

The Just Shall Live By Faith

Galatians 3:1-18

March 10, 2019

Purpose of Galatians

Paul warns the Galatians not to tolerate any addition to the gospel of grace, particularly ritual circumcision, because a Gentile following Jesus does not need first to become a Jew.

I. Introduction (1:1-10)

A. The Apostolic Greeting (1:1-5)

- 1. Author (1:1-2a)**
- 2. Audience (1:2b)**
- 3. Greeting (1:3-5)**

B. Rebuke: the occasion of the letter (1:6-10)

Where we would normally expect to find an apostolic blessing, we hear instead an apostolic curse!

- 1. Paul's amazement at their departure (1:6-7)**
- 2. A curse on those who proclaim or receive a false gospel (1:8-9)**
- 3. Paul's model of not trying to please people (1:10)**

II. Using autobiography, Paul defends his apostleship and gospel (1:11-2:21)

- A. Paul's gospel comes directly from God (1:11-24)**
- B. The Apostles endorse Paul's ministry and gospel (2:1-10)**
- C. Paul consistently was committed to the true gospel (2:11-21)**
 - 1. Paul rebuked Peter at Antioch which proves his apostolic authority (2:11-14)**
 - 2. Paul proclaims the biblical gospel: both Jews and Gentiles are justified by faith alone (2:15-20)**

III. Using doctrine, Paul defends Justification is by faith alone (3:1-4:31)

A. The Holy Spirit is received by faith alone (3:1-5)

Paul rebukes the Galatians for the 2nd time: 'O foolish Galatians!'

1. Who has bewitched you? (3:1)

- The teaching of the Judaizers functions like an evil spiritual influence. Rightly understanding the cross protects someone from being bewitched!

2. How did you receive the Holy Spirit? (3:2)

- The Galatians are foolish because they don't recognize how they received the Spirit by faith alone.

3. Does religious ritual add to the sanctifying ministry of the Holy Spirit? (3:3)

- The Galatians are foolish because, although they received the Spirit by faith alone, they try to add religious ritual to the sanctifying ministry of the Holy Spirit.

III. Using doctrine, Paul defends Justification is by faith alone (3:1-4:31)

A. The Holy Spirit is received by faith alone (3:1-5)

Paul rebukes the Galatians for the 2nd time: 'O foolish Galatians!'

4. Did the experience of receiving the Holy Spirit have no purpose? (3:4)

- The Galatians are foolish because they think the experience of receiving the Holy Spirit had no purpose.

5. Does the Father give the Holy Spirit and work miracles among you because you obeyed the Mosaic Law? (3:5)

- The Galatians are foolish because they began to believe that the Father gave the Holy Spirit because they obeyed the Mosaic Law.

III. Using doctrine, Paul defends Justification is by faith alone (3:1-4:31)

A. The Holy Spirit is received by faith alone (3:1-5)

B. Gentiles become sons of Abraham by faith alone (3:6-14)

1. Blessing comes by faith alone through the Abrahamic Covenant (3:6-9)

- **Quoting Genesis 15:6**, Abraham was justified by faith, and not by circumcision (3:6-7)
- The blessing promised to Abraham was always intended to include Gentiles (3:8-9)
 - Therefore, Gentiles are saved the same way Abraham was: by faith alone (3:8)
 - Paul closely associates the blessing of Genesis 12:3 with justification (3:9)

III. Using doctrine, Paul defends Justification is by faith alone (3:1-4:31)

B. Using the Old Testament, Gentiles become sons of Abraham by faith alone (3:6-14)

2. Relying on the Law for justification brings a curse (3:10-14)

- **Quoting Deuteronomy 27:26**, Paul proves that everyone who relies on or breaks one commandment is under God's curse (3:10)
 - The Galatians have broken various laws, putting them under God's curse
- **Quoting Habakkuk 2:4**, Justification by faith alone is straightforward and obvious (3:11)
 - Salvation by faith alone has always been God's plan of salvation
- **Quoting Leviticus 18:5**, justification by faith and justification by keeping the law are mutually exclusive (3:12)
- Christ redeems from the curse of the Law (3:13-14)
 - **Quoting Deuteronomy 21:23**, Paul teaches how Christ took our curse upon Himself
 - Curse comes from the law (3:13) and blessing comes by faith (3:14)

III. Using doctrine, Paul defends Justification is by faith alone (3:1-4:31)

- A. By the Galatians' own experience, they received the Holy Spirit by faith alone (3:1-5)**
- B. Using the Old Testament, Gentiles become sons of Abraham by faith alone (3:6-14)**
- C. If the Law does not save, then what is the Purpose of the Law? (3:15-29)**
 - 1. The Mosaic Law does not void the Abrahamic Promise (3:15-18)**
 - Human covenants are irrevocable and unchangeable (3:15)
 - God's covenants are irrevocable and unchangeable (3:16-18)
 - In some Old Testament passages (Gen. 3:15, 22:18), 'seed' can refer to Jesus Christ (3:16)
 - The Mosaic Law does not void the Abrahamic Promise (3:17)
 - Promise and law are opposed to one another when thought of in terms of acceptance before God (3:18)

The 'seed of Abraham' can refer to 4 different groups

① Natural lineage or natural seed

- Every physical descendant of Jacob, saved and unsaved**
- The Mosaic Law was given to all natural descendants regardless of whether or not they were saved**

The 'seed of Abraham' can refer to 4 different groups

2 Spiritual lineage within the natural

- Every physical descendant of Jacob who believed in God
- Romans 9:6 But *it is* not as though the word of God has failed. For they are not all Israel who are *descended* from Israel
- Galatians 6:16 And those who will walk by this rule, peace and mercy *be* upon them, and upon the Israel of God.
- The Land promise is given to all believing ethnic Jews

The 'seed of Abraham' can refer to 4 different groups

③ Every Gentile believer

- **Current Gentile believers, while called the 'seed of Abraham,' do not fulfill promises made to numbers 1 or 2.**
- **Galatians 3:29 And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's descendants, heirs according to promise.**
- **Gentile believers are Abraham's seed in the spiritual sense only and heirs of the promise given to "all the families of the earth."**

The 'seed of Abraham' can refer to 4 different groups

4 Christ

- Gal. 3:16

- Christ does not fulfill #1-3 in such a way as to replace/negate physical inheritance

- Christ does not fulfill Genesis 12:7 – Israel will one day receive the land

The fulfillment of the Abrahamic Covenant is “already/not yet.” Gentiles are already receiving covenant blessing. Yet, the dimensions of the land promised to Israel await future fulfillment. Calling gentiles ‘sons of Abraham’ does not reinterpret ‘Israel’ to mean ‘the church.’ It simply means gentiles receive some of the covenant blessing.

Identifying Jesus as the ‘seed of Abraham’ is the basis for the fulfillment of all Abrahamic blessing.

**Salvation is by grace alone, through faith alone,
in Christ alone.**

**Adding any religious/ceremonial work results in a
message that does not save.**