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(The) trouble-makers in Galatia

Crist, Milton Bernard

Boston University

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Boston University
THE TROUBLE-MAKERS IN GALATIA

by

Milton Bernard Crist
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INTRODUCTION

Purpose of the Study

One of the critical periods in the History of Christianity was that time of transition, when Our Great Faith, by the slow evolutionary process, changed from just another Jewish sect into a religion with a worldwide view. The history of this change is by no means clear to the students of early Christianity. It cannot be traced step by step from the very beginning until it culminated in a Faith far surpassing its source, both as to numbers of converts and as to effectiveness. In spite of this, all scholars will agree that the one great name to be linked with this period of the history of the Church is that of the Apostle Paul. He became the champion of Christian Liberty. And if we are to find the foundations upon which our liberty is based, we must go back to a study of Paul and his work. One pillar in the foundation upon which our liberty is constructed deals with the opposition which Paul encountered in his missionary work. "The letter to the Galatians is a first-hand document from the heart of one of the most significant controversies in the history of religion." It will be therefore, the purpose of this paper to consider the source of this opposition to Paul and his work, as reflected in the Galatian letter.

1 E. De Witt Burton, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians, p. lvii.
Its main object will be to find the party or parties against whom Paul finds it necessary to write such a vindictive letter. As for the other problems which arise in the letter, such as: the date when it was written, the location of the Galatian Churches, and the co-relation of historical events in Galatians with the Book of Acts; we shall not consider except as they will affect our main problem which is the "Trouble-Makers in Galatia."

Nature of the Study

With this problem before us, first, we shall make an analysis of the letter, and secondly, from this analysis draw what evidence that can be found as to the extent and nature of the charges brought against Paul. Then we shall consider the prevailing theories regarding what parties or party would most likely be the authors and instigators of the trouble. For the most part the discussion will be confined to the consideration of the Judaistic Theory as expounded by E. De Witt Burton, compared with the Radical Theory as championed by James Hardy Ropes of Harvard. The main difficulty in sitting in a seat of judgment upon such evidence as this, is, that we have only one side of the story. This makes it necessary to construct the other side, or as in this case, to construct the attacks made from the answers given. After the claims of the existing theories have been considered, we shall then summarize and draw our own conclusions.
ANALYSIS OF THE LETTER TO THE GALATIANS

I. INTRODUCTION (1:1-1:10)

A. Salutation, in which Paul asserts his apostolic authority. (1:1-1:5)

B. The occasion of the letter, expressing surprise that the Galatians are so soon to be removed to a "different gospel". It also denounces the false teacher and proclaims "the eternal truth of the gospel which he had preached." (1:6-10)

II. ARGUMENTS SETTING FORTH THE ORIGIN OF THE GOSPEL THAT PAUL PREACHED (1:11-2:21)

A. Through revelation and not through man. (1:11,12)

B. Evidence from Paul's life to prove his main contention. (1:13-2:21)

1. Before his conversion, he persecuted the Christians. (1:13,14)

2. After his conversion, he stayed away from the Apostles at Jerusalem. (1:15-17)

3. His first visit to Jerusalem after his conversion. (1:18-20)

4. His stay in Syria and Cilicia (1:21-24)

1 J. B. Lightfoot, St. Paul's Epistle to the Galatians, p. 70
ANALYSIS OF THE LETTER TO THE GALATIANS

5. His conduct on a trip to Jerusalem fourteen years after his conversion. (2:1-10)

6. His rebuking of Peter at Antioch and the address which he made at that time. (2:11-21)

III. REFUTATORY PORTION OF THE LETTER

"The doctrine that men, both Jew and Gentiles, become acceptable to God through faith rather than by works of law, defended by refutation of the arguments of the judaisers, and chiefly by showing that the 'heirs of Abraham' are such by faith not by works of law. Chapters 3, 4

1. Appeal to the early Christian experience of the Galatians (3:1-5)

2. Argument from the faith of Abraham, refuting the contention of his opponents that only through conformity to the law could men become 'sons of Abraham' (3:6-9)

3. Counter argument, showing that those whose standing is fixed by the law are by the logic of the legalists under the curse of the law (3:10-14)

4. Argument from the irrevocableness of a covenant
ANALYSIS OF THE LETTER TO THE GALATIANS

made with Abraham to the law, to the effect that the covenant is still in force (3:15-18)

5. Answer to the objection that the preceding argument leaves the law without a reason for being (3:19-22)

6. Characterization of the condition under the law, and in contrast with it, the condition since faith came: then we were held in custody under the law: now we are all sons of God, heirs of the promise (3:23-29)

7. Continuation of the argument for the inferiority of the condition under the law, with the use of the illustration of guardianship (4:1-7)

8. Description of the former condition of the Galatians as one of bondage to gods not really such, and exhortation to them not to return to that state (4:8-11)

9. Affectionate appeal to the Galatians to enter fully into their freedom from the law, referring to their former enthusiastic reception for him (4:12-20)

10. A supplementary argument, based on the allegorical use of the story of the two sons of Abraham, and intended to convince the Galatians they are
ANALYSIS OF THE LETTER TO THE GALATIANS

joining the wrong branch of the family (4:21-31)\(^1\)

IV. THE PRACTICAL APPLICATION OF WHAT PAUL HAS BEEN SAYING (5:1-6:10)

A. "Stand fast in your freedom", with an added condemnation of his opponents (5:1-12)

B. Do not let your freedom degenerate into a state of fleshly freedom (5:13-26)

C. Be brotherly in your relations one to another (6:1-10)

V. CONCLUSION (6:11-18)

A. Last warning against those who would pervert the gospel and who would demand circumcision (6:11-16)

B. "Let no man trouble me for I bear branded on my body the marks of Jesus Christ" (6:17)

C. Benediction (6:18)

\(^1\) E. De Witt Burton, op. cit., pp. lxxiii-lxxiv.
THE CHARGES MADE AGAINST PAUL AS REVEALED IN THE LETTER TO THE GALATIANS

The purpose of this section of the paper will be to set forth the charges brought against Paul by a party or parties who are unknown to us. We will refrain from any comments as to the source or purpose of the charges but simply endeavor to frame a set of charges which Paul seems to be refuting in this Letter.

There are signs of trouble in the very first verse of the Letter.

"Paul, an Apostle, not from men nor through man, but through Jesus Christ and God (the) Father who raised him from the dead,"

From this verse, there is no reason to believe that Paul's apostleship had been denied, but it does seem clear that his opponents had claimed that it was received "through man". The evidence for believing that such was the charge made against Paul does not stop there. When we read the detailed account of his life as reported in 1:13-2:14, at once it is noticeable that all evidence presented leads but to one conclusion. Paul was not dependent upon any man for the gospel he preached, for it was the result of a special revelation to him.

"For I make known to you, brethren, the gospel preached by me, that it is not according to man; for not from man did I receive it, nor was I taught it, but through Jesus Christ's revelation." (1:11,12)
THE CHARGES MADE AGAINST PAUL AS REVEALED IN THE LETTER TO THE GALATIANS

Thus it is clear that Paul is making refutation against "the assertion of his opponents that he had never received (from Jerusalem) a commission authorizing him to set himself up as a teacher of the religion of Jesus, he affirms his entire independence of all human authority or commission and the possession of his gospel by virtue of a divine revelation of Jesus Christ." 1

The second evidence that Paul is here refuting charges brought against him is the reference to his conduct. He says:

"Am I now seeking favor of men, or of God? Or am I seeking to please men? If I were still pleasing men, I should not be a servant of Christ." (1:10)

The straightforwardness and vigor of this statement lead us to the conclusion that some of Paul's opponents had charged him with endeavoring to compromise his message so that it would "please" men, make it easy for them, and that he did not present a message "pleasing" to God.

These are the only two charges which stand out in the personal portion of the letter. However, in 5:11 Paul makes a statement which can be construed as an answer to a charge brought against him by the Trouble-Makers. "And, I, brethren, if I am still preaching circumcision why am I still being persecuted?" From such a statement, we gather at once that Paul had been accused

1 E. De Witt Burton, op. cit., p. 35
THE CHARGES MADE AGAINST PAUL AS REVEALED IN THE
LETTER TO THE GALATIANS

of preaching circumcision.

From the personal standpoint, three charges appear against Paul. In the first place, Paul's gospel lacks authority, for he received it through men, and in some way he was dependent upon the apostles at Jerusalem. In the second place, Paul had compromised his message, and adapted it to the desires of men, without consideration for the desire of God. And in the third place, Paul had done something or said something which allowed his opponents to accuse him of preaching circumcision.

So far in the Letter, it has not been difficult to follow Paul in the refutation of charges brought against him. They stand out and can be noted at once. But beginning with chapter three Paul proceeds into an intricate defense of his gospel of "salvation by faith". Here we cannot be dogmatic and say that the line of argument followed is strictly defensive or strictly offensive. Certain elements in the argument can be judged to be direct answers to the charges of the Trouble-Makers, but others cannot with certainty be so classed. They may be nothing more than the logical steps necessary in the development of the entire argument. Here we will put down those which we think are answers to charges, and weigh the evidence later as to their possibility of being
THE CHARGES MADE AGAINST PAUL AS REVEALED IN THE
LETTER TO THE GALATIANS

correct.

1. The fruits of the spirit were to be gained by
   obedience to the law. (3:1-5)

2. The only way to become "sons of Abraham" was
   through conformity to the law. (3:6-9)

3. If the law was not necessary to salvation (as
   Paul claimed) what good was it? (3:19-22)

These are the questions which Paul answers in the
refutatory portion of his letter to the Galatians. Just
how far we can say that they are the direct charges of his
opponents will be considered later. Some accounts of this
epistle find a much longer list of charges to which it
seems that Paul is answering. However, there is a
grave danger that we will consider too many statements
of Paul to be answers to direct charges which are not
necessarily of such a nature. In this account I have
endeavored to keep the list as small as consistently
possible.
REFERENCES IN THE EPISTLE WHICH FURNISH EVIDENCE IN REGARD TO THE TROUBLE-MAKERS

As it is our purpose to identify as nearly as possible the party or parties who were undoing the work of Paul in Galatia, it is necessary to consider all evidence submitted by the Letter. The possible charges which Paul seems to be refuting have been listed, and they will furnish many valuable hints as to the identity of their author. There are other remarks made by Paul which should also be of help in untangling the mystery which is before us.

1. In verse seven, two things are learned about them. First, they were still in Galatia; and secondly they were trying "to pervert the gospel of Christ."

2. Paul's opponents were of such caliber that he was willing they should be "Anathema" (1:8)

3. The reference to the "false brethren" in 2:4 "who came in to spy out their freedom."

4. The beginning of the incident at Antioch caused by "certain from James."

5. "They zealously seek you, not honestly, but wish to shut you out that ye may seek them." (4:17)

6. From Paul's remarks in 5:2-5 it is clear that some of the Galatians had been circumcised. These
REFERENCES IN THE EPISTLE WHICH FURNISH EVIDENCE IN REGARD TO THE TROUBLE-MAKERS

according to Paul, had fallen from grace.

7. As yet, the majority of the Church were not won over to Paul's opponents for he says: "A little leaven is leavening the whole lump." (5:9)

8. The Trouble-Makers are only seeking to escape persecution; their interest is not zeal for the law (6:12,14)

9. The Trouble-Makers did not keep the entire law, and only desired to subject the Galatians to the rite or circumcision so that they might get credit for proselytising.
THEORIES PROPOSED AS TO THE IDENTITY OF THE TROUBLE-MAKERS

All evidence is in, and it is now time to proceed with the case. We have before us: Exhibit A, containing the personal charges brought against Paul as reconstructed from his refutation of them. Exhibit B, containing attacks which were made against his doctrine, and which brought forth an elaborate exposition of his position on the question of salvation by faith or works. Finally Exhibit C, containing scattered remarks made by Paul, which refer to his opponents, and which may help lead to their identification.

First of all, attention is directed to existing theories which have been presented as to the identification of the Trouble-Makers in Galatia. The prevailing view of most scholars since the time of Marcion in the second century is that the Letter to the Galatians was written to stem the tide of Judaistic teaching which was spreading through the Galatian Church. This theory in one form or another has been the answer to the problems brought forth by the Letter. The position taken by the followers of the Judaistic Theory is summed up in the following quotation:

"This new doctrine opposed to Paul's was of a Judaistic and legalistic type. Its advocates
THEORIES PROPOSED AS TO THE IDENTITY OF THE TROUBLE-MAKERS

evidently endeavored to win the Galatians to it by appealing to the promises to Abraham and his seed recorded in the Old Testament. Though the letter makes no definite quotation from the language of these teachers it is easily evident from the counter argument of the apostle in chapters three and four that they had taught the Galatians either that salvation was possible only to those who were, by, blood or adoption, children of Abraham, or that the highest privileges belonged only to these. See especially (3:7,9,14-4:21,31) They had laid chief stress upon circumcision, this being the initiatory rite by which a Gentile was adopted into the family of Abraham. Though they had cautiously abstained from endeavoring to impose upon the Galatians the whole Jewish law, or from pointing out that this was logically involved in what they demanded (5:3), they had induced them to adopt the Jewish feasts and fasts (4:10)."1

All scholars have not agreed as to the locality from which the judaistic party arose. Some have contended that the party arose within the Galatian Church, without any influence from the outside. Other scholars hold the position that the judaistic party was a missionary enterprise from the Jerusalem Church, whose influence was also felt in the church at Antioch. Still others have contended that it was the result of Petrine Party similar to that which arose in Corinth. All these are different views of the same theory that the source of Paul's trouble lay in a judaistic party.

1 E. De Witt Burton, op. cit., p. liv.
THEORIES PROPOSED AS TO THE IDENTITY OF THE TROUBLE-MAKERS

Another theory which differs from these suggested, was first propounded by Professor Wilhelm Lutgert in the year 1919.

"The essence of the matter in the Epistle to the Galatians is that there are, as all admit, two elements in the Galatian situation, first, the judaizing tendency which Paul reproves, and secondly the hostile personal attacks upon Paul which he endeavors to repel. The usual view explains the attacks referred to by Paul as proceeding from the judaisers; Lutgert's view explains them as made not by the judaisers but by a 'radical' party in the Galatian Churches which stood in opposition both to the judaisers and to Paul."

However, in 1929 James Hardy Ropes of Harvard presented this view in a very much broader sense, applying the principle set forth by Lutgert not only to the personal attacks against Paul but to other portions of the Epistle as well. We shall confine ourselves to the theory as expounded by Ropes in an issue of Harvard Theological Studies, under the title, "The Singular Problem of the Epistle to the Galatians."

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1 James Hardy Ropes, The Singular Problem of the Epistle to the Galatians, p. 3.
Before going into a consideration of this intricate theory as to the identity of Paul's opponents at Galatia, it may be well first to find out just what Ropes means by the 'radical' party. The rise of this 'radical' party came as a consequence of the activities of certain persons of Judaistic tendency within the church.

"Paul had taught that faith in Christ is freely opened to uncircumcised Gentiles, and brings them the hope of salvation without their becoming subject in any manner to the Jewish law; he had further taught that the gift of the Holy Spirit which God supplies causes believers to be in Christ a new creation, transforming them so that they are in the Spirit and not in the flesh, and live to God, the flesh with its passions and lusts being dead."¹

In an attempt to combat those persons tending toward Judaism the 'radicals' used this teaching of Paul's as a starting point,

"allowed their freedom to be an occasion to the flesh, doubtless acting on a 'perfectionist' idea of the negligibility of moral discipline; such 'radicals' priding themselves on their full reliance on the Spirit, were more distinguished by arrogance toward their brethren than by highly developed graces of character .... It must further be assumed that they definitely turned away from Paul's emphasis on the fundamental relation of Christian faith to the Hebrew tradition and to the moral duties inculcated by the law."²

The picture then of the Galatian Church contains three distinct elements. First, there were the Gentile Christians who emphasized the Hebraic elements in

¹ James Hardy Ropes, op. cit., p. 25
² Ibid., p. 25
THE RADICAL THEORY

Paul's teachings, tending toward Judaism, and becoming extremists on the subject. They may be called the left wing. Exactly opposed to this left wing we find another party, who have taken to themselves the teachings of Paul which declare "the independence of Christian faith from the Jewish Law and the sufficiency of the Spirit." They too become extremists and are known as the 'radical' party. These may be called the right wing. The third element was a large group of Gentile Christians who stood midway between the two wings. They followed the "via media" and upon them Paul rested his hope of ever saving the churches.

The main contention of this theory is not that either party is entirely responsible for the condition which called forth this Letter from Paul, but that the controversy which arose between the two existing wings gave rise to the situation to which Galatians is an answer. Some portions of the Letter are directed against the 'radicals' while other portions are written with the Judaistic party in mind. Due to the fact that Ropes agrees that part of the Letter is directed against the Judaistic party, he only applies his theory of a 'radical' party to certain portions of the Letter. His theory is based upon "the difficulties which on various sides attach to the commonly held, and

1 James Hardy Ropes, op. cit., p. 27
THE RADICAL THEORY

simple theory of the situation.\textsuperscript{1} Before this 'radical' party can be rightly understood, it will be necessary to consider with Ropes what he thinks to be difficulties in the theory which contends that the Trouble-makers were judaisers.

\textsuperscript{1} James Hardy Ropes, op. cit., p. 3.
DIFFICULTIES IN THE CURRENT THEORY

Ropes points out four difficulties in the common theory which he summarizes as follows:

1. "The supposed appeal of the judaisers' to the Jerusalem apostles is odd, since precisely the main contention of the judaisers was not shared by the Jerusalem apostles.
2. The combination of the judaisers' rejection of Paul's gospel of freedom with the coincident charge by them that he had learned his gospel from their own friends produces a paradox.
3. That he preaches circumcision is a singular ground for an attack on him by those who also preach it; and even if the charge of unworthy motives in veering with the wind of influence be taken to refer not to this but to his turning away from the truth as taught at Jerusalem in order to adopt his doctrine of freedom, certainly his method of countering that charge, by showing that he has been independent of Jerusalem, is a strange one.
4. Extensive ethical instruction is introduced (5:13-6:10) which, if merely pastoral, is hardly in place in this letter and distinctly weakens Paul's main contention against judaisers' misrepresentations, it is strangely devoid of any indication whatever of its purpose."

With these difficulties in mind Ropes applies his theory to the problem at the point where the difficulty occurs. As briefly as we can let us consider the application of the 'radical' theory to the Letter itself.

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1 James Hardy Ropes, op. cit., pp. 22-23.
APPLICATION OF THE RADICAL THEORY TO THE LETTER

It must be kept in mind that this theory is dependent upon the hypothetical reconstruction of the situation in Galatia which involves two extreme parties, each at sword's point with the other. The entire epistle will not be considered but only those sections which Ropes considers to be directed against the 'radicals'.

The first section which comes under consideration according to this theory is the autobiographical section (1:13-2:14). The opening section of the epistle is directed against the judaisers, with the possible exception, that he already had in mind the 'radicals' when he emphasizes the source of his gospel in verse one. "Paul, Apostle, not from men, nor through man, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father." This verse echoes the thought of verses eleven and twelve.

"For I make known to you brethren, the gospel preached by me, that it is not according to man; for not from man did I receive it, nor was I taught it, but through Jesus Christ's revelation."

After establishing his position in regard to the judaisers, he then defends himself against the attacks of the 'radicals'. From verse ten we gather that he had been charged with "pleasing men." "For am I now persuading men, or God? Or am I seeking to please men? If I were still pleasing men, I should not be Christ's bondservant."
APPLICATION OF THE RADICAL THEORY TO THE LETTER

"A color for the charge of insincerity and dependence on men for his gospel was in fact provided by the prominence which Paul's teachings gave to Hebrew tradition (see Rom.3:1-2; 3:21; Rom 4, etc), and by the misuse which the Galatian judaisers may well have made of that aspect of his real teaching. It is not against the judaisers that this affirmation of his independence is directed; on the contrary his defence is against a reproach from the side of the radicals, who are saying that he is insincere and pliable, and that the Jewish taint which his gospel originally received from the Jerusalem apostles has led him to compromise with the principles he had formerly affirmed."

Ropes presents the following paraphrase of the passage (1:11-2:14) as the application of this theory to the section under consideration.

"My gospel," says Paul, 'was not taught me by men, but was revealed to me by God, whose definite purpose in creating men was that I should preach the gospel among the Gentiles. On my conversion I kept away from the leaders of the church for three years, and then, when I did visit Jerusalem, I stayed with Peter for only two weeks, and of the other apostles saw no one (before God this is the truth) except James the Lord's brother. Thereafter I was in Syria and Cilicia, and the church of Judaea saw nothing of me; their friendly attitude was due solely to hearsay reports of my preaching gentile lands. Then, after fourteen years, I admit, that I went up to Jerusalem again with Barnabas and Titus (an uncircumcised Gentile) but I went because God expressly directed me so to do. On that occasion, I grant, I did set forth to the leading men my gospel, and did so in a private interview, lest through a misunderstanding of it my work among the Gentiles should have been interfered with and prove to have been in vain. But it was not necessary even that Titus should be circumcised, although there were present false brethren with malicious purpose, directed against Gentile freedom and the truth of the gospel, to whom I yielded subjection not for a single moment. The result was that (quite the contrary of the

1 James Hardy Ropes, op. cit., p. 31.
APPLICATION OF THE RADICAL THEORY TO THE LETTER

way in which the matter has been represented in Galatia) the leaders at Jerusalem: James, Cephas, and John (of whose supposed authority I make nothing at all), had to admit that I have been entrusted by God with the gospel of the gentiles; and they had to give full recognition to my and Barnabas' work. Later, when Cephas came to Antioch, I maintained my independence and entirely refused to admit that his withdrawal from the common meals of the church was justified, although in this instance Barnabas sided with him. 1

In this paraphrase two things stand out. First, "Paul is substantiating from the facts of his life the affirmation of his independence and consistency." 2 Secondly, his purpose in presenting what happened at the council in Jerusalem was to show that the apostles did not have an opportunity to affect Paul's gospel. Also they had been "compelled to give full recognition to the gospel of freedom as he preached it, that fact is not affirmed with pride, but rather explained, almost apologized for, as harmless." 3

This theory also applies to the very difficult section immediately following the one we have been discussing, (2:15-21). Ropes contends that Paul is

"clearly on the defensive here, and the whole of verses seventeen to twenty one becomes comprehensible so soon as they are taken as repelling the charge that Paul's view, if consistently developed, would make Christ as minister of sin, make void the grace of God, imply that salvation

1 James Hardy Ropes, op. cit. pp. 31-32.
2 Ibid., p. 32
3 Ibid., p. 32
APPLICATION OF THE RADICAL THEORY TO THE LETTER

is by the law, and lead to the diabolous absurdity that Christ died with no adequate result. 1

At the end of chapter two this theory contends that Paul once again picks up the argument started in 1:6 directed against the judaisers. Thus the entire section under consideration has been in the nature of a digression directed against the 'radical' party. However Ropes thinks that Paul directs himself to the judaisers for only three verses (3:2-5) and then once again turns his attention to the 'radicals' in the next section (3:6-4:7).

Under the radical theory we are asked to consider that in the division (3:6-4:7) Paul is making a statement of his position which includes both the Hebraic element and "freedom-from-the-law" element. In this statement he is reconciling the two, trying to show that he was not inconsistent in laying importance on the worth of Hebrew tradition, and at the same time opposing any attempt of the Gentiles to bring themselves under the Mosaic Law. For it is, "only by this supposition (that) we can account for the singular balanced qualification of his argument in 3:6-4:7, as contrasted with the downright positiveness of 3:2-5." 2

1 James Hardy Ropes, op. cit., p. 34.
2 Ibid., p. 36.
APPLICATION OF THE RADICAL THEORY TO THE LETTER

Ropes interprets this passage to the effect that Paul is presenting the argument that the Law in no way brings about salvation, but yet Paul points out that faith in Christ brings the Gentile believers into a relationship with Hebrew tradition and the promises of God made to Abraham. He says that,

"All this balanced elaboration of his precise position has out qualified usefulness for Paul's attack on judaizing tendencies, but is of great importance for explaining to the radicals how, without abandoning his doctrine of freedom he can yet have so much to say about Abraham and the Jewish relationships of Christianity." 1

Ropes' evidence for the above supposition will not be followed now, but will be considered in another section when the claims of this theory are discussed. The position on this section is not, then, that it is directed against the radicals; but that it has as its "main purpose the refutation and rebuke of the judaisers." 2 All this time Paul has the 'radicals' in mind when presenting his finely balanced position in regard to Hebrew tradition and "freedom-from-the-law."

The next section begins with that strong outburst: "And brethren, If I am still preaching circumcision why am I still persecuted," (5:11).

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1 James Hardy Ropes, op. cit., p. 36.
2 Ibid., p. 38.
APPLICATION OF THE RADICAL THEORY TO THE LETTER

The content and tone of this statement give the clue against whom this section is directed. Ropes says:

"Verses 11 and 12 do not in our interpretation bear any relation to what immediately precedes them; with what follows they are connected by a conjunction ('for', vs. 13). This connection is appropriate, since, although the grounds of his complaint (verses 11-12 and 5:13-6:10) are distinct, the persons who gave cause for it are the same."¹

This theory contends that such a charge of preaching circumcision would only arise from the 'radical' group, and therefore this "ethical section" is directed against the 'radicals'; for they are the ones who acting on a 'perfectionist' viewpoint have lost all regard for any moral discipline. Ropes says:

"The whole force of this passage (5:13-6:10) seems to turn on the claim of the persons addressed that they are 'spiritual' and as such free from responsibility for their own conduct. It is implied that they are engaged in bitter controversy with their brethren, are inconsiderate, harsh, and arrogant, and have shown themselves unwilling to bear the common burden of the churches."²

And here end the claims of this theory. The final section or the conclusion of the epistle has a word in it against the judaisers which is only natural. This theory which has just been considered has been applicable to all four sections of the epistle. It does not claim to take the

¹ James Hardy Ropes, op. cit., p. 39.
² Ibid., p. 42.
APPLICATION OF THE RADICAL THEORY TO THE LETTER

place of the judaising theory, but only to supplement it, and to account for a number of phases which it claims the judaising theory fails to do.
SUMMARY OF THE APPLICATION OF THE RADICAL THEORY

1. The autobiographical section (1:13-2:14) is called forth by the charge of the 'radicals' that Paul is dependent upon the apostles at Jerusalem, and that his gospel was received from man.

2. The section (2:15-21) which is a "personal confession" of Paul's is to repel the charge that his gospel if consistently developed would make Christ a minister of sin.

3. In the section (3:1-5:10) which is in refutation and reproof of the judaisers, Paul has in mind the 'radicals' in presenting his balanced gospel.

4. The hortatory section (5:11-6:10) is called forth by the conduct of the 'radicals', and the charge that Paul is still preaching circumcision.

In a few words, this is the claim of the 'Radical' Theory. It will be noticed that it claims to apply in four separate instances. It will also be noticed that the four difficulties pointed out by Ropes, and reviewed on page 19 of this paper, are the basis or foundation upon which this theory is built. So far the evidence has not been considered, only the claims of the Radical Theory have been designated.
THE CLAIMS OF THE JUDAISTIC THEORY

In the presentation of the theory that the Trouble-Makers at Galatia were members of a Judaistic party, we shall not endeavor to identify them as to where they originated. The problem as to whether they were missionaries from Jerusalem; or whether they were members of a Petrine party; or whether they were part of the same movement which Paul mentions as making trouble in the church at Antioch, will be left to a later discussion. At this time we shall separate the epistle into divisions, just as was done in the presentation of the Radical Theory.

Naturally the first section to come under consideration is the introduction, including the salutation, and the purpose of writing the Letter. Here two things are learned. First Paul is asserting his apostolic authority, which was not received by man. Secondly, he expresses surprise that the Galatians are so soon removed from the gospel which he brought them, and he pronounces condemnation upon those who led them astray. The strong and unusual manner in which Paul asserts his apostleship makes it evident that it had been denied by his opponents. If the interpretation of this Letter is to be understood from the standpoint of the Judaistic theory, we must get the import of that sentence. Paul is not denying the charge that he received his gospel "in the way they had alleged
he had, but that he obtained it as they alleged he (not having been one of the original group) must have received it if it were genuine. They did not say, 'you received your apostleship from men, and through a man, therefore it is not genuine,' but, 'you should thus have received it,' and Paul's answer is that he received it in a way far above this, which made human source and human agency wholly superfluous. In his answer is that he received it in a way far above this, which made human source and human agency wholly superfluous. Not only is he here in the very first part of the Letter affarming his independent apostleship but also he gives expression to the fact that Jesus Christ "gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us out of the present evil age." (1:4)

"The addition of this verse with its reference to the death of Christ for the salvation of men is undoubtedly occasioned by the nature of the erroneous teaching which was propagated among the Galatians by the judaizing opponents of Paul, and which this letter was written to combat."  

Here in the very beginning is the basis for the two main claims of the judaizing theory.

1. Paul's apostleship has been attacked, and in defense he writes the autobiographical section.

2. His opponents had taught something which negated the death of Christ. This teaching would very likely be

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1 E. DeWitt Burton, op. cit., p. 5
the ability of the law to save.

In the personal portion of the Letter (1:11-2:21) we find Paul offering evidence to support his claim as to the divine source of his gospel. This theory claims that,

"Beginning with these verses, the apostle addresses himself to the refutation of the charges and criticisms of the judaising teachers, and to the re-establishment of himself and his gospel in the confidence of the Galatians; and first of all, doubtless against the assertion of his opponents that he had never received (from Jerusalem) a commission authorizing him to set himself up as a teacher of the religion of Jesus, he affirms his entire independence of all human authority or commission, and his possession of his gospel by virtue of a divine revelation of Jesus Christ."

The third section of the Letter is that which has been called in the analysis, the refutatory portion, and is found in the third and fourth chapters. This division is a fine exposition of Paul's doctrine, and the presence of it in this Letter shows that not only was his authority under attack, but also his doctrine. This theory takes the position that this attack on his doctrine came from the judaistic party, and that they made certain very definite arguments against it.

Taking our direction from Paul's refutation we surmise that the main premise of Paul's opponents was to the affect, that, all men, whether Jews or Gentiles, became acceptable unto God through their works under the law. Under this

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1 E. DeWitt Burton, op. cit., p. 35.
THE CLAIMS OF THE JUDAISTIC THEORY

general contention they made a number of arguments. First, they claimed that God's promise had been to Abraham and his sons. Secondly, they contended that only through obedience to the law could men become sons of Abraham. And thirdly, they may have raised the question as to the worth of the law, if Paul's teachings as to the inability of the law to save were correct.

Paul not only meets and refutes these charges but he carries the battle into the enemies' camp. This theory lines up his defense and attack under the following general outline.

1. Paul asks them to consider their own experience of Christianity. (3:1-5)

2. Paul argues that Abraham was justified by faith (3:6-9)

3. Paul argues that whoever is under the law is condemned by the law, quoting the Old Testament to prove his point, but continues from there to prove that men are justified from the curse of the law by the death of Christ. (3:10-14)

4. Paul argues that the covenant made with Abraham was before the law, and thus the law could not modify it. (3:15-18)
5. Paul meets the possible or actual argument that if this is true, the law had no objective value. (3:19-22)

6. Paul contrasts the condition under the law and the condition under faith.

7. Paul continues his argument for the inferiority of the law, by illustrating the condition while under a guardian. (4:1-7)

8. Paul refers to the condition of the Galatians before receiving the message of faith as one under bondage to false gods, and exhorting them not to return to such a condition. (4:8-11)

9. "Dropping argument, .... the apostle turns to appeal begging the Galatians to take his attitude towards the law. .... He compares his own zealous pursuit of them with that of his opponents, justifying his by its motive, but expresses, also, the wish that he could be present with them right now and speak in a different tone from that by implication harsher one which he had employed on some previous occasion when he had 'told them the truth.'

10. Paul here introduces a supplementary argument which is allegorically drawn from the story of the two sons of Abraham, in which he attempts to convince the Galatians that they are "joining the wrong branch of the family." (4:21-31)

This then is the position of the Judaistic theory on

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1 E. DeWitt Burton, op. cit., p. 235.
THE CLAIMS OF THE JUDAISTIC THEORY

this very important part of the Letter. The hortatory or ethical section will now be considered in the light of the judaistic claims.

Paul has so far argued that he had the authority to present his gospel to the Gentiles from God himself. He has met the charges of the opposition as to the question whether or not the Gentiles should accept the Jewish law as a means of justification. And now, as he once strongly argued for their freedom, he just as strongly exhorts them not to abuse their freedom. (5:1-6:10) So far as this theory is concerned this section is but,

"the needful complement of the doctrine of justification by faith asserted in its native ruggedness. This doctrine Paul does not qualify by expounding at length what he means by faith and by justification, lest by so doing he should weaken its force or perplex his readers; but guards it from abuse by placing beside it the moral teaching of division three." 1

We have now arrived at the final division: the conclusion. (6:11-18) Here, there is a definite reference to the judaising party, and a final warning against them. Then with a short re-affirmation of his position that religion is a matter of faith and has nothing to do with the works of law, Paul pronounces a benediction upon those who follow his principles. A brief summary of the

1 Joseph Agar Beet, A Commentary on St. Paul's Epistle to the Galatians, p. 171.
THE CLAIMS OF THE JUDAISTIC THEORY

Judaistic Theory as regarding the three divisions of the Letter is as follows:

1. The introduction and the autobiographical section which follow are a rebuke of and a defense against the judaistic party, which has made a twofold attack upon Paul. The charge against him was to the effect that the apostles at Jerusalem had never authorized Paul to preach.

2. The section, (3:1-4:31), was written to defend Paul's doctrine that justification was by faith and not by works of the law as contended by the judaistic party.

3. The section (5:1-6:10) is purely an exhortation as to the use of the freedom which is argued for in the refutatory portion of the Letter.

4. The conclusion (6:11-18) contains a warning against the judaistic party and a re-statement of his position in regard to the law.

Here in a concise form, the position of the Judaistic Theory in regard to the important issues involved in the Letter is stated. It will be seen at once that the two theories which we have been considering, the Radical Theory and the Judaistic Theory, do not agree in many vital points. In order to see this more clearly the two positions will be re-stated, placing them side by side under the headings of the disputed sections. There is some minor
THE CLAIMS OF THE JUDAISTIC THEORY

disagreement as to the exact divisions. But for the most part the following comparison paints a good picture of the relation between the two theories in their main contentions.
COMPARISON OF THE TWO THEORIES AT VITAL POINTS

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<td>Warning against the Judaistic party.</td>
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CONCLUSION

Before going further in the settlement of this problem a choice must be made between these two theories. Our procedure will be very much like that of a court of justice. The table of comparison divides the epistle into six natural divisions. On each of these divisions the two theories present answers as to the source of the trouble. Only in two cases do these answers agree. It will be our object then to present all evidence for and against on each division, and at the end of the discussion draw our conclusion as to which party or parties were responsible for causing Paul to include that division in his Letter. On the two divisions where there is no disagreement the evidence will be presented the same as in the other sections.
EXAMINATION OF THE INTRODUCTION
(1:1-10)

The opening sentence of this epistle is different from the opening sentence of all the other epistles of Paul. In Romans, Paul addresses them in the following manner:

"Paul, Jesus Christ's bondservant, called (as an) apostle,"

In first Corinthians:

"Paul, called (as) apostle of Jesus Christ through God's will, .."

But in Galatians:

"Paul, an apostle, not from men nor through man, but through Jesus Christ and God (the) Father,..."

The existence of this negative element in the opening words of the epistle, would be strange indeed, unless it were placed there with a definite purpose in mind. And what other purpose could it have except to refute directly the charge of his opponents that he received his authority from men? There is one other position that may be taken, and that is: a charge from the Judaistic party to the effect that Paul had never received a commission from the apostles at Jerusalem.

The next piece of evidence which this section offers is the following: "Grace to you and peace from God the Father, and Our Lord Jesus Christ, Who gave himself for our sins, that He might take us out of the present evil age, .."(1:3)
EXAMINATION OF THE INTRODUCTION
(1:1-10)

Paul reflects in the opening verses not only the personal charges against him, but also the charges made against the doctrine.

"In all other Pauline letters the salutation closes with the benediction though not always in exactly the same form, and the next paragraph is introduced by an expression of thanksgiving or an ascription of praise to God. .... here against their legalistic conception of the value of works of law, he sets forth even in the salutation the divine way of deliverance provided in Christ's gift of himself for us according to the will of God." 1

This is also the opinion of Lightfoot, who says in reference to this verse, "by dwelling on the work of redemption in connection with the name of Christ (verse 4), he protests against their doctrinal errors." 2

No further evidence which throws light either on the charges or by whom they were made is found until we come to the tenth verse: "For am I now seeking the favor of men, or of God? Or am I seeking to please men? If I were still pleasing Men, I should not be a servant of Christ." (1:10)

The background for this verse is obscure, and scholars disagree as to the shade of meaning which it contains. But from its position it seems to me that Paul is not bothering to answer a charge that he had been inconsistent or that he

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2 J.B. Lightfoot, op. cit., p. 215.
EXAMINATION OF THE INTRODUCTION
(1:1-10)

had compromised. And if the evidence in Acts 16:3, (circumcision of Timothy), 18:18 (shaved his head), and 21:23 (in Jerusalem at the Temple), is correct, Paul has left himself open to the possible charge of inconsistency by those who failed to understand the motive behind the act. Paul speaks his mind, and after placing the anathema upon the Trouble-Makers says, that here is one place where he is not endeavoring to please men, he is speaking plainly regardless of whose feelings are hurt. And this brings to an end the three pieces of evidence which are found in the introduction. We have found what we think are three separate charges.

1. Either Paul was charged with receiving his gospel from men, or he was charged with never having received a commission from the apostles at Jerusalem.

2. We infer from verses three and four that his enemies had set forth a doctrine opposed to his doctrine of the redemptive work of Christ.

3. He had been charged with compromising his gospel.

Upon consideration of this evidence, nothing is established upon which judgment may be passed as to which party brought the charges here suggested. This evidence will have to be considered in light of that which follows before
any decision can be made. This is only natural, considering the fact that we are dealing with the direction which the Letter will take. Nothing is definitely established that would give basis for a fair decision. When we consider the second section we find that our two theories are at disagreement, and this will no doubt clear up part of the situation which exists in the introduction.
It is the contention of the 'Radical' Theory that the charge of insincerity and compromise in verse ten is from the 'radical' party, and that Paul proceeds from there to defend himself against the charge that he is dependent upon the Jerusalem apostles. At this point it must be remembered that the Radical Theory is built upon four supposed difficulties of the usual judaistic theory, which were presented on page 19 of this paper. The contention now under consideration is based upon the first of these difficulties.

Ropes presents his case in the following manner. In chapter two the controversy revolves around Paul's relation to the apostles at Jerusalem, and Paul makes an elaborate explanation as to the extent of that relationship.

"The usual view is that his judaising opponents had appealed against Paul to the authority of these apostles and that it is in reply to this that Paul affirms his independent divine commission and tells how he forced these authorities to recognize the testimony borne to him by God's manifest favor."¹

Taking this as the view of those who defend the judaistic origin of this charge Ropes points out that

"the value of such an appeal by the judaisers would depend on whether in fact the Jerusalem apostles actually did give their support to the judaisers' contention that Gentile Christians must subject themselves to the Jewish

¹ James Hardy Ropes, op. cit., p. 19.
EVIDENCE IN THE AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL SECTION

Law, and Paul states in his reply (Gal. 2:6-9) that these authorities had refused to support this contention. 1

Ropes continues with further evidence from Act. 15 and 21: 19:20 to show that the Jerusalem apostles did not agree with the position of the judaisers. He concludes that the Judaistic Theory stands on the supposition that the judaisers were forced to misrepresent the position taken by the Judaistic Theory by saying that, if the charge had been that Paul was dependent upon the Jerusalem apostles, and coming from the judaistic party, all that Paul would have had to do to refute it, would have been to say, that the apostles at Jerusalem agreed with his position and not with that of the judaisers. This concludes Rope’s charge against the Judaistic Theory, and is, as far as I can see, his main reason for proposing the Radical Theory as an answer to this difficulty. So far all that Ropes has done is to discredit what he considers to be the Judaistic Theory at this point.

The Radical Theory rests its case on the supposition that Paul is here repelling an attack made upon him to the effect that he is dependent upon the Jerusalem apostles. When trying to see what evidence Ropes offers which proves

1 James Hardy Ropes, op. cit., pp. 19-20.
that this was the nature of the attack, we find the evidence sadly lacking. He does say,

"That for our immediate purpose it is enough to repeat that a part of the attack upon him is here plainly shown to have consisted in the charge that he has been dependent for his gospel on Jewish believers in Judaea. The incident at Antioch (2:11-14) is introduced to show that he has even been aggressive in maintaining his independent attitude."1

Just where Ropes "plainly shows" this I fail to see. His paraphrase which we quoted on page 21 applies this theory, but it is not based on translation and cannot therefore be evidence to support this position. On the other hand it is the result of the Radical Theory.

All scholars who hold to the Judaistic Theory do not agree at this point; therefore it will be necessary to present the position or contention of two separate sides, as to the origin of the charges that drew from Paul this account of his life. First there are a group of scholars who take the position attributed to them by Ropes. Their contention is that Paul had been accused of being in some manner dependent upon the Jerusalem apostles. Zahn says that Paul's opponents

"must have made it appear that immediately after his conversion Paul accepted a position quite subordinate,

1 James Hardy Ropes, op. cit., p. 14.
EVIDENCE IN THE AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL SECTION

and entirely dependent upon the earlier apostles, and also that at the so-called apostolic council he submitted to the decision of his superiors in Jerusalem."

The same position is also taken by J.A. Beet in his Commentary on St. Paul's Epistle to the Galatians, when he says, in referring to this section,

"that the false teachers had insinuated that Paul received the gospel at second hand and preached only in virtue of a commission from the apostles sent personally by Christ, and was therefore inferior to them;"

In order to save this group from the charge made by Ropes, that such a position would demand that the judaizers were condemning Paul for being subordinate to the very body to which they also looked for authority, we would have to add that they also charged him with "preaching a different gospel from that which he had received from them." Such a charge is nowhere apparent. Therefore this group finds itself either wrecked on the charge by Ropes, or lost in trying to account for the difference between the St. Paul's Gospel and that which he received from the Jerusalem apostles.

However, another scholar who holds to the judaistic

3 Ibid., p. 24.
EVIDENCE IN THE AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL SECTION

theory looks upon this section as an attempt of Paul to prove that his gospel was divine, and therefore independent of all men. This contention differs from the others in that it considers the section which deals with Paul's relationship to the Jerusalem apostles, not necessarily in answer to a separate charge, but only necessary evidence to establish Paul's main theme, that his gospel is of divine source. The charge which brought forth this section of the Letter is conceived to be, not that Paul was dependent upon the apostles at Jerusalem, but that "he had never received a commission authorizing him to set himself up as a teacher of religion of Jesus." The result of his failure to receive this commission was that his gospel was accused of being inferior to that of the Jerusalem apostles.

This conception of the original charge is quite different from the one which Ropes finds difficult in believing, and which he attempts to refute. Therefore if the existence of such a charge can be proved, we have disproved the contention of the Radical Theory at this point. For it is not built upon any constructive foundation, but is entirely based upon the supposition that the charge

1 E. DeWitt Burton
2 Ibid., p. 35.
EVIDENCE IN THE AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL SECTION

which Paul is refuting is that he was dependent upon the Jerusalem apostles.

In order to establish the existence of such a charge, we shall have to follow quite closely the evidence in this section. Verse eleven presents the general proposition that the gospel which he preached is not according to man. With this as his proposition Paul begins at once to prove it. He says, 'that his message neither had its source in man, nor was man an instrument in bringing him his message.' But that it 'was the result of a personal experience, which was divine in its origin.' Paul now begins to amass evidence to prove that his gospel was independent of any human authority and he uses a chronological arrangement of his life as an outline (1:13-2:21)

The first evidence in defense of his proposition is drawn from his life before his conversion. Paul calls their attention to the fact that he was not under any Christian influence whatsoever. In fact he then violently opposed the followers of Jesus. There is also another interesting piece of evidence in this section. Paul in his own mind had formed a distinct difference between the Judaism of his former life, and the present faith which he then held. In speaking of Judaism he calls it Ἰουδαϊσμός which is interpreted "the religion of the Jews."
EVIDENCE IN THE AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL SECTION

"The very use of this term in this way is significant of the apostle's conception of the relation between his former and his present faith, indicating that he held the latter, and had presented it to the Galatians, not as a type of Judaism, but as an independent religion distinct from that of the Jews."1

And over against this he speaks of "the church of God" thus uniting all local Christian communities into one body, the Church, and thus showing that even though the word, Christianity, was not used, it was already a fact.

Paul then moves on to the next outstanding events in his life, his conversion and what immediately followed. In verses fifteen - following he tells them that the divine activity had "set him apart" at the time of his birth. He is saying that,

"He whom God himself from his birth set apart to be a preacher of the gospel to the Gentiles and whom by his grace he called into that service cannot be dependent on men for his commission or subject to their control."2

He continues by telling them that after his conversion he did not go to see the apostles, but made his way into Arabia, and when he did return he went to Damascus and not to Jerusalem. There is no break between this evidence and that which went before it. Standing by itself it might be interpreted that Paul is claiming to be independent of

1 E. DeWitt Burton, op. cit., p. 44.
2 Ibid., p. 49.
EVIDENCE IN THE AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL SECTION

the Jerusalem apostles, but when considered in the connection in which it is used, it is only part of the evidence offered to show that he was independent of all men, and dependent upon God only, for his gospel and authority. The conjunction connecting the two pieces of evidence should be translated "and", not "but", for the reason that there is no sense of antithesis between the two statements, the second rather continues the argument of the first.

The third piece of evidence has to do with Paul's first visit to Jerusalem. Here he tells them quite frankly that the purpose of his visit was to see Peter. And the verb which he uses was one used "by those who go to see great and famous cities." 1

"He went to Jerusalem to see Peter especially, as a distinguished and great man whom a young convert like himself regarded with peculiar respect, but not to seek authority or commission from the apostles as an official body." 2

Next Paul states quite clearly that he was "unknown among the church of Judaea, and that he went into the regions of Syria and Cilicia, also noting that the church 'glorified God' because he was 'now preaching the faith'." This evidence proves that he did not place himself under the

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1 J.B. Lightfott, op. cit., p. 227.
2 W.M. Ramsay, A Historical Commentary on St. Paul's Epistle to the Galatians, p. 283.
EVIDENCE IN THE AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL SECTION

direction of the Jerusalem apostles, but carried on work independent of them. Thus Paul is still piling up the evidence that he was not influenced in any way by the Christian Church or by the apostles at Jerusalem. In order to prove the main contention that his gospel was not dependent on any man or men for authority, it is only natural that he should have to prove that he did not receive anything from the Jerusalem apostles. But he is also in the ticklish position of having to prove that he was in accord with the Jerusalem apostles, or a split in the growing young church would be the result.

With this in mind Paul proceeds with his evidence, now coming to an event which happened fourteen years after his first visit to Jerusalem. This is known as the second visit to Jerusalem, or the Jerusalem Council. The purpose and results of this visit have been the subject of many debates and much writing. We will not even try to summarize the account, but will see what there is in it that will help us to understand the reason why Paul included it in this Letter to the Galatians.

Paul refers to the fact

"that when he went up it was not at their command, but in obedience to divine revelation; then, indicating that the question at issue was then, as now in Galatia, the
circumcision of the Gentiles who had accepted his gospel, he tells how he laid his gospel before the Jerusalem Christians, and in a private session before the pillars of the church, James and Cephas and John, since he recognised that their disapproval of his preaching might render of no avail his future work and undo what he had already done."

The first thing that can be learned from this account is that the question under consideration at Jerusalem was not a matter of doctrinal significance. The doctrine, however, rested on the practical question as to whether Gentile believers had to be circumcised, or had to subject themselves to the Jewish Law. Out of this practical question and out of the answer to it, there arose the doctrinal question as to the significance of the work of Christ for salvation.

The presence of this section in the Letter to the Galatians, bulwarked by the doctrinal passage which is also in the Letter, points to the existence of the same discussion in the Galatian church. There could be no reason for Paul to give such a detailed account of what happened if he were only trying to prove that the apostles agreed with his work and doctrine. All he would have had to do would have been to announce the result of the council, and to show that the Jerusalem apostles were in accord with his work. Nor does it add anything to the main point to which the apostle is

1 E. DeWitt Burton, op. cit., p. 66.
driving, namely that his authority was divine.

Two results of this council are significant in the light of the problem before us. First, "It drew from the authorities at Jerusalem the admission that 'circumcision is nothing' and that the Gentile Christians are free from the ritual law." And secondly, Paul was able to establish the point toward which he had been working, by presenting the testimony of the apostles at Jerusalem to the effect that they had given him

"the right hand of fellowship, in which was involved the acknowledgement of their divine call to preach the gospel among the Gentiles; in which was involved moreover, the recognition of the right to preach just as they had been preaching."²

So far, Paul has been able to do three things. First, to prove his independence of all men and his divine authority, which involved his independence of the Jerusalem apostles. Secondly, to prove that the Jerusalem apostles recognised and confirmed or approved his authority to preach. And finally, to prove that the Christianity which he preached was at one with their own and had the sanction of the apostles.

By his final exhibit Paul proves beyond all shadow or a doubt that he was not dependent upon any human authority

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1 G.G. Findlay, The Epistle to the Galatians, p. 112.
EVIDENCE IN THE AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL SECTION

for his message. As shown clearly in the incident when he publicly rebuked Peter at Antioch for his action in withdrawing from eating with the Gentiles, when "certain came down from James" and caused him to retrench in his position. This is also a much discussed section, and this part will have to be left to the commentators, only viewing the incident as it relates itself to the opponents of Paul in Galatia.

Paul by his action shows that he does not consider the authority of Peter, which represents the Jerusalem apostles, a sufficient reason to cause him to ease one bit in demanding the freedom of the Gentiles from the Jewish Law. Although the incident brings to light the insufficiency of the Jerusalem agreement, Paul stands by his guns, and demonstrates that he considers his authority from God, and that it is above and beyond any authority exercised by the Jerusalem apostles.

However the incident relates itself much more deeply to the situation at hand than just as a matter of authority. Paul had already brought enough evidence to prove his independence from all men. He proceeds to the question touched upon in the last exhibit, and which is paramount in the discussion with the Galatians. This is the question
EVIDENCE IN THE AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL SECTION

of circumcision or of obedience to the law of Moses by the Gentile converts to Christianity. The trouble at Antioch serves as a transition from the question of his authority to the question of the relation between Gentile converts and the Jewish law. This section will be saved for the next division.

Before we endeavor to choose between the two theories as toward which party the autobiographical section was directed, let us summarize what we have found.
SUMMARY OF EVIDENCE IN THE AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL SECTION

1. The Radical Theory presents the idea that this section is in answer to two charges: first, that Paul lacked divine authority, and secondly, that he was dependent upon the Jerusalem apostles.

No direct evidence is given to support this claim, and it is based upon the supposition that such a charge as being dependent upon the apostles at Jerusalem, could not arise from the Judaistic party. For they themselves looked to the apostles for their leadership, and also the apostles did not agree with their position.

Criticism of this position: The entire position is dependent upon the idea that this section offers evidence to the effect that Paul is here presenting his relationships with the apostles to defend the charge that he is dependent upon them.

2. The Judaistic Theory is defended by some scholars who assume the position that Paul is here defending the claim that his gospel was received second-hand, and was consequently inferior, and that he was dependent upon the Jerusalem apostles. There is no evidence in the epistle to uphold this theory against the criticism of Ropes.

The position of E. DeWitt Burton is that this section is not in answer to the charge that Paul was dependent upon the

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1 James Hardy Ropes, op. cit., p. 15.
SUMMARY OF EVIDENCE IN THE AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL SECTION

Jerusalem apostles, but that the charge was that Paul had never received the authority for his gospel from these apostles; and so his gospel was not divine, but human.

It can be seen at once that the whole question hinges upon one thing, and that is the exact nature of the charge which Paul is here refuting. Was he charged with being dependent upon the Jerusalem apostles? If so, we must vote in favor of the Radical Theory. Or was he simply refuting the charge that his gospel lacked divine authority? If the latter is the case, we must vote for the Judaistic Theory as proposed by Burton.

The only evidence supporting the first view is that Paul makes an elaborate explanation of his relationships with the Jerusalem apostles, and this fact points to the charge that he had been accused of being dependent upon them. However, such a view is condemned by what seems to me to be unanswerable objections. First, from the position which this section occupies in the text, Paul's refutation of the charge against his authority cannot be separated from the statements he makes as to the relationship which existed between the Jerusalem apostles and himself. On the same basis of reasoning used by Ropes, the Radical Party would not deny Paul's authority, no more than the Judaistic Party would say the Jerusalem apostles lacked authority. For Paul
SUMMARY OF EVIDENCE IN THE AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL SECTION

had brought to the 'radicals' (if they existed) their faith, and their supposed claims were based on part of his teachings. How could they deny authority to his teachings and claim authority for themselves on such basis. Secondly, the development of the evidence which Paul brings to prove that his authority was independent of all men, would naturally lead to a discussion of his relationship with the Jerusalem apostles. They are included in the phrase, 'all men', and really constituted the most important group of men, from the readers of Galatian's standpoint. Therefore, it is only in the order of events that the relationship is mentioned, and it does not necessarily imply that Paul had been charged with being dependent upon the apostles. I am afraid that we make a great mistake in supposing that everything that Paul says in this Letter is in direct answer to some charge. Why not give Paul credit for knowing enough to present his case in such a manner that he not only answers the charge brought against him, but presents natural developments which make his position impregnable? A third objection to this theory is that it makes possible such a translation as Ropes gives us on the section (1:11-2:14) quoted on pages 21 and 22 of this paper. Imagine a man of Paul's temperament damming his enemies in verse nine and then in the next twenty or so verses apologizing for his action and saying, "I only stayed two weeks with Peter," and "I
CONCLUSION OF THE AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL SECTION

admit I went up after fourteen years!" It is not Paul; that is all.

Therefore it stands out clearly that the situation as reviewed by E. De Witt Burton is the one that is more practical. All the evidence in this section naturally culminates to prove the one fact that Paul had his authority from God, and that he was independent of all men, even of the disciples and apostles at Jerusalem. It was as if his enemies had said, 'Your gospel is not divine, you have no authority from the Jerusalem apostles, and when you preach freedom from the law for the Gentiles, you are wrong. By what authority do you do this thing?' And Paul answers them, 'Of course I have no authority from any man, apostle, or anybody else; my authority is from God,,'

This conclusion helps us to decide the source of the charge in the first division, where because of the lack of evidence, we had to keep from passing judgment in regard to who had made the charge against his authority.
EVIDENCE IN THE PERSONAL CONFESSION SECTION

The evidence that is to be found in the introduction and the autobiographical sections has been considered, so let us now consider a short passage called by Ropes, the personal confession, (2:15-2:21). The position of the Radical Theory is very definite at this point:

"The key to the purpose and the meaning of Paul's flaming and vehement words must be looked for in verses 20 and 21: 'My doctrine is not open to the objection that it makes Christ's death superfluous.' He is clearly on the defensive here, and the whole verses 17-21 becomes comprehensible so soon as they are taken as repelling the charges that Paul's view insistently developed would make Christ a minister of sin, make void the grace of God, imply that salvation is by the law, and lead to the blasphemous absurdity that Christ died with no adequate result. Such charges as these can have come only from the 'radicals'."

Ropes makes the following paraphrase:

"We Jews, who believe in Christ, rely for salvation on faith; by the works of the law no man will be justified. But, if, while relying on Christ, we nevertheless still commit sin (as Paul, in contradiction of the perfectionism of the radicals, is compelled by the facts to admit that we do), that does not imply the absurdity that it is Christ who causes us to sin, so as to make my position (namely that believers must pay attention to morals) untenable. By faith in Christ I have broken the power of sin; if I thereafter yield to that power, it is I who make myself a transgressor; the fault is my own (and no defect is to be ascribed to Christ or the transforming power of faith in Him). I am wholly severed from the Law, and have new life unto God. I am crucified with Christ, and my life is not mine but his. I continue indeed, to live in the flesh, but none the less my life is lived in faith in the Son of God who died to save me. It is false to say that (because I hold a believer to be

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1 James Hardy Ropes, op. cit., pp. 33-34.
capable of sin) I treat the grace of God as worthless. Salvation is not gained through the law; to affirm that it is so gained would indeed be equivalent to denying the need and efficacy of the saving death of Christ. No one shall say that of me."¹

The position of those who hold to the Judaistic Theory is entirely different from this. Paul is here discussing the question, which has been brought about by the relating of what happened at Antioch between himself and Peter. At first he appeals to the action of both himself and Peter, in following after Christ as a means of justification. In doing this they both demonstrated by their act the inability of the law to save. For if the law could have saved them, they would not have followed after Christ.

"He then raises and answers the objection to his position that since his premises had led him and Peter to abandon and disregard the statutes of the law, they had made Christ a minister of sin, denying the premise of this objection that violation of law is sin, and affirming, on the contrary, that one becomes a transgressor by insisting upon obedience to the statutes of the law."²

He closes his argument with the statement that if righteousness, or salvation is to be found in the law, why then Christ's death was useless. Notice that this is the same question only reversed which has previously been suggested may have been a question of his opponents.

¹ James Hardy Ropes, op. cit., p. 33.
² E. De Witt Burton, op. cit., p. 118.
EVIDENCE IN THE PERSONAL CONFESSION SECTION

They asked that if salvation is by faith in Christ, and if this promise was given to Abraham before the law came into existence, what good is the law?

It can be seen at once that the difference between these two positions is one of translation. Is Paul saying what Ropes implies in his paraphrase, simply denying that because we commit sin after becoming followers of Christ, that this is a reason for making Christ a minister of sin? Or is Paul arguing, that if obedience to the law constituted a means of justification, and if both he and Peter had been drawn by Christ away from seeking justification through the law, that then Christ is a minister of sin, because He had drawn both Peter and Paul away from salvation? Let us study our translation and see what we can find.

The position of the commentators is not clear on this question. None of them can bring themselves to say which of three translations is right. A good summary of the views on this passage is to be found in Burton, page 127 and following. Even though the commentators cannot reach an agreement as to the exact translation of this passage, out of the four commentaries before me, not one of them even considers the translation suggested by Ropes. From the

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1 E. DeWitt Burton, J.B. Lightfoot, G.G. Findlay, J.A. Beet
EVIDENCE IN THE PERSONAL CONFESSION SECTION

viewpoint of position in the epistle, spirit of the writer, and the background out of which it came, I think the following paraphrase is a good translation.

"You will admit reter, that it was while seeking to be justified in Christ that we were led to be violators of law at Antioch; are you willing, then, to admit that Christ is a minister of sin, as would follow from what was implied in your conduct in refusing to eat with the Gentiles, viz.: that not to obey the statutes of the law is sin?" 1

Paul continued to say that he died to the law, in order that he might live to God, in other words the law stood between him and God.

We cannot therefore, take the position suggested by Ropes for two reasons: it is based on a very poor translation, for which we can find no testimony. And it falls into the wrong assumption that everything Paul says is in reply to charges from some party. There is no reason to believe that his remarks as to the denial of "making void the grace of God" were called forth as suggested in the paraphrase, "it is false to say that (because I hold a believer capable of sin) I treat the grace of God as worthless." 2 In fact there is no real connection between the original and the paraphrase. But if we consider that it has been said that Paul's doctrine of freedom was negating the

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1 E.DeWitt Burton, op. cit., p. 130.
2 James Hardy Ropes, op. cit., p. 33.
"special grace of God to Israel in giving them the law," which Paul denies, and in the next sentence proves, we see the reason for the insertion of this denial in his explanation.

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E. DeWitt Burton, op. cit., p. 140.
Both of the theories under consideration agree that in chapters three and four Paul is refuting the arguments of the judaistic party concerning his doctrine. However the Radical Theory thinks that the section included between verses 3:6-4:7

"is not satisfactorily explained by the current theory that the whole epistle is governed by the argument with the judaisers. .... his doctrine has in fact two aspects one of them decidedly Jewish in character, is the reason why the radicals attack him, and it is necessary for him somewhere to show as convincingly as he can, not only that he is opposed to the adoption of the Law by gentiles, but also that there is no inconsistency between this opposition and the value he ascribes to the Hebrew tradition." 1

Perhaps we can better understand the position upon which the Radical Theory stands from another quotation.

"In the part beginning with 3:6, his argument is founded on the assumption that Christian faith is not devoid of a positive relation to the Hebrew tradition and even to the law, and it is noticeable what pains he takes to affirm and define this positive relation." 2

Thus Ropes thinks that Paul introduces the section about Abraham, and emphasizes the fact that by faith his readers will become sons of Abraham (3:7; 3:9; 3:14; 3:29) because he feels what he must show a good reason for the stress he has placed upon Hebrew tradition in his teachings.

The followers of the Judaistic Theory see a different reason for the introduction of this material. They conten-

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1 James Hardy Ropes, op. cit., p. 35.
2 Ibid., p. 6.
that Paul is arguing for his main premise that men become acceptable before God, not through works of the law, but through faith. And that from the Judaistic party had some the argument that only the sons of Abraham would be saved, with the corollary that only through circumcision and the law could one become a son of Abraham. But look at the passage and see what can be gained from it.

Remembering that Paul, in what went before has established his authority, he now goes on to set up his doctrine. It is only necessary to read verse six to see at once what Paul is going to prove. He questions them concerning the one thing which they knew better than anything else, their own experience. His direct question is, "received ye the Spirit on ground of works of law or of a hearing faith?" Here is the antithesis which prevails throughout the whole epistle - faith vs. works. So we have argument number one in favor of Paul's general proposition that salvation is through faith. There can be only one answer to the previous question, and that is that they received the spirit through faith. Faith, what character in all history goes with that one word? None other than Abraham! But what is this? Some of his opponents have been reading the 12th and 17th chapters of Genesis, and there they had found that "no one could participate in the blessings of God's covenant with
EVIDENCE IN THE REFUTATORY SECTION
(Chapters 3-4)

Abraham, and so in the messianic salvation that is inseparably associated with it, who was not circumcised." Therefore the contention that they must obey the Jewish Law of circumcision. It is not strange that Paul used Abraham as an example, indeed it would have been strange if he had not, for had not faith been the outstanding characteristic of Abraham?

"By faith he left home and kindred, and settled in a strange land; by faith he acted upon God's promise of a race and an inheritance though it seemed at all variance with all human experience; by faith he offered up his only son, in whom alone that promise could be fulfilled."2

Or as Findlay says, "Abraham's case was the instantia probans in this debate." Paul was then in agreement with his opponents in believing that "to the sons of Abraham belonged one blessing promised to Abraham." And upon this phrase the following section turns until the end of the fourth chapter. The debate hinged on the conditions by which men may participate in this blessing. By the direction of Paul's arguments it can be seen that he is refuting the supposition that the way to become "a son of Abraham" was by circumcision, and law observance.

It will only be necessary to point out the main divisions

of Paul's argument. His first contention is that those who say that justification is by the law, and base their claim on Scripture, are, by that same authority, wrong. For the Scriptures say that all those who do not live up to the whole law are cursed, while they also say that "the righteous shall live by faith." Thus by the method of proof texting, Paul is able to pick his Scripture and to prove that men are not saved by the law, but by faith. He continues to prove that the covenant made with Abraham, which came before the law, could not be abrogated by the law, which came centuries after it. Thus he inserts one more link in his chain of evidence to prove the priority of faith over the law.

After having made the statement to the effect that the law was not the means of justification, Paul proceeds to state the purpose of the law. This is indeed necessary, for he could not deny all divine authority to the law. Whether this is the actual question of his opponents, or only one that he sees will arise from his previous argument, nothing in the epistle tells us. But Paul answers this question by "ascribing to it the function of producing transgressions, denying to it the power to give life, and making it simply temporary and preparatory to the gospel." ¹

¹ E. DeWitt Burton, op. cit., p. 187.
EVIDENCE IN THE REFUTATORY SECTION
(Chapters 3-4)

He argues further in favor of this point by contrasting the condition under the law and the condition under faith. "For while under the law it seemed as if we were under a Pedagogue, whose duty it was to bring us to Christ. But now, by faith in Jesus Christ we are all sons of God.' "And if ye are Christ's then ye are seed of Abraham, heirs according to promise." (Gal. 3:29) Now the argument has returned to where it started, the seed or sons of Abraham, to whom the promise was given not by law, but by faith. St. Paul is not satisfied with this, but expands what he had just said, by drawing an illustration to make the point clear. (4:1-7). The illustration does not add anything new to his argument.

So far Paul has established the main thesis of this section. By scriptural authority he has proved that the Gentile Christians are the true "seed of Abraham". By placing the promise given to Abraham in a superior position to the Mosaic law, he has proved further that the law is temporary and disciplinary. Christ, the heir of Abraham's testament, and those who belong to Christ, inherit the promise given to Abraham and escape the curse of the law. Paul follows this by making a personal application of what he has been saying to the case of the Galatians. (4:8-11) But as this in no way affects our argument or throws light on our problem it will not be considered.
EVIDENCE IN THE REFUTATORY SECTION
(Chapters 3-4)

For a short section Paul ceases his arguing, and makes a personal appeal to the Galatians,

"begging (them) to take his attitude toward the law, referring to the circumstance under which he had preached the gospel to them .... He compares his own zealous pursuit of them with that of his opponents, justifying his by its motive, but expresses, also, the wish that he could be with them right now and speak in a different tone from that, by implication harsher one, which he had employed on some previous occasion when he had 'told them the truth'."

The one verse reference to his opponents is very important for our consideration. Paul does not call them by name, in fact he does not even use a pronoun when talking about them. "That he does not find it needful to mention them expressly, proves that they are already present to his thought." He refers to their motives as compared with his, insinuating that theirs are both insincere and selfish, and that their desire was to shut out the Galatians in order that the Galatians would seek them (i.e. Paul's opponents). We are led to conjecture from what the opponents of Paul desired to shut the Galatians out, by the position in which we find the reference. "By insisting on ceremonial observances, they were in fact shutting the Galatians from Christ." Paul closes his personal appeal with the

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1 E. DeWitt Burton, op. cit., p. 235.
2 Joseph Agar Beet, op. cit., p. 127.
3 J.B. Lightfoot, op. cit., p. 275.
expression of the desire that he might be with them and talk to them personally.

Then as an afterthought Paul thinks that perhaps he can make his argument clearer by illustrating his principle by means of an allegorical interpretation of the story regarding the two sons of Abraham. So in verses 21 to 31 Paul makes an elaborate argument, based on this story. Condensed, his argument amounts to this:

"Would you be sons of Abraham? Be so, but observe that of the Abrahamic family there are two branches, the slave and the free. We, brethren, whose relation to Abraham is spiritual, not physical, we are the sons not of the slave, but of the free."1

Thus Paul ends his argument for the superiority under the law. It is not possible to find any direct evidence in this section which will point clearly to one theory or to another. But as was the case in the autobiographical section, the Radical Theory is based on objections to the Judaistic Theory. Therefore these objections will now be considered, weighing the evidence for and against each one, and by this method come to our conclusion as to which theory can be supported by this division of the epistle.

Ropes presents two main objections to the application of the Judaistic Theory to the entire argument of this

1 E. DeWitt Burton, op. cit., p. 251.
In verse 6 Paul introduces the discussion of Abraham not at all as if it were the premise of his opponents, with which he has to reckon in the controversy, but quite as his own idea, brought in by reason of his own interests in order to illustrate the general view which he himself wishes to make clear. So also in the following verse it presently appears that the reference to Abraham is more than a passing illustration; it is an integral element in his own system of thought. Secondly, the conception which the usual solution requires is not at all easy to picture, and is too narrow. This has perhaps been made sufficiently clear by what has been said above. The solution commonly proposed cannot, therefore, be regarded as satisfactory, although perhaps it cannot be called impossible.\(^1\)

Let us take up the first part of the first objection, which suggests that Paul introduces his reference to Abraham, not as the premise of his opponent but as his own idea. Perhaps this was not the premise of Paul's opponents, but we have no way of knowing. Nevertheless this can be seen, that in verses 3:1-5 Paul draws from his readers the mental assertion that their justification came through faith and not through works. This assertion in itself proves that works of law are not essential to salvation. With this thought uppermost in his mind St. Paul moves directly to Abraham. "In this mode of salvation the apostle goes on to show, there was after all nothing new. The righteousness of faith is more ancient than legalism. It is as old as Abraham."\(^2\)

\(^{1}\) G.G. Findlay, op. cit., p. 181.

\(^{2}\) James Hardy Ropes, op. cit., p. 9.
The two sections follow each other as naturally as day and night. And granted be the fact that the grounding of his doctrine of salvation through faith in Abraham is essential to his system of thought. That does not disconnect what follows from verses 1-5, which are without a doubt directed against judaistic teachings. Nor in placing the basis of his teachings upon the promise given to Abraham is Paul making a concession to the judaisers, as Ropes suggests. He is rather placing his own doctrine on bedrock, by going back to a direct promise of God. In the section 3:19-22 there is no evidence that Paul is trying to balance a respect for the law with a rejection of it. It fits in very naturally as an answer to the question, as to the purpose of the law. Paul argues quite at length for the inferiority of the law (3:15-18; 3:23-29; 4:1-7) and in the section 4:8-11 he compares the days when the Galatians worshiped heathen gods with the days under one law for the Jews. For these reasons it is impossible to agree with the contention of the controversy. Another vital argument against this position is that it requires us to think that Paul makes an attack against the judaisers in 3:1-5, and then branches off into a defense of his doctrine from the charges of the 'radicals'. Then in

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1 James Hardy Ropes, op. cit., p. 7.
EVIDENCE IN THE REFUTATORY SECTION (Chapters 3-4)

4:12-20, Paul again takes up the question of the judaisers with a reference to those who were troubling them, only once more to proceed into an allegorical illustration of his position to satisfy the Radical Party. A section to section study shows that there is a steady movement of thought, with the one exception where Paul returns to illustrate further his position by the story of the two sons of Abraham.

As to the second objection I think Ropes is stretching a point when he says:

"if a Gentile had not been actually converted to Judaism, the comment he would make on being told that Gentiles by exercising faith become sons of Abraham would, 'Why should I be interested in becoming a son of Abraham?' If Paul's readers crave is not sonship to Abraham for its own sake, but salvation; and that, as Paul tells them, comes solely through Christ. Why this round-a-bout method of further argument,"

This does not take into consideration the fact that even the Gentiles in Galatia had been converted by Paul, and that Paul did not preach Christ and salvation without tying it up very definitely with some form of Judaism. For after all Christ was from God, and such a promise had been made centuries ago to Abraham, so why would Paul preach Christ without presenting a Jewish background. Simply

1 James Hardy Ropes, op. cit., p. 7.
because Paul saw his way to denounce the law as a method of obtaining salvation, does not say that he cut off himself completely from the promises made to Abraham.

Therefore the conclusion for this section of the epistle is that it is an answer to the charges made against Paul's doctrine by the judaistic party. For the entire passage moves, not swiftly, but nevertheless moves to the one conclusion that the way to justification is not by the works of the law, but by faith, even as God had promised to Abraham.
EVIDENCE IN THE ETHICAL SECTION

The third section of the Letter is known as the hortatory section (5:1-6:10) Paul has defended his authority to preach, independent of all men (1:11-2:21). And in chapters 3 and 4, he has answered the charges of opponents, who were in favor of imposing legalism as a means of justification upon the Gentile converts. Before the intentions of this final section can be determined, it will be necessary to see what evidence can be found.

The Radical Theory interprets this section, beginning with verse eleven as Paul's attack "on what was, in Paul's eyes the most objectionable aspect of the radicals' teaching and influence, namely, their perfectionist disregard of moral discipline." Verses one to eleven are considered a summary of the refutatory section "which has as its main purpose the refutation and reprove of the judaisers."

This ethical section is considered by those who contend for the Judaistic Theory to be a moral development of the doctrinal teaching which Paul has expounded in the previous section. To the moral development he adds certain application. Or as A.W.F.Blunt says,

"Paul reaches in chapter five his practical conclusion. All doctrinal arguments, about Faith and the Law, the

1 James Hardy Ropes, op. cit., p. 39.
2 Ibid., p. 38.
Promise and the Law, Grace and works, are summed up in the conclusion that the differentia of Christianity is Freedom.¹

First let us consider the position of the Radical Theory, its strength and its weakness.

The first contention is to the effect that the break between the short section, dealing with the fact that if the Galatians yield to circumcision Christ will be of no avail, and the following outburst as to the charge that Paul is still preaching circumcision, occur at verse ten instead or verse twelve. Ropes says, "the transition to the next topic is an important one, sharper than any other transition in the epistle."² And he further adds that, "verses 11 and 12 do not in our interpretation bear any relation to what immediately precedes them."³ But upon a closer study of the text this does not prove to be the case. For in 5:2 Paul says "if ye be circumcised Christ will in no way benefit you." This is the first time that the word or rite of circumcision has been mentioned in the epistle. Although the drift of the argument has tended toward that very thing, Paul is here applying the principle, for which he has been contending, to the rite of circumcision. If the Galatians accept circumcision they

¹ A.W.F.Blunt, The Epistle of Paul to the Galatians, p. 122.
² James Hardy Ropes, op. cit., p. 36.
³ Ibid., p. 39.
EVIDENCE IN THE ETHICAL SECTION

must also take the entire law, and in so doing they place themselves outside the fold of Christ. This condemnation of circumcision continues and is mentioned again in verse 6: "For in Christ Jesus neither hath circumcision any strength nor uncircumcision, but faith working in us through love." Then Paul makes a short digression with reference to those who have cut the Galatians off from the truth, which closes with a note of hope. Then come verses 11 and 12, "But why am I yet being persecuted, if I am still proclaiming circumcision? Then the offense of the cross is done away with." Who can say that the reference to circumcision here has no connection with the things said about it in verses 2 and 7? Surely they are the same. One grows out of the other. They are linked together by the nature of the charge which called forth from Paul this denial, that he still preached circumcision. The Radical Theory contends that such a charge would only come from the 'radical' party on the basis that the judaisers would not charge Paul with preaching one of their contentions. However, this is not necessarily true, for the type of personal attacks made against him shows that their method was to discredit him with the Galatians. Such a charge as this would have the desired effect.

The one thing which points to the direction of the charge is not the charge itself, but the sentence which follows,
EVIDENCE IN THE ETHICAL SECTION

the conclusion to which Paul comes, namely - that the offense of the cross is done away with, if he is still preaching circumcision. Let us analyze what is being said here. Paul first speaks about the worthlessness of circumcision, and then adds a reference to those who were troubling the Galatians. In speaking of one, the other evidently comes to his mind. Immediately following there is a denial of the charge of preaching circumcision, which is backed up by the statement that if he still preached circumcision, why should he be persecuted, for such teachings would remove the doctrine which was offensive to those who persecuted him, namely - the cross of Christ. Now who other but Jews or Christians with strict judaizing tendency would be offended by the doctrine of the cross? Is it not clear that Paul is saying that he is being persecuted because his doctrine presents a "stumbling block?" Else there would be no reason for the persecution. "The crucifixion of Messiah was itself a stumbling block to the Jews, but preached as the means of atonement, it became doubly more so: compare 1 Corinthians 1:23." When this is considered in light of the doctrinal section in which Paul is clearly arguing the superiority of salvation by faith as against the works of

1 J.B.Lightfoot, op. cit., p. 287.
EVIDENCE IN THE ETHICAL SECTION

the law, it seems to be clear that those who are the opponents of Paul in this matter must be either Jews or Christians with a strong tendency toward the views held by the orthodox Jew. The strength of this point is lost by Ropes, when he paraphrases the section to mean, "For one who preaches circumcision the cross of Christ is no source of personal risk," which is true for the implication of part of verse 11. But it does violence to the thought and cannot be based upon any translation of one phrase under consideration. Therefore we must agree with the Judaistic Theory at this point, as we fail to find any evidence for the support of the contentions of the Radical theory.

The second division under this main section of ethical instruction is from 5:13-6:1. Here the two theories are directly opposed to each other again. The Radical Theory contends that this section is called forth by the actions of the 'radical' party, "which has misused liberty for the false ends of license, and which, while pluming itself on its superiority in the Spirit has in fact given an occasion to the flesh." While the position of the Judaistic Theory presents the idea that Paul is

1 James Hardy Ropes, op. cit., p. 39.
2 Ibid., p. 40.
"Aware that on the one side it will probably be urged against his doctrine of freedom from law that it removes the restraints that keep men from immorality, and certainly on the other that those who accept it are in danger of misinterpreting it as if this were the case, he fervently exhorts the Galatians not to fall into this error, but, instead, through love to serve one another."

Of all the sections which have been considered so far, this one gives the least response to the inquiry as to why St. Paul should include it in this particular Letter. There seems to be a perfect balance without adding weight to either side. Of course, with the condemnation of the Radical Theory by the evidence gathered in the rest of the epistle, naturally it is the tendency to put aside this theory as applied to this section also. But we find an absolute lack of evidence for doing so within the section itself. In fact there is in verses 20 and 21 a reference to "Those who live by the Spirit" which gives color to the Radical Theory. Even Burton is led to remark that;

"The two parts of the exhortation doubtless have reference to two classes in the churches of the Galatians. Those who fancied that they had attained unto freedom and were in danger of converting their freedom into an occasion to the flesh (5:13) whose \( \text{κατω το σώμα του θ ελπιδων} \) took the form of pride in their fancied possession of liberty to act without restraint, would be tempted to challenge (\( \text{ποιος ακίντως ημ} \) ) their more timid or more scrupulous brethren, ... On the other hand, the more scrupulous would, while not quite daring to follow in the footsteps of these, yet be tempted to regard this spurious liberty of their fellow-Christians

1 E. DeWitt Burton, op. cit., p. 290.
as a thing to be desired, and to look at them with envy, wishing that they felt the same freedom.  

But for our purpose, neither the tone, the content, nor the position gives any clue as to whether Paul is here directing a warning against an actual condition, or whether he is giving a warning against a danger which he sees is possible. Nevertheless the opening verses of chapter five including the charge of preaching circumcision, we concluded, were directed against the judaisers.

1 E. DeWitt Burton, op. cit., p. 323.
Beginning with 6:11 Paul makes a final plea against the judaisers, pointing out a number of things about them.

1. Their selfish motive
2. Their desire to escape persecution
3. Their wish to convert you to Judaism
4. They do not keep the law themselves
5. They are compelling the Galatians to be circumcised.

There can be no doubt but that the warning of 6:11-15 is made against the judaizing party. The reference to the fact that they were compelling the Galatians to be circumcised, marks this section very clearly. And with a final reiteration of the main contention of the epistle, "that neither circumcision nor uncircumcision is anything," St. Paul brings to a close his Epistle to the Galatians.
RESULTS OF THE EVIDENCE FOUND IN THE LETTER

We have made a hurried study of the epistle for the purpose of discovering evidence which will enable us to choose between two theories as to the Trouble-Makers in Galatia. The two theories, the Radical Theory and the Judaistic Theory, have been defined, and their main contention considered for each separate section of the Letter. It has been found that the evidence has pointed consistently toward the Judaistic Theory and against the Radical Theory. There have been definite reasons for rejecting the Radical Theory in all sections but one, and in that section no positive reasons were found for retaining it. Perhaps the reasons for rejecting the Radical Theory can be set forth by answering the four objections to the Judaistic Theory, upon which the Radical Theory is constructed.

First Objection: "The supposed appeal of the judaisers to the Jerusalem apostles is odd, since precisely the main contention of the judaisers was not shared by the Jerusalem apostles."

Answer: The charge was not an appeal to the Jerusalem apostles as against the authority of Paul; but the charge that Paul should have received his authority from them, if it were to have any real authority. Paul's answer was to declare his independence of all men for authority.
RESULTS OF THE EVIDENCE FOUND IN THE LETTER

Second Objection: This objection calls attention to the improbability that the judaizers would have charged that Paul had received his authority from the Jerusalem apostles.

Answer: This is based on the idea that they had charged Paul with being dependent upon the Jerusalem apostles, which was shown in the former question as being a misconception.

Third Objection: It is strange that Paul should be charged with preaching circumcision by those who also preached it; and still stranger that he should counter this argument by proving his independence of the Jerusalem apostles.

Answer: The charge of preaching circumcision is accounted for, considering it an attack upon Paul in an attempt to discount him in the eyes of the Galatians. Paul did not answer this charge by proving his independence of the Jerusalem apostles. Paul answered it by the simple question, "Why am I still persecuted if I preach circumcision?" (5:11). The obvious answer being that if he preached circumcision he would not be persecuted.

Fourth Objection: The presence of ethical advice weakens Paul's argument against the judaizers, and can hardly be pastoral.
RESULTS OF THE EVIDENCE FOUND IN THE LETTER

**Answer:** The exact reason why Paul included this section in the Letter is not to be found from internal evidence, but I fail to see just how it weakens the argument. In fact, it is the moral complement of the argument and comes naturally enough out of the contentions for which Paul has argued so strenuously.

With the main objections to the Judaistic Theory explained, and the lack of positive evidence in favor of the contentions of the Radical Theory, our conclusion is that the Trouble-Makers in Galatia were members of a Judaistic party.

"But the central purpose of the letter is to arrest the progress of the judaizing propaganda with its perverted gospel of salvation through works of law, which the Galatians were on the very point of accepting, and to win them back to faith in Jesus Christ apart from works of law, the gospel which Paul himself had taught them."¹

¹ E. DeWitt Burton, op. cit., p. lv.
The next problem to be considered is the question of the source of the judaising opposition. The first thing to be kept in mind is that this trouble in Galatia was not just an isolated case.

"St. Paul's career was one life-long conflict with the judaising antagonists. Setting aside the Epistle to the Thessalonians, which was written too early to be affected by this struggle all his letters addressed to churches, with one exception (Ephesians) refer more or less directly to such opposition. It assumed different forms in different places. In Galatia it was purely Pharisaic; in Phrygia and Asia it was strongly tinged with mysticism; but everywhere, and under all circumstances, zeal for the law was the ruling passion."

A number of interesting theories have been suggested to account for the wide-spread territory which this opposition covered. Four suggestions are worthy of consideration. First, could this judaistic party be a member of a group under the leadership of James, the Lord's brother? The second theory would account for this movement by attributing it to the leadership of Peter. Still another theory would say that the Trouble-Makers in Galatia were emissaries from a judaistic party with head-quarters at Jerusalem, and who were in opposition with both Peter and James. The last possibility is that the movement arose within the church at Galatia, through the activities of Jews of the Disapora, who were legalists.

The first consideration will be the evidence in favor of and contrary to the first theory—was the judaistic party under the leadership of James?

1 J.B. Lightfoot, op. cit., p. 149.
"CERTAIN FROM JAMES"

This theory is based mainly on two points. First, the reference to "certain from James" whose arrival in Antioch caused Peter and Barnabas to withdraw from eating with the Gentile Christians in Galatians 2:12. Secondly, the little known about James shows him to be the more conservative member of the Jerusalem apostles.

It is doubtful if this possibility would have suggested itself to scholars if it were not for the mention of the emissary from St. James who arrived in Antioch, after the liberal-minded St. Peter had spent some time there in company with the Gentile Converts. This was shortly after the so-called Jerusalem council, at which the freedom of the gentiles from Mosaic Law had been confirmed by the Jerusalem Church. However this may be accounted for by supposing that James had not realized what the fulfillment of the agreement reached in the council, would mean. It was one thing to say that the gentile converts did not have to be circumcised, and an entirely different thing when the Jews broke the ceremonial laws by eating and fraternizing with these Gentiles. In the Jewish community at Jerusalem, this problem had not suggested itself, but in the mixed community at Antioch, it was a very pressing question. The conservatism of James caused him to revolt at such a thing, and when news was brought that it
"CERTAIN FROM JAMES"

was going on in Antioch, and that reter was a party to it, he immediately sent members of the Jerusalem church to call the Jews to order.

"for to James as well as to the more extreme legalists such conduct might seem not only to violate the Jerusalem agreement, but to create a most serious obstacle to the development of the Christian faith among the Jews." 1

This is about all the direct evidence which is to be found for this theory. There are a number of things which seem to me to point out the improbability that such a party could have enjoyed the leadership of James.

Notice that in the second chapter of Galatians, just a few verses before Paul mentions the "certain from James", he also makes mention of "false brethren" who were brought in secretly to "spy out our freedom" at the Jerusalem conference. Now these "false brethren" are very definitely identified as those who desired to force the Mosaic Law upon the Gentiles, but there seems to be no connection in Paul's mind between the two references. We have a very definite feeling that the two are not the same. In fact from the position that James took in this conference, it is established that he did not lead the "false brethren" or the legalist party. For he and Peter are credited with making speeches in favor of accepting

1 E. DeWitt Burton, op. cit., p. 106.
the position suggested by Paul. Scholars have granted this but then they say that James changed his mind when he saw all that was really involved in the agreement, and that his sending men to Antioch is proof that he did. From that time on, James with the conservative Jewish position that was his, became the real leader of the legalist forces which hounded Paul all over Europe. One vital piece of evidence is against this position. When we read in the twenty first chapter of Acts, how Paul on his return to Jerusalem with his peace offering from the Gentiles was addressed by the Elders, we find the following speech:

"Thou seest brother, how many thousands of Jews there are which believe; and they are all zealous for the law. And they are informed of thee, that thou teachest all the Jews which are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses saying that they ought not to circumcise their children, neither to walk after the customs. ..... and all may know that those things whereof they were informed concerning thee, are nothing; but that thou thyself also walkest orderly, and keesthe the law." (Act. 21:20-24)

Even though James may not have made this speech he at least concurred in it. And what reason is there to believe that the Elders at Jerusalem were insincere, and would say that Paul was innocent of the things of which he was charged, if they did not themselves believe it to be so? It was impossible to believe that James could be the author of the trouble made for Paul in Galatia and elsewhere, and then to take the position which this report in Acts refers to him.
PETRINE PARTY

The evidence for believing that the judaistic party could have been under the leadership of James was very scant, and in the case of evidence pointing toward a Petrine party we find even less. This possibility is suggested by the fact that in the trouble at Corinth, mention is made of a Petrine party. On the basis that such a party existed in the Corinthian church some scholars think that it is possible that the trouble in Galatia could have arisen from the same source.

We shall not attempt to go into the problem as to the Petrine party in the Corinthian church, but simply to acknowledge that the mention of such a party must have had some historical background. First notice the trouble between Paul and Peter at Antioch.

"All that St. Paul says is that when St. Peter was in Antioch he gave up his usual intercourse with the Gentile Christians under pressure from the emissaries from St. James of Jerusalem, and that St. Paul rebuked him. So far from implying that St. Peter was the consistent antagonist of Paulinism or of the Antiochene movement he is represented as friendly to it, and only yielding under pressure to the extremists from Jerusalem." ¹

We know also that Peter is represented as making a speech with James in favor of Paul and his work among the Gentiles at the Jerusalem Council. And had not Peter seen with his own eyes "the coming of the spirit" upon a man who

was not circumcised? He had received a vision from the Lord which taught him not to call any meat unclean. Is it credible that Peter would head such a movement as would harass Paul in almost all of his missionary churches? As to the reference to a Petrine party in the Corinthian church we need no discussion. Only there is one thing which should be pointed out in this connection.

"There is from the beginning to the end of the Epistles to the Corinthians not the faintest trace of any controversy as to that insistence on circumcision and on the law, which we recognize as cardinal in those to the Galatians and to the Romans." ¹

Thus even though the Petrine party may have existed, it did not prove itself to be a legalistic party, which it would most surely have done, had it had anything in common with the Galatian Trouble-Makers. Thus when things which we know about Peter are considered, there is nothing to point to the fact that he would be so narrow and so conservative as to direct missionary endeavors in legalism, opposed to Paul's work in mixed churches.

The last two theories have one thing in common. They contend that the Trouble-Makers were a party of legalists; Jews who championed the Mosaic Law, even for Gentile converts, as a means of salvation. One theory would have us believe that the legalistic party located in Jerusalem sent

¹ Kirsopp Lake, op. cit., p. 222.
PETRINE PARTY

out missionaries to win the Gentiles over to their way of thinking. While the other theory contends that the trouble was made by legalists who were members of the local church, and who did not come in from the outside. Neither side can prove its theory, although one side may prove to be more probable in face of the evidence that can be gathered than the other.
There are a number of very definite things that point toward this theory as a solution to the problem under consideration. In the first place the account of the Council at Jerusalem makes it very clear that there were three parties involved. First there are Paul and Barnabas who had been working in the Antioch Church and who had presented their claims for Gentile freedom. Secondly, the party of the disciples, headed by James and Peter, who agreed with Paul and who were willing to accede to his request. Then another party entered the controversy, and these Paul calls the "false brethren". They must have counted quite strongly against the position which Paul was taking, and even then prevailed upon the apostles to request that Titus should be circumcised. Paul would not agree to this. The request of the apostles was made in a spirit of, 'do it to save trouble,' but they recognized that the gospel was for men, regardless whether or not they were circumcised. Thus we feel sure that such a legalistic party existed among the Jerusalem Christians. But the question as to whether or not they sent emissaries to outlying churches is another question.

The first thing that points to the possibility of the Trouble-Makers being from the outside, presumably from Jerusalem, is that Paul distinguishes them from the
church members. Notice in 1:7 - "But there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel." If those who were making the trouble were numbered among those to whom he was writing, he would have stated it differently. The same characteristic can be found in (3:1; 4:17; 29-31; 5:7-10,12; 6:12). Also,

"Paul does not resist them as if they were settled teachers, who as members of the churches were doing things which to him seemed injurious, but he treats them as if they were preachers of a false gospel, i.e. missionary preachers who dogged his steps and invaded the churches which he founded."¹

Paul in writing this Letter has in mind the Gentile Christians because in verse 4:8, "Howbeit then, when ye knew not God, ye did service unto them which by nature are no gods." This could only refer to the Gentile Christians, yet there must have been some Jews among the congregation. Now, seeing that Paul was writing to a Gentile church, how would they understand all the references made to Jewish history and the Old Testament? Are we to suppose that Paul had seen with them long enough to give them a background in Jewish history? Of course! This Letter only has value as it is interpreted by a Jewish body of Christians. In the refutatory section, Paul must have counted on somebody who would bring these arguments

¹ Theodor Zahn, op. cit., p. 105.
A LEGALISTIC PARTY FROM JERUSALEM

to the judaisers, and thus to refute what they claimed for themselves. At the same time it would impress upon the Gentile Christians their position in the plan of the cross. So it seems that when Paul addresses the church he thinks of Gentiles, but when addressing his arguments it is to a Jewish audience. This argues that the Trouble-Makers were not members of his congregation and that they had come in from the outside.

One other fact seems to point toward the idea that this legalistic tendency came in from the outside, and that is, if persons with such a strict legalistic point of view were members of the church they would have argued the point with Paul when he first established the church among them. And in that case Paul would have known them, and known that the legalistic tendency existed. But it seems to be a late development and Paul does not know exactly who is responsible for the condition. So it becomes clear that the legalists must have just recently moved into the churches, or else they are missionaries sent into the churches for the one purpose of preaching law obedience for the Gentiles. This latter seems to have been the case.
This paper had as its purpose - to discover the party or parties who were the source of the opposition which Paul encountered in his missionary work among the Galatian Churches. Two possibilities presented themselves. First, a party of 'radical' Christians who had reacted against the legalism of Judaism. Secondly, a judaistic party, who attempted to bring the Gentile converts under the jurisdiction of the Jewish Laws. The claims of these two theories were considered in the light of evidence which was revealed in the epistle. It was found that the evidence offered by Ropes in favor of the Radical Theory was not sufficient. The four objections to the Judaistic Theory upon which the Radical Theory is built were upon examination discovered not to be valid. After a close application of both theories to the epistle, the conclusion was reached that the Trouble-Makers of Galatia were members of a judaistic party.

The next question that had to be answered was in regard to the source of the Trouble. Four possibilities were presented. First, that the opposition was under the leadership of Peter. This theory was found wanting, after the relation of Peter to Paul had been considered, plus the entire absence of any evidence pointing to such
a conclusion. Secondly, the possibility of James being the leader found some evidence in its favor. This however, was discarded mainly because of James' attitude toward Paul upon the occasion of Paul's last visit to Jerusalem.

The last two suggestions as to the source of the Trouble were that it was caused by a legalistic party either rising spontaneously in the local church or under direction of members of the Jerusalem Church. Because of certain hints in the Letter we concluded that the Trouble-Makers in Galatia consisted of missionaries or traveling teachers, rather than local people. These teachers or missionaries came presumably from Jerusalem, the center of judaistic legalism. Thus the final conclusion of this paper is that the Trouble-Makers were a judaistic, legalistic party from Jerusalem.
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