The churches in Galatia - there are two theories as to who the Galatians were.

The South Galatian theory - Galatia refers to political Galatia, the Southern part, the province of Galatia. They are the four churches mentioned in Acts 13-14. Most evangelical scholars and archeologists hold to this theory. Most of the Galatians were Phrygians, known for their strict and moralistic religion and pagan cults.

The North Galatian theory - Galatia refers to ethnic Galatia, the land of the Gauls and Celts. Most scholars held to this view before the 20th century. Some still hold to it today.

The Law - shorthand for the Law of Moses. Also called "the Torah." It refers to all 613 commandments in the writings of Moses. 365 are negative ("thou shalt not"), 248 are positive ("thou shalt"). The ancients did not divide the Law up into civil, ceremonial, and moral. The Law was viewed as one unit.

The works of the Law - refers to acts done in obedience to the Mosaic Law. It refers to the actions commanded, demanded, and prescribed by the Law of Moses. Doing the ordinances of the Torah (Law). The New Perspective scholars say the works of the Law only refer to the distinctive Jewish identity markers of circumcision, the dietary regulations, and Sabbath observance which are badges that a person is part of God's covenant. I believe the best scholarship disagrees with this view. Rather, the works of the Law refer to the attempt to do everything the Law commands and refrain from everything the Law forbids. It has in view the entire Law of Moses.

The legalists - There are five references to the legalists in Galatians (1:7; 3:1; 4:17; 5:7-12; 6:12-13). They are referred to as agitators (those who are "disturbing/troubling/agitating" the Galatians, 5:12). Judaizers (those who want the Gentiles in Galatia to "live like Jews," 2:14). The "party of the circumcision" (2:12). These men came from Jerusalem and were led by one ringleader (5:10). I believe this one ringleader was Paul's thorn in the flesh who dogged Paul's steps wherever he went and sought to undermine his work (see frankviola.org/paulsthornintheflesh).

The gospel - refers to the good news that Jesus of Nazareth, who died, was buried, and rose again, is this world's true Lord and Savior, and those who repent and entrust themselves to Him in believing allegiance will be saved from the consequences of sin -- past, present and future.

Justification/Justified - To be justified means to be in favor with God, standing under His smile. It means acquittal in a courtroom setting. To be pronounced righteous, cleared, and vindicated. Justification is the exact opposite of condemnation. It has to do with status, not character transformation or sanctification (holiness). The court has decided in your favor. It's the status of being in the right and found not guilty. To be declared righteous. Justification also means that you have been reckoned by God as a true member of His family. Our justification is based on the faithfulness of Jesus, who shed His blood for the forgiveness of our sins.

Righteousness - This word has two meanings in the New Testament. (1) a right relationship with God, that is, right standing with God. (2) living a righteous life, that is, a lifestyle that pleases God (doing righteousness). The first is a position; the second is a practice.

Titus - According to history, Titus was Luke's brother. He's never mentioned in Acts, but he's present in the story. Titus was part of the church in Antioch. Paul would eventually mentor him in the apostolic work.

The elemental things/principles of the world - refers to the ABCs of religion. The rules and regulations of any religious system which, according to Paul, are weak and worthless. The Do's and Don'ts of religion. The universal
moral code. Paul applies it to both the Law of Moses and the laws of pagan religion (see Galatians 4 and Colossians 2:8).

**Under the Law** - to be under the jurisdiction of the Mosaic Law. To be obligated to obey the Law of Moses, all 613 commandments. To be under the Law is to obey the Law for right standing with God and to gain His favor and pleasure.

**Grace** - God's unmerited, unearned favor. Grace does for us what we cannot do. Grace gives us what we don't deserve; mercy delivers us from what we do deserve. God's grace is His favor to save us, forgive us, and His power to deliver us from ungodliness (Titus 2:11-12).

**The blessing of Abraham** - refers to the world to come which we experience a foretaste in the here-and-now. The blessing of Abraham was the promise that Abraham would be the father of one family through which all the nations of the earth would be blessed. The blessing was promised to Abraham's seed. That seed is Christ. So all who are in Christ receive the blessing. By the Holy Spirit, we are part of God's one family and we are sons and daughters of Abraham. We are also heirs to the promise that was given to Abraham (the inheritance).

**The inheritance** - refers to the Land of Canaan, which is a shadow of the all-sufficient, all-inclusive, unsearchable and inexhaustible riches of Christ. In other words, it speaks of the kingdom of God which we inherit now and which we inherit in the future in its fullness. The Holy Spirit is the down payment and guarantee of our inheritance, for by the Spirit, we experience the foretaste of the coming kingdom.

**Tutor** - this word is also translated "guardian," "school master," or "custodian." It refers to a child-conductor who took the children to and from school, superintended them, and helped them with their school work. It wasn't a teacher. Child-conductors were disciplinarians, and they were often harsh and sometimes cruel. When a child came of age, the child-conductor was no longer needed. In Galatians 3, Paul says that the Law served as a child-conductor until Jesus came. Then the child-conductor was dismissed.

Galatians presents Jesus Christ as the Liberator from the Law and from the flesh. The letter has been called the Magna Carta of Spiritual Emancipation.

Galatians, like Romans and all the other letters of Paul, isn't just about individual salvation. It's concerned with God's Eternal Purpose. Many of the themes in Galatians reappear and are unpacked in Romans. One scholar said that Galatians is "the rough sketch" of which Romans is "the finished picture."

Galatians is a little over 3,000 words long. When printed out, it's approximately 6 pages long. It's a revolutionary letter. A letter of rebuke and correction. It has no thanksgiving at the beginning of the letter, which marks Paul's other letters. And there are no personal greetings at the end. The letter can be divided up into 3 parts.

1. The Apology - the defense of the gospel. Chapters 1-2 (Paul responds to the false charges of the legalists)
2. The Argument - the declaration of the gospel. Chapters 3-5 (the gospel and God's purpose unveiled)
3. The Appeal - the demands of the gospel. Chapter 6 (practical matters of body life)

The key word of the letter is "liberty" or "freedom." The idea of freedom/liberty occurs more in Galatians than in any other letter from Paul. The letter contains biting irony. Paul is angry, upset, perplexed and frustrated when he writes it. The letter is blunt and rough-hewn. Galatians is also the first piece of Christian literature that we have. It was even written before the Gospels. The story of the Galatian church plant is found in Acts Chapters 13 and 14.