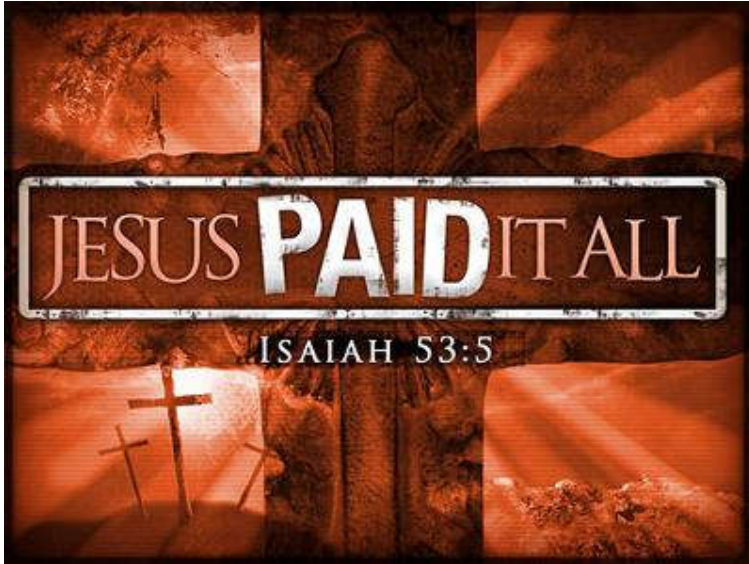


6. Justification by Faith



The freedom in the work of Christ is in conflict with our nature, we want to have a part in our salvation. At a pet shop, I was introduced to a bird which lived in a house, the bird was never permitted to leave the cage, when the owner died, the bird, a beautiful bright green Cockatoo had lived in the cage for over 40-years. The pet shop owners opened to the door of the cage and tried to let the bird have freedom to move outside the cage, the bird refused, they tried to pull it out and it fought and screamed, finally they just let the door opened in the hope the bird will realize its freedom one day, years later the bird will only peer its head outside the door. The bird is so accustomed to the way of its life it refuses to take the freedom the new owners are offering.

Before Jesus Christ died on the cross, we under the wrath of God for our sins, Jesus' death on the cross took the wrath that we deserved. God's wrath was satisfied in the death of Christ, his death "Justified" those who believe in Him. We are free from judgment, forgiven because Jesus paid for our sins. Like the bird, many people are so used to their cage of "works" for salvation, they refuse to leave the open cage. Jesus has freed us from "Self" justification because we could never accomplish it regardless of how hard we tried.

This was the problem the Galatians faced, they were freed by the work of Jesus Christ, they accepted and were saved by their faith. They were being misled that they could now improve on their salvation by following Jewish law and traditions. Paul has harsh words for them, he calls them foolish. They are abandoning liberty for a cage of works.



Gal 3:1-9

- (1) O foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you? It was before your eyes that Jesus Christ was publicly portrayed as crucified.
- (2) Let me ask you only this: Did you receive the Spirit by works of the law or by hearing with faith?
- (3) Are you so foolish? Having begun by the Spirit, are you now being perfected by the flesh?
- (4) Did you suffer so many things in vain—if indeed it was in vain?
- (5) Does he who supplies the Spirit to you and works miracles among you do so by works of the law, or by hearing with faith—
- (6) just as Abraham "believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness"?
- (7) Know then that it is those of faith who are the sons of Abraham.
- (8) And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, "In you shall all the nations be blessed."
- (9) So then, those who are of faith are blessed along with Abraham, the man of faith.

The Foolish Galatians

GALATIANS

	Personal Words from Paul Defense of the True Gospel	Doctrinal Teaching Freedom from Legalism	Practical Exhortations Freedom to Love and to Serve
	For I would have you know, brethren, that the gospel which was preached by me is not according to man. For I neither received it from man, nor was I taught it, but I received it through a revelation of Jesus Christ. (1:11-12)	Therefore the Law has become our tutor to lead us to Christ, so that we may be justified by faith. But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor. (3:24-25)	For you were called to freedom, brethren; only do not turn your freedom into an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. (5:13)
	CHAPTERS 1-2	CHAPTERS 3-4	CHAPTERS 5-6
Style	Vigorous, blunt, direct, and brief		
Theme	Justification comes by faith in Christ Jesus, not by works of the Law.		
Key Verse	2:16		
Christ in Galatians	Jesus is the source and power of the believer's new life and the heir of the promises to Abraham's seed (2:20; 3:1-16).		

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(1) O foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you? It was before your eyes that Jesus Christ was publicly portrayed as crucified.
Galatians 3:1

The Galatians were believers who were being led astray, Paul calls their actions **foolish**, They had trusted

and believed the Gospel preached by Paul, now they were turning their toward a works based gospel. The Galatians were **bewitched**, as if they tricked or tranduced to being led astray from the truth of the Gospel.

Jesus was **crucified** for their sins, this was the whole point of the Gospel, their sins and wicked deeds were paid for on the cross as demonstrated in the Gospel accounts and Old Testament prophecy, did the Galatians now think they were going to add to the work of Jesus by their own actions? Did they think they could improve on His saving work? They were tricked or fooled by the "False gospel" of the Judaizers.

This demonstrates how its possible for real believers to be led astray into doctrines that handicap faith. Because they were weak in their knowledge the Galatians were being tricked into false system of works based salvation. They did not loose their salvation, but they were going to loose the freedom they were given through Jesus.

(2) Let me ask you only this: Did you receive the Spirit by works of the law or by hearing with faith? **Galatians 3:2**

Paul here clearly shows the Galatians were believers, they had **received the Spirit**, when they first believed, so Paul asks the question, how did this happen? Did their salvation come as a result of **hearing** and believing or **works of the law**? What was the cause of your salvation?

Rom 10:9-10

(9) because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.

(10) For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved.

Salvation comes through hearing the Gospel and believing it with the heart, not by works of the law. The Galatians were believers who were being led astray from this truth.

(2) Are you so foolish? Having begun by the Spirit, are you now being perfected by the flesh? **Galatians 3:3**

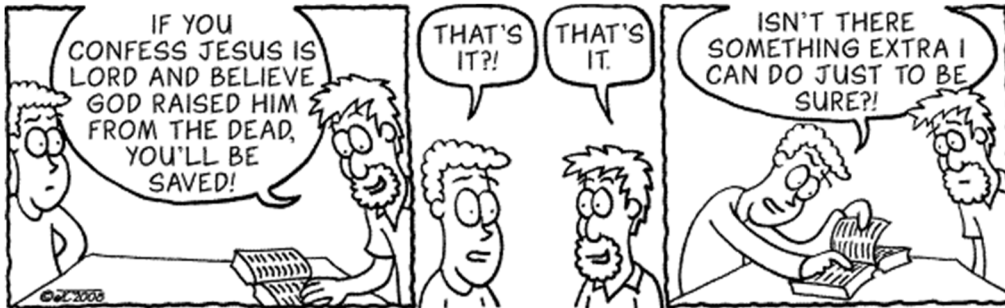
When someone is saved they receive the Spirit of God as the downpayment of their salvation (Eph 1:13), this was the case of the Galatians, they heard the Gospel and believed. They received the Gift of the Holy Spirit.

Eph 1:13-14

(13) In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit,

(14) who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory.

This was the promise of Jesus, the Holy Spirit would cause the believer to be Born Again, the Holy Spirit was confirmation of their acceptance before God. They were complete and



perfected as a result of the faith in Christ. The Holy Spirit will be with them forever, so if that the case, how are they going to perfect it by going to the laws of Moses to add to the work of Christ.

Joh 14:16-17

(16) And I will ask the

Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever,

(17) even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you.

(4) Did you suffer so many things in vain—if indeed it was in vain? **Galatians 3:4**

The Galatians were pagan idolaters, they were intertwined in the Greek, Romans and Galic culture of the land before they accepted Christ. After they accepted Christ and turned away, they were rejected, suffered for their new faith. (See Acts 13-14). Paul was left for dead after he was stoned during this period. Many feel it at this time Paul was caught up into the third heaven (2 Cor. 12:2).

Act 14:19-22

(19) But Jews came from Antioch and Iconium, and having persuaded the crowds, they stoned Paul and dragged him out of the city, supposing that he was dead.

(20) But when the disciples gathered about him, he rose up and entered the city, and on the next day he went on with Barnabas to Derbe.

(21) When they had preached the gospel to that city and had made many disciples, they returned to Lystra and to Iconium and to Antioch,

(22) strengthening the souls of the disciples, encouraging them to continue in the faith, and saying that through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God.

The Galatians believers went through a great deal of tribulation as a result of their simple faith in Christ work on the cross. They received the Holy Spirit, they suffered persecution and trials, was all this in vain? The Judiazers taught one cannot be saved unless one follows the Law of Moses (i.e. Circumcision Acts 15:1-2), if this were the case all they went through was in vain, since they were not saved by their faith.

(5) Does he who supplies the Spirit to you and works miracles among you do so by works of the law, or by hearing with faith—**Galatians 3:5**

The birth of the Galatians church was accompanied by miracles, confirming the ministry of Paul and Barnabas. One notable miracle in Galatia was the healing of the cripple from birth at

Lystra. Miracles often accompanied the preaching of the Gospel to bring attention and confirm its message for listeners. This happened to both Paul and Peter in their ministries

Act 14:8-15

- (8) Now at Lystra there was a man sitting who could not use his feet. He was crippled from birth and had never walked.
- (9) He listened to Paul speaking. And Paul, looking intently at him and seeing that he had faith to be made well,
- (10) said in a loud voice, "Stand upright on your feet." And he sprang up and began walking.
- (11) And when the crowds saw what Paul had done, they lifted up their voices, saying in Lycaonian, "The gods have come down to us in the likeness of men!"
- (12) Barnabas they called Zeus, and Paul, Hermes, because he was the chief speaker.
- (13) And the priest of Zeus, whose temple was at the entrance to the city, brought oxen and garlands to the gates and wanted to offer sacrifice with the crowds.
- (14) But when the apostles Barnabas and Paul heard of it, they tore their garments and rushed out into the crowd, crying out,
- (15) "Men, why are you doing these things? We also are men, of like nature with you, and we bring you good news, that you should turn from these vain things to a living God, who made the heaven and the earth and the sea and all that is in them.



The miracles were accompanied by faith based ministry as opposed to work based ministry. Paul want the Galatians to go back to their history of salvation, he wants them to remember how it all occurred. The faith based Gospel is not a new issue, Paul now goes back to Abraham to prove his case.

Abraham the Example

- (6) just as Abraham "believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness"?
- (7) Know then that it is those of faith who are the sons of Abraham.
- (8) And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith,

preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, "In you shall all the nations be blessed."

- (9) So then, those who are of faith are blessed along with Abraham, the man of faith.

Galatians 3:6-9

(6)What was the cause for Abraham's position with God? Was Abraham righteous because he followed the law? No, Abraham believed God and it was counted to him as righteous in Genesis 15. So if this is the case for Abraham, why wouldn't it be the case for the Galatians or anybody who hears the Gospel?



Gen 15:1-6 After these things the word of the LORD came to Abram in a vision: "Fear not, Abram, I am your shield; your reward shall be very great." (2) But Abram said, "O Lord GOD, what will you give me, for I continue childless, and the heir of my house is Eliezer of Damascus?" (3) And Abram said, "Behold, you have given me no offspring, and a member of my household will be my heir." (4) And behold, the word of the LORD came to him: "This man shall not be your heir; your very own son shall be your heir." (5) And he brought him outside and said, "Look toward heaven, and number the stars, if you are able to number them." Then he said to him, "So shall your offspring be." (6) And he believed the LORD, and he counted it to him as righteousness.



The Jewish people took great pride in their ancestor Abraham, to this day the Tomb of Abraham in Hebron is the 2nd most hotly contested piece of land in the Middle East, after the Dome of the Rock. Both Muslims and Jews consider it a sacred site, there is wall surrounding the tomb of Abraham, giving half to Muslims and half to the Jews. Jews, Muslims and Christians claim spiritual decendency from Abraham.

(7) Here Paul show the true descendants of Abraham are those descendent by **faith**. Abraham is the father of the faithful and God uses Abraham as a model for future believers. Abraham had no children at this point, he was old, Sarah was old from an earthly perspective, it seemed like it was impossible for him to have one child, let alone a number like the stars. So through the Messiah, Jesus Christ, the descendants of Abraham are those who have faith like Abraham.

- (8) The Gospel of Christ was first made known to the Jews, but was rejected by the nation, as a result the Gospel was sent to the nations, the Gentiles. Peter and the early church had a hard time at first understanding how the Gentiles, should be recipients of the Gospel, but embedded in the Law of Moses were clear revelations of how the Gospel would cross ethnic lines. In Genesis 22, after Abraham passed a test of his faith, God declares through Abraham the whole earth would be blessed. Abraham took Isaac to the top of Mt. Moriah to offer him as a sacrifice, God prevented the sacrifice and provided His own, a male ram, a picture of the Jesus Christ who would be sacrifice God provided. Abraham was also promised blessing for being faithful and believing. Abraham is the model of those who are saved by faith, since it was Abraham's faith demonstrated in action.

Gen 22:15-18 (15) And the angel of the LORD called to Abraham a second time from heaven (16) and said, "By myself I have sworn, declares the LORD, because you have done this and have not withheld your son, your only son, (17) I will surely bless you, and I will surely multiply your offspring as the **stars of heaven** and as the **sand that is on the seashore**. And your offspring shall possess the gate of his enemies, (18) **and in your offspring shall all the nations of the earth be blessed, because you have obeyed my voice.**"

- (9) Abraham is the model of the faithful, Paul also uses Abraham as real example of how God operates both in the Old Testament and in the New. God economy always operated by faith, it was never works based. Works played the role of demonstrating true faith, if the faithful believed God, they did what He commanded, but works was not the method of salvation. Paul makes this clear in Romans chapter 4.

Rom 4:1-5,9-25 What then shall we say was gained by Abraham, our forefather according to the flesh? (2) For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God. (3) For what does the Scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness." (4) Now to the one who works, his wages are not counted as a gift but as his due. (5) And to the one who does not work but believes in

him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is counted as righteousness,(9) Is this blessing then only for the circumcised, or also for the uncircumcised? For we say that faith was counted to Abraham as righteousness. (10) How then was it counted to him? Was it before or after he had been circumcised? It was not after, but before he was circumcised. (11) He received the sign of circumcision as a seal of the righteousness that he had by faith while he was still uncircumcised. The purpose was to make him the father of all who believe without being circumcised, so that righteousness would be counted to them as well, (12) and to make him the father of the circumcised who are not merely circumcised but who also walk in the footsteps of the faith that our father Abraham had before he was circumcised. (13) For the promise to Abraham and his offspring that he would be heir of the world did not come through the law but through the righteousness of faith. (14) For if it is the adherents of the law who are to be the heirs, faith is null and the promise is void. (15) For the law brings wrath, but where there is no law there is no transgression. (16) That is why it depends on faith, in order that the promise may rest on grace and be guaranteed to all his offspring—not only to the adherent of the law but also to the one who shares the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all, (17) as it is written, "I have made you the father of many nations"—in the presence of the God in whom he believed, who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist. (18) In hope he believed against hope, that he should become the father of many nations, as he had been told, "So shall your offspring be." (19) He did not weaken in faith when he considered his own body, which was as good as dead (since he was about a hundred years old), or when he considered the barrenness of Sarah's womb. (20) No unbelief made him waver concerning the promise of God, but he grew strong in his faith as he gave glory to God, (21) fully convinced that God was able to do what he had promised. (22) That is why his faith was "counted to him as righteousness." (23) **But**

the words "it was counted to him" were not written for his sake alone, (24) but for ours also. It will be counted to us who believe in him who raised from the dead Jesus our Lord, (25) who was delivered up for our trespasses and raised for our justification.

