in *The Language of God* by Francis Collins. And after that I have a lot more to read by C.S. Lewis. So, we'll see. I now see the humanity of Martin Luther and agree that he was a passionate, effective apostle for Jesus.

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### **John Lowery says**

This is the book that God used to bring me to assurance. It is truly wonderful and should be widely read.

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### **Rick Davis says**

Historically, this is one of the most important commentaries ever written. It embodies the reformation teaching of justification by faith alone. Galatians was Luther's favorite epistle, and his commentary on Galatians was his favorite among his own writings.

It's also just as vibrant and insightful today as it was when Luther wrote it.

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### **Thomas Hayes says**

This book changed my life forever. It is also my first time ever looking into what Martin Luther knew about the Bible, reading one of his books. Prior to reading this I was a Seventh Day Adventist for nearly 5 years. I knew a little about Jesus before Adventism, but was introduced to it through family. During this 5 years I was taught that the Law and the Gospel were the same thing. To my surprise, Martin brought me straight to the Scriptures to show me that the Law and the Gospel are two completely different forces. I never really touched the book of Galatians as an Adventist, and this commentary forced me to. I am so grateful that the deceptions found within Adventism were rapidly discarded from my mind thanks to the aid of this book. I now know for sure that I am saved by grace by faith in Christ and not by works. This single book tore down in two weeks the walls of superstition that Adventism built in my mind for over 5 years. That should say

something.

This read is not only stunning in intellectual depth, but very funny at parts too as Luther uses the aid of metaphors, similes, and even the abuses of the Catholic church itself to prove Scripture. And of course he backs up Scripture with more Scripture, line upon line, here a little, there a little. Even if you feel well versed in righteousness by faith, please read this book; I highly doubt it will fail to solidify your faith in Christ and Christ alone.

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### **Henry says**

Luther regarded this work as among his best. It dealt with the central issues of the Reformation in a clear and decisive way. If you want to know what the Reformation was about, read this book. John Bunyan said of it that there was no book apart from the Bible better suited to help a wounded conscience. It was a favorite of his and deserves to be more widely read today.

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### **Zoie Thune says**

This commentary refreshed my understanding of the gospel and my joy in the gospel.

Read this commentary if you want to distinguish between the law and gospel, have Christ set before your eyes, encourage a guilty conscience, or learn how to speak the gospel to yourself and others. Possibly you just want to see Luther smack talk the papacy.

I would recommend it to any brother or sister in Christ but especially to those who are battling a guilty conscience. For example,

"To be dead to the Law means to be free of the Law. What right, then, has the Law to accuse me, or to hold anything against me? When you see a person squirming in the clutches of the Law, say to him: 'Brother, get things straight. You let the Law talk to your conscience. Make it talk to your flesh. Wake up, and believe in Jesus Christ, the Conqueror of Law and sin. Faith in Christ will lift you high above the Law into the heaven of grace. Though Law and sin remain, they no longer concern you, because you are dead to the Law and dead to sin.'"

Again, I highly recommend it.

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### **Douglas Wilson says**

Good.

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