

## Galatians 3

### The Galatian Folly

Paul Scolds Galatian Christians

**GAL 3:1 You foolish** [unwise, mislead] **Galatians** [brothers], **who has bewitched** [misled] **you, before whose eyes Jesus Christ was publicly portrayed** [preached by me] **as crucified?** See 1 Cor. 2:2

1. The Greek “baskaino” means to “bewitch, fascinate (by false representations).”
  - a. Are you under the charm of the sorcerer’s?
  - b. These Galatian Christians had listened intently to the perverted, false message of the Judaizers.
  - c. They had taken their eyes off the cross and had forgotten Christ’s atonement.
2. He “was publicly portrayed” (prographo) is a word for posting up public announcements or notices.
3. Paul had preached (posted a public announcement) that Christ had been crucified.
4. The proclamation (posted notice) of Christ crucified should have been enough to keep the eyes of the Galatians from the enticements of the Judaizers.

**GAL 3:2 This is the only thing I want to find out** [learn] **from you: did you receive the** [Holy] **Spirit by the works of the** [Mosaic] **Law, or by hearing with** [of] **faith** [the gospel]?

#### Lit. “hearing of faith”

1. ‘Faith’ stands here for the gospel and Christianity.

ROM 1:5 through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the **obedience of faith** among all the Gentiles, for His name's sake,  
ROM 16:26 but now is manifested, and by the Scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the eternal God, has been made known to all the nations, leading to **obedience of faith**;  
GAL 1:23 but only, they kept hearing, "He who once persecuted us is now preaching **the faith** which he once tried to destroy."  
ACT 6:7 And the word of God kept on spreading; and the number of the disciples continued to increase greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests were becoming obedient to **the faith**.  
JUD 1:3 Beloved, while I was making every effort to write you about our common salvation, I felt the necessity to write to you appealing that you contend earnestly for **the faith** which was once for all delivered to the saints.

2. The gospel is the message that announces “faith” as the means whereby one receives salvation. (Rom. 1:16; 1 Cor. 4:15).
3. Christians receive the Spirit after baptism. (Acts 2:38; 5:32). See Rom. 8:9; 1 Cor. 6:19, 20.

**GAL 3:3 Are you so foolish [unwise, mislead]? Having begun by the [Holy] Spirit, are you now being perfected by the flesh [fleshly ordinances]? See Gal. 3:1**

- NIV - “are you now trying to attain your goal by human effort?”

### **Circumcision**

GAL 5:2 Behold I, Paul, say to you that if you receive circumcision (in regard to salvation), Christ will be of no benefit to you.

GAL 6:12 Those who desire to make a good showing in the flesh try to compel you to be circumcised, simply that they may not be persecuted for the cross of Christ.

GAL 6:13 For those who are circumcised do not even keep the Law themselves, but they desire to have you circumcised, that they may boast in your flesh.

1. We must have a dynamic, trusting faith.
2. We must never work with the notion we are meriting salvation.

**GAL 3:4 Did you [Galatian Christians] suffer so many things in vain [for nothing]-- if indeed it was in vain [for nothing]?**

1. If salvation could be obtained through the Law, the persecution they had received as Christians was needless and had no value.
2. Why suffer (for being a Christian) if you can be saved by the Law?
3. Acts 14:2, 5, 19, 22.

**GAL 3:5 Does He [God] then, who provides you with the [Holy] Spirit and works miracles among you, do it by the works of the [Mosaic] Law, or by hearing with [of] faith [the gospel]?**

- Lit. “hearing of faith” see verse 2.
1. The miraculous gifts came to those who received the gospel. (1 Cor. 12:7-12).
  2. These gifts came through the laying on of the apostles’ hands. (Acts 6:6; 8:17-20; 19:1-6).
  3. They cease when the apostles died and there was no one to pass them on.

## **Abraham**

**GAL 3:6 Even so Abraham believed [trusted] God, and it was reckoned [accounted, credited] to him as righteousness [justification, standing right, salvation].**

1. Paul contends Abraham was saved on the basis of his faith. (Gen. 15:6).
  - a. GEN 15:6 Then he believed in the Lord [Jehovah]; and He reckoned it to him as righteousness.

b. He believed God though he was 75 years old and continued to believe for 25 years until Isaac was born. (Gen. 12:3, 4; 21:5).

c. Abraham was saved apart from circumcision.

ROM 4:11 and he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had while uncircumcised, that he might be the father of all who believe without being circumcised, that righteousness might be reckoned to them,

d. He was not circumcised until he was 90. (Gen. 17:24)

2. James affirms this verse was actually a prophecy and it was fulfilled when Abraham offered up Isaac. (Jas. 2:22; Gen. 22:1-15).

**Paul and James do not contradict**, but are expressing the same thing in different ways.

1. **Paul** teaches a man is saved by faith.

a. Paul does not treat Genesis 15:6 as a prophecy, but does not deny it was a prophecy.

b. His purpose was to show that man is not saved by keeping the ordinances of the Mosaic law, but his purpose was not to show that man is saved by a weak, wavering, dead faith.

c. He is not talking about mere mental assent, but saving faith is a trusting, obedient faith. (Rom. 3:28; 1:5; 16:26; Gal. 3:6; 5:6).

d. Meritorious works do not earn salvation, but nullify grace. (Eph. 2:8-10; Rom. 11:6).

2. **James** teaches a man is saved by works of faith (an active faith), but not meritorious works.

a. Faith is not mental assent. (Jas. 2:19).

b. Faith must act to have value. (Jas. 2:14-26). See Luke 13:6-9

c. He is speaking of “works of faith.”

**GAL 3:7 Therefore, be sure that it [justification, salvation] is those who are of faith who are [true, spiritual] sons of Abraham.**

**Heb. 11:17** - monogenes - “one of a kind, special, unique”

1. Abraham had many fleshly descendants. (Gen. 25:1-2).

a. He was the father of Ishmael by Hagar and Isaac by Sarah.

1) He married Hagar at 85. (Gen. 12:4, 16:3).

2) Ishmael was born about a year later. (Gen. 16:4).

3) Abraham was 86 when Ishmael was born. (Gen. 16:16).

b. He also was the father of **six more** son by Keturah.

GEN 25:1 Now Abraham took another wife, whose name was Keturah.

GEN 25:2 And she bore to him Zimran and Jokshan and Medan and Midian and Ishbak and Shuah.

**Note:** Genesis 25 may not be in chronological order. Abraham may have married Keturah before the birth of Isaac. (Gen.; 21:5). It was probably before the death of Sarah. (Gen. 23:1). If he married her after the death of Sarah, he was at least 137. (Gen. 17:17).

2. Being merely a physical descendant of Abraham counts for nothing when it comes to salvation. (Matt. 3:9).
3. What counts is being a spiritual descendant of Abraham, and all those who have faith like Abraham are his spiritual children.
4. They must, male or female, experience **spiritual circumcision of the heart**. (Rom. 2:28, 29).

ROM 2:28 For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly; neither is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh.

ROM 2:29 But he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that which is of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter; and his praise is not from men, but from God.

## Prophecy

**GAL 3:8 And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify [declare righteous] the Gentiles [nations] by faith, preached the gospel [good news] beforehand to Abraham, saying, "All the nations [of the earth] shall be blessed in you."**

- **Abraham was 75 years old.** Prophecy was made about 1876 B.C. when he was 75. (Gen. 12:4).

1. God promised to bless "all the nations" through Abraham.

GEN 12:3 And I will bless those who bless you, And the one who curses you I will curse. **And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed. "**

GEN 18:18 since Abraham will surely become a great and mighty nation, and in him **all the nations of the earth will be blessed?**

2. The Old Testament prophesied the gospel was for both Jews and Gentiles.

**GAL 3:9 So then those who are of faith [Jew or Gentile] are blessed [in right standing, saved] with Abraham, the believer.**

**Greek "sun to pisto Abraam"**

1. KJV & NIV have "with faithful Abraham" See also McCord.

2. NASB has "with Abraham, the believer."

3. Abraham is called:

- "Abraham, the believer" "faithful Abraham" - Gal. 3:9.

- “the friend of God” - Jas. 2:23; 2 Chron. 20:7; Isa. 41:8)
- father of those having faith - Rom. 4:16
- “a father of many nations” - Rom. 4:17

2. Those who have the faith of Abraham “are blessed,” that is have salvation.

### “Under A Curse”

**GAL 3:10 For as many as are of the works of the [Mosaic] Law are under a curse [condemnation]; for it is written, "Cursed [doomed to eternal punishment] is everyone who does not abide by all things written in the book [rolls] of the [Mosaic] law, to perform them."**

DEU 27:26 ' Cursed is he who does not confirm the words of this law by doing them.' And all the people shall say,' Amen.'

Paul basically follows the Septuagint which adds the word “all” before “the words of this law by doing them.”

1. “Curse” is the Greek “kataran”
2. “Cursed” is the Greek “epikataratos.”
  - a. It is a derivation: from “epikataraoimai” (to invoke curses on).
  - b. It means “accursed.”
3. See Rom. 3:10; Jas. 2:10.

**GAL 3:11 Now that no one is justified [saved, declared righteous] by the [Mosaic] Law before God is evident; for, "The righteous man shall live by faith."**

- Gr. “delos” - clear, plain, evident
1. “No one is justified by the Law” - Rom. 3:20; Gal. 2:16.

ROM 3:20 because by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified in His sight; for through the Law comes the knowledge of sin.

GAL 2:16 nevertheless knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the Law but through faith in Christ Jesus, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we may be justified by faith in Christ, and not by the works of the Law; since by the works of the Law shall no flesh be justified.

2. Men are justified “by faith.”

HAB 2:4 "Behold, as for the proud one, His soul is not right within him; But the righteous will live by his faith.

- a. “Live” means to be declared righteous and being in a state of reconciliation with God.
- b. It means in the simplest terms to have salvation.

c. "Live" is used in a spiritual sense.

**GAL 3:12 However, the [Mosaic] Law is not of faith; on the contrary, "He who practices them [the things prescribed by the law] shall live by them."**

LEV 18:5 'So you shall keep My statutes and My judgments, by which a man may live if he does them; I am the Lord.

ROM 10:5 For Moses writes that the man who practices the righteousness which is based on law shall live by that righteousness.

1. The law was not a faith system, but a merit system. It was not designed as a merit system, but that was the only way one could be saved by it.
2. It does not mean those who lived under the law had no faith, **but to the contrary.** (Heb. 11).
  - a. God expected faith. (Heb. 11:1, 6).
  - b. His people were often rewarded or punished because of their faith or lack of it.

**GAL 3:13 Christ redeemed [freed, rescued] us [Jewish Christians] from the curse [doom, condemnation] of the Law, having become a curse for us-- for it is written [in the scriptures], "Cursed [condemned] is everyone who hangs on a tree [executed]"--**

- "xulon" - wood, stocks, pole, club, cross, tree"
- "exagorazo" - to redeem, buy, to redeem from slavery, make the most of."

1. Christ gave His life as a ransom. (Matt. 26:28).
2. He took the beating, the punishment we deserve. (Isa. 53:4-6).
3. Those who trust in Him are no longer under a curse.
4. **Hanging was not the usual Jewish method of execution.**
  - a. The body of the criminal, most often stoned, was impaled or nailed to a stake after execution.
  - b. The body was not allowed to remain overnight on the tree lest it somehow defile the land.
  - c. The corpse was to be buried the same day.

DEU 21:22 "And if a man has committed a sin worthy of death, and he is put to death, and you hang him on a tree,  
DEU 21:23 his corpse shall not hang all night on the tree, but you shall surely bury him on the same day (for he who is hanged is accursed of God), so that you do not defile your land which the Lord your God gives you as an inheritance.

**Note:** Here is no reference to Roman crucifixion that was unknown in the time of Moses.

**GAL 3:14 in order that in Christ Jesus the blessing [salvation] of Abraham might come to the Gentiles, so that we [all] might receive the promise of the [Holy] Spirit through [Gr. the] faith [in Christ].**

**Gr.** “dia tes pisteos” “through the faith” See Joel 2:28.

1. Christians have the Spirit. (Acts 2:38; Acts 5:32; 1 Cor. 6:19, 20; Eph. 1:13; Rom. 8:15, 16).
2. They are led by the Spirit. (Gal. 5:16, 18).
3. They are to be filled with the Spirit. (Eph. 5:18).
4. The manifest “the fruit of the Spirit.” (Gal. 5:22, 23).

**Note:**

1. “In Christ” appears a number of times in Galatians. (Gal. 2:4, 17; 3:14, 28; 5:6).
2. Salvation is “in Christ,” not outside of Him.
3. No one can be saved outside of Christ. (Jn. 3:36; 14:6; Acts 4:12).

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