

Galatians 3:1-9

Paul's Defense of the Gospel: The Galatians' Experience; Abraham's Example

Chapter 3 key words: "spirit, law, faith, believe, righteousness, justify, blessed, curse, grace, covenant, promise"

Day 1

Read Galatians 3:1-3

The Galatians' experience

1. Why was Paul surprised by the Galatians' turning to the law for salvation? 3:1 (Connect this verse with 2:21).

IT'S GREEK TO ME: "**foolish**" *anoetos* Strong's NT:453 signifies "not understanding" (a, negative, *noeo*, "to perceive, understand"), not applying nous, "the mind," Luke 24:25; in Rom 1:14 and Gal 3:1,3 it signifies "senseless," an unworthy lack of understanding; sometimes it carries a moral reproach - Vines'

"**bewitched**" NT:940 *baskaino* to malign, i.e. (by extension) to fascinate (by false representations) - Strong's Concordance

"**publically portrayed**" "A Christian is not someone who knows about Jesus, but one who has 'seen' Him on the cross. Our hearts are moved when we *see* not just that He died, but that He died for us. We *see* the meaning of His work for us."
-Timothy Keller (66)

2. In the following verses, underline the words that describe our relationship/standing with God because of Christ's death on the cross.
 - Romans 5:1,2,9 Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand....Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from the wrath of God through Him. NASU
 - Romans 8:1 Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. NASU
 - 1 Corinthians 6:11b ...you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God. NIV
 - 2 Corinthians 5:21 He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him. NASU
 - Colossians 1:13 For He rescued us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son, 14 in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins. NASU
 - Colossians 1:22 But now he has reconciled you by Christ's physical body through death to present you holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation- NIV
 - 1 Peter 3:18 For Christ also died for sins once for all, the just for the unjust, so that He might bring us to God...NASU
 - Ephesians 2:13 But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near through the blood of Christ. NIV
 - Ephesians 2:18-19 for through Him we both have our access in one Spirit to the Father. So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints, and are of God's household, NASU

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3. From 1 Corinthians 1:18,24, how did Paul describe the message of the cross?

4. In verses 3:2,3, what things are contrasted?
 - 3:2 -

 - 3:3 -

5. What did Paul teach about receiving the Holy Spirit in Titus 3:4-7?
 - From Ephesians 1:13-14, when do we receive the Spirit and what assurance does that give?

6. What conclusion should the Galatians have come to from the past about the work of the Spirit in their lives? 3:5
 - What did Paul say about the work of God in his own life? 1 Corinthians 15:10

FYI: "The Spirit works as Christians don't rely on their own works, but rather consciously and continuously rest in Christ alone for their acceptability and completeness...We must go back again and again to the gospel of Christ crucified, so that our hearts are more deeply gripped by the reality of what He did and **who we are in Him..**
 We are not only saved by the gospel, but we also grow by the gospel. Paul is saying that we don't begin by faith and then proceed and grow through our works. We are not only justified by faith in Christ, we are also sanctified by faith in Christ . We never leave the gospel behind."
 - Timothy Keller (68,65)

"Faith is laying hold of Jesus Christ personally. There is no merit in it. It is not another 'work.' Its value is not in itself, but entirely in its object, Jesus Christ."
 - John Stott (82)

"We cannot achieve our salvation to any degree or through any means. We are justified and sanctified through faith alone in Christ alone. There is no other way."
 - Charles Swindoll (49)

7. Underline the phrases that describe the flesh (sinful nature/old self).
 - Romans 7:18 For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh; for the willing is present in me, but the doing of the good is not. NASU

 - Galatians 5:17 For the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are in opposition to one another, so that you may not do the things that you please. NASU

 - 2 Peter 2:10a and especially those who indulge the flesh in its corrupt desires...

 - 1 John 2:16 For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world. NASU

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8. From the above what do you see as the problem with trying to be “perfected” (3:3) by our “flesh” (NIV “sinful nature”)? (see also Romans 8:7)
9. Underline the phrases that describe God’s power at work in us.
- Ephesians 1:19 and his incomparably great power for us who believe. That power is like the working of his mighty strength, NIV
 - Ephesians 3:20 Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, NIV
 - 2 Corinthians 4:7 But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, so that the surpassing greatness of the power will be of God and not from ourselves;
10. From the above, how does God’s work in us compare to our fleshly attempts at perfection?

FYI: “**Legalism** is not the opposite of liberty, meaning that a person can live a lawless existence., As Ryrie, explains, ‘Christian liberty does not give the believer the option of living anyway he please; it is not license. It places him in a position where he can live as God pleases, something he was unable to do as an unregenerated person. Liberated living is not unrestricted living.’ What is legalism, then?

It is a wrong attitude toward the code of laws under which a person lives. Legalism involved the presence of law, the wrong motive toward obeying that law and often the wrong use of the power provided to keep the law, but is basically a wrong attitude. Thus legalism may be defined as ‘a fleshly attitude which conforms to a code for the purpose of exalting self...’”

- Charles Swindoll (47,48)

Having begun in the Spirit (3:3) “‘You received the greatest gift - the Holy Spirit of God - by faith. Are you going on from there, not by faith, but by trusting in your own obedience under the Law of Moses?...This is indeed foolishness. This deception is cultivated by Satan to set our Christian life off-track. If he cannot stop us from being *saved* by faith, then he will attempt to hinder our *blessing and growth and maturity* by faith. And, when the works of the flesh are substituted for faith, self-confidence and pride are the inevitable result. ‘[Man] prefers to believe in the proud falsehoods of his own heart, which delude him into the flattering hope that he may merit eternal life.’ (Spurgeon)” - David Guzik

Applying the Word: How is focusing on Christ so much more than the “power of positive thinking?”

Day 2

Read Galatians 3:4-5

Questions about the past

11. If the Galatians went back to a works righteousness, what would happen to their progress in the faith? 3:4 (Cf. 4:11; 5:7)

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12. According to Hebrews 10:32-36, what were some of the ways Christians had suffered?

FYI: "Apparently, the Galatians had (perhaps when Paul was among them) suffered for the principle of faith (probably at the hands of legalistic Christians). Does their departure from the principle of faith mean that this past suffering was **in vain**? We know that Paul did suffer persecution in this region. Acts 14 makes it clear that Paul and his companions were persecuted vigorously (Paul even being stoned and left for dead) by the Jews when they were among the cities of Galatia. Surely some of this persecution spilled over to the Christian congregations Paul left behind in Galatia." - David Guzik

13. What point was Paul's making by his question in 3:5? (Read Acts 14:3,8-10 for examples of the kind of miracles the Galatians had witnessed.)

14. In the following verses, underline the reasons/motivations for why a gospel of grace/faith in Christ leads to good works.

- John 15:4-5 "Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine, so neither can you unless you abide in Me. "I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing. NASU
- Romans 6:1-2,6-7 What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? By no means! We died to sin; how can we live in it any longer?...6 For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin- because anyone who has died has been freed from sin. NIV
- Rom 7:4-6 So, my brothers, you also died to the law through the body of Christ, that you might belong to another, to him who was raised from the dead, in order that we might bear fruit to God...now, by dying to what once bound us, we have been released from the law so that we serve in the new way of the Spirit, and not in the old way of the written code. NIV
- 2 Corinthians 5:14-15 For the love of Christ controls us, having concluded this, that one died for all, therefore all died; and He died for all, so that they who live might no longer live for themselves, but for Him who died and rose again on their behalf. NASU
- Ephesians 4:20-24 You, however, did not come to know Christ that way. Surely you heard of him and were taught in him in accordance with the truth that is in Jesus. You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; to be made new in the attitude of your minds; and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness. NIV
- Colossians 3:12-13 So, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience; bearing with one another, and forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you.
- Titus 2:11-12 For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men. It teaches us to say "No" to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age. NIV
- 1 John 4:19 We love because he first loved us. NIV

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15. Read through the supplemental handout “*The Normal Christian Life.*”

Applying the Word: Pick one thing that you are struggling with such as anger, unforgiveness, pride, a feeling of unworthiness, anxiety, a controlling spirit, materialism, etc. How does a focus on all that Christ has done for you and all that you are to Him help you with that? How much do you struggle **believing** God is able and willing to handle these things for you when you ask?

Day 3

The Holy Spirit

16. In the following, underline the titles given to the Holy Spirit.

- Genesis 1:2 The earth was formless and void, and darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was moving over the surface of the waters. NASU
- Isaiah 11:2 The Spirit of the LORD will rest on him--the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding, the Spirit of counsel and of power, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD-- NIV
- Matthew 10:19-20 "But when they hand you over, do not worry about how or what you are to say; for it will be given you in that hour what you are to say. "For it is not you who speak, but it is the Spirit of your Father who speaks in you. NASU
- John 14:16,17 And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever - the Spirit of truth. NIV
- Galatians 4:6-7 Because you are sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, "Abba, Father." NIV
- Ephesians 4:30 Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. NASU
- Romans 8:1-2 Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit of life set me free from the law of sin and death.NIV
- 2 Corinthians 3:18 But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord. NKJV
- 1 Peter 1:10-11 Concerning this salvation, the prophets, who spoke of the grace that was to come to you, searched intently and with the greatest care, 11 trying to find out the time and circumstances to which the Spirit of Christ in them was pointing when he predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow. NIV
- 1 Peter 4:14 If you are insulted because of the name of Christ, you are blessed, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you.NIV

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17. In the following verses, underline the work the Holy Spirit does in us and for us.

- John 15:26 "When the Counselor comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father, he will testify about me. NIV
- John 16:13 But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. NIV
- John 16:8 When he comes, he will convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment: NIV
- Romans 8:11. And if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit, who lives in you. NIV
- Romans 8:15-16 For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship. And by him we cry, "Abba, Father." 16 The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children. NIV
- Romans 8:26-27 And in the same way the Spirit also helps our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we should, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groaning too deep for words; and He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.
- Romans 15:13 May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. NIV
- 1 Corinthians 2:12 Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, so that we may know the things freely given to us by God,
- 1 Corinthians 12:4,7 There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit...7 Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good. NIV
- Galatians 5:22-23 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.
- Ephesians 1:13-14 ...Having believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession-to the praise of his glory. NIV
- 2 Timothy 1:7 For God has not given us a spirit of timidity, but of power and love and discipline.

18. Underline for what purposes or to what end God works in us.

- Philippians 2:13 for it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose. NIV
- Hebrews 13:20-21 May the God of peace...equip you with everything good for doing his will, and may he work in us what is pleasing to him, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen. NIV
- Ephesians 3:16-19 that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit in the inner man, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; and that you, being rooted and grounded in love, 18 may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled up to all the fullness of God. NASU

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- 2 Thessalonians 1:11 With this in mind, we constantly pray for you, that our God may count you worthy of his calling, and that by his power he may fulfill every good purpose of yours and every act prompted by your faith. NIV
- 2 Peter 1:3-4 His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. 4 Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature and escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires. NIV

19. How does Ephesians 1:18-22 describe the extent/sufficiency of God's power available to us?

Applying the Word: Which of the verses about the Holy Spirit speaks to your heart and mind?

Day 4

Read Galatians 3:6-9

Abraham's example

20. On what grounds was Abraham declared righteous? 3:6 (See also Romans 4:1-3)

- Why would Abraham's example be a good one to use in refuting the Judaisers? 3:6 (See Isaiah 51:1,2; John 8:33,39) (Note what John the Baptist said in Matthew 3:9)

IT'S GREEK TO ME: *reckoned/credited/accounted* *logizomai* NT:3049 primarily signifies "to reckon," whether by calculation or imputation, (from Vine's Expository Dictionary)

"It was usually an accounting term that meant that money was being received and counted as payment toward some end. In general, the English term 'credited' means the same thing - to confer a status on something that was not there before...

When God 'credits righteousness', He is conferring a legal status on someone. He treats them as actually righteous and free from condemnation, even though they are still actually unrighteous in the heart and behavior...Paul (and Abraham) are showing that it is possible to be loved and accepted by God while we are ourselves sinful and imperfect."

- Timothy Keller (71,72)

"We should be careful to say that Abraham's faith did not make him righteous. Abraham's *God* made him righteous, by accounting his faith to him for righteousness... 'Believed', of course, means more than that he accepted what God said as true ...it means that he trusted God.' (Morris)"

- David Guzik

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21. Read Genesis 12:1-6; 14-17; 15:1-6. What promises did Abraham believe God would fulfill?

22. Read the following passages and list the phrases that describe Abraham's faith and/or what He believed about God's character and ability.

- Romans 4:18-23

- Hebrews 11:11

23. What does Abraham's experience demonstrate about not connecting circumcision or any other works of the law with salvation or receiving the Spirit? 3:6,7 (See Romans 4:9,10)

24. How does a person qualify as a "son/descendant of Abraham?"

- 3:7,9

- 3:29 (Cf. Romans 4:23-25)

FYI: "What does it mean to have faith like Abraham? First...He had to believe and trust what God actually said in His promise to save. You can't believe God without believing in God, but you can believe in God without believing God! Second, Abraham shows that saving faith is faith in God's provision, not our performance. Abraham was childless...with a barren wife. The promise of an heir depended wholly on God, not on Abraham at all." - Timothy Keller 73,74

25. How was the gospel "preached" before Christ? 3:8

26. What else did Paul say about "those who are of faith"? 3:9 (Note: What title did Paul give Abraham in vs. 9?)

Applying the Word: How should understanding that we are accepted by faith affect our view and relation to others who are "in Christ"?

