

## Gal 05 – Who Has Bewitched You – Gal 3:1-5

Lst wk – we saw Paul Stand for “Faith Alone”

& He was standing against Peter – who had caved to the Judaizers

& thru Paul’s “standing for Faith Alone” – I pray we are learning . . .  
to not be moved by those who would say (or imply) . . .

that “works” (of any kind) can make us ‘Right’ before God  
even if those works are just “In Addition” to Faith in Christ

Last wk - was the end of Paul’s Defense of Himself as an Apostle –  
This wk - he gets to the Defense of Righteousness thru Faith alone

Paul had been used to bring salvation BY Grace THRU Faith to the Galatians -  
& they had received it w/ thanksgiving . . .

But now they were being “Drawn Away” from that pure gospel –  
to an ineffective religion of **Faith PLUS works** = salvation

They had substituted **supernatural** salvation thru Faith alone -  
for the natural “Earning” of salvation by some religious efforts

they had allowed themselves to be deceived by the Judaizers –  
who were saying salvation must come w/ following rituals of religion

& Paul is amazed at their **defection** back to “works-based” Righteousness

in **Gal 1:6-7** he had already said to them – [get scrip] *“I am amazed that you  
are so quickly deserting Him Who called you . . . . for another gospel . . .*

Even tho they had received their salvation thru faith in Christ alone –  
they were now being bewitched into adopting the old ways of  
“Righteousness by works”

Because of this “Defecting” from **Grace** back to **Works** - in **Ch’s 3-4**  
Paul gives a forceful defense of Righteousness thru Faith alone

**Let’s Pray**

## **Gal 3:1**

*“O **foolish** Galatians, who has **bewitched** you that you should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ was clearly portrayed among you as crucified?”*

Paul is shocked & dismayed – “O foolish Galatians . . .

word “**Foolish**” – doesn’t mean “**Mental Deficiency**” . . .  
it means “**Mental Laziness**” or “**Carelessness**”

The Galatians had “**Carelessly**” (foolishly) fallen into Religion –  
because they had stopped “Standing” for the pure truth  
of **Righteousness thru Faith** alone - that they had received

They were careless not to Defend their faith –  
& so they were easily led astray by the Religious Judaizers

In fact – they had been “**Bewitched**” (& not the Samantha Stevens style) -  
they had been **Bewitched** into not obeying the simple gospel of Grace

The word “**Bewitched**” means **LIT**: **to charm or fascinate** (almost hypnotize)  
best pictured by how a snake can come up to a bird (who could fly away) –  
yet the snake “**hypnotizes**” the bird . . . till . . . **BAAM !**

The Galatians were carelessly “**charmed**” into following the religionists  
who claimed faith in Christ must be “**supplemented**” with their works

but as the commentator **William Hendrickson says**:  
**A Supplemented Christ - is a Supplanted Christ**

In other words – if you’re going to **supplement** (add to) **Christ Alone**  
for Righteousness before God – then in essence . . .  
You are **Replacing Christ** with that thing you’ve added

The Galatians had been subtly misled – into “Supplementing”  
Religious Works to their Righteousness thru Faith in Christ alone

& Paul is shocked & dismayed . . . & he finishes **V.1** saying:  
*before whose eyes Jesus Christ was clearly **portrayed** among you as crucified*

The word “**portrayed**” means **LIT** – “**to place on a placard for public display**”

& Paul had dramatically placed - Christ crucified on a placard (as it were)  
for the Galatians to **clearly see** - & to which they had **clearly responded**

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Then - in **V.2** – Paul takes the Galatians back to their **own experience**  
when they received Righteousness thru faith in Christ alone -  
& to when they received new life in the Holy Spirit

### **Gal 3:2**

*“This only I want to learn from you: Did you **receive the Spirit** by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?”*

When Paul says “Did you ‘receive the Spirit’ – He’s talking about  
the very **life** of Christ living inside you – Our indwelling power –  
Our seal & guarantee – He’s talking about the Holy Spirit

When we say Jesus Christ lives in me . . .  
**He does**, in the person of the Holy Spirit (*the life of Christ in us*)

That’s why in **Jn 14:\_\_\_ (ck)** Jesus says I will send “Allos Parakletos”  
which is LIT – **another one of the same kind & quality, Who is called  
alongside to help & to comforter**

The Holy Spirit is the indwelling supernatural New Life of Jesus Christ –  
& the Galatians had received that New Life - & they knew they had

Paul says - When you 1<sup>st</sup> received that supernatural New Life of Jesus Christ -  
Did you **earn it** from the Law - or did you **receive it** by faith?

When you 1st Born –Again – into new life in Christ –  
did you have to take a Religious Equivalency Test ?  
& did you have to pass w/ a “C” for Christian ??

Or did you simply cry out & say Lord Jesus – I believe, please save me ??

If you **are** saved today – you are saved thru “Life Giving” Faith in Jesus Christ  
if you are **not** saved today – the only way to be saved - is thru that same  
“Life Giving” Faith in Jesus Christ (*it’s the only way it can happen*)

There is a scientific law that demonstrates the truth Paul's making -  
it is the "**Law of BioGenesis**" first demonstrated by Louis Pasteur . . .

Louis Pasteur demonstrated the fact that if you take a thoroughly sterilized  
& hermetically sealed container – devoid of all life . . .

that you could conceivably keep that container indefinitely . . .  
& **NO new life** would ever grow in it . . . **WHY ?**

because of this scientific law he was demonstrating (BioGenesis)  
"There is NO life without antecedent life" (**antecedent = prior/previous**)  
in other words "Only live can beget life"

Which means – something that is totally DEVOID of life – cannot beget life –  
no matter how much you work at it & clean it up . . .

Paul's proving to the Galatians - their new life couldn't of come from the law,  
because there is no "Antecedent" (prior) life in the law . . .

The law could never give new life (*because it did not have it to give*)  
it could only **point out** how badly we **needed** New life

The Spirit of God on the other hand – is the very essence of life –  
& He comes to not only give us new life – but to **be** that very life in us

so here in **V.2** - Paul makes such an obvious point just asking the question –  
that it doesn't even have to be answered

**Read w/ me again - Gal 3:2**

*"This only I want to learn from you: Did you **receive the Spirit** by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?"*

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So then – cont'g in **V.3** – Paul hits 'em again - w/ the same word he started w/

**Gal 3:3**

*Are you **so foolish**? having begun in the Spirit are you now being made perfect in the flesh?*

**Remember** – “foolish” means “*mental laziness*” or “*mental carelessness*”

have you been so careless, so lazy, w/ the miracle of your salvation –  
that you’ve forgotten how your Righteousness in Christ began ?

You know your Righteousness began in the Spirit – by Faith alone –  
now do you think you can improve on that w/ works of your flesh ??

[CK STRONGS – “PERFECT”] – Remember – the word translated “perfect”  
means “Complete or “mature”

Paul’s saying – do you really think you think you can add to God’s miraculous  
gift of Righteousness w/ the puny little efforts of your own flesh ??

Why would want to go back to trying to do it the old way ???

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Have you ever seen a butterfly acting like a caterpillar ??

Imagine a beautiful butterfly trying to act like the best caterpillar possible

Instead of spreading it’s wings & catching the wind . . .

it slowly, slowly inches it’s way up the branch to gnaw on a leaf . . .

all the time thinking how it can make itself a better cocoon than the last one

If a caterpillar who’s been born again into a butterfly –

goes back to being the best caterpillar it can possibly be –  
we would say that was very sad indeed

But that’s exactly what we do when we try to go back to earning our  
Righteousness before God by our own efforts

It must be very very sad to God indeed . . .

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Now - It may be a good time right here –

to stop & clear up a question that some of you most certainly have

The subject in Galatians – is possibly the greatest of all subjects –

It is our **being declared righteous** before God

& more specifically – how we **Become** Righteous before God

& Paul's entire defense in Gal – is to prove to us -  
there is **NOTHING** of our own efforts – that we can bring to God,  
to in any way **earn** (deserve) a *right standing* before Him

But certainly some will say . . . yeah but – aren't there things we're supposed  
to **DO** as Christians . . . you know . . . like the book of James

& the one word that **MUST** be understood – to understand the difference  
is **MOTIVE**

Motive was the issue way back in Gen Ch 4 – between Cain & Abel -  
**Abel** came to God on **God's** terms - & brought a sacrifice of Obedience  
**Cain** came to God on **Cain's** terms – implying the *fruit of his own effort* –  
should be an acceptable sacrifice

**The difference . . . was motive -**

In considering our Motive to serve God – Who would be our example ?

Throughout the earthly life of Jesus Christ – He made it clear  
He **did only** what the Father *called Him* to do –  
He **was always** at *the disposal* of the Father –  
He **was always** *in submission* to the Father's will . . .

Now – do you think Jesus did that to **earn** His “Right Standing” before God?

Jesus submitted to - & Obeyed the Father –  
out of His love for - & out of His oneness with - the Father  
certainly not to *earn acceptance* from the Father

There was a religious group in Jesus' day - who assumed they were **earning**  
*“Right Standing”* w/ God - thru the following of their law? (Pharisee's) –

& in \_\_\_\_\_ Jesus called them ‘White-Washed tombs’ . . .  
just like Cain – the Pharisee's brought the fruit of their own efforts to God  
to be in “Right Standing” with Him - & they were rejected

Turn over to **Rom 8:3-4**

The Pharisees (& Judaizers) were trying to obtain Righteousness before God - thru the fruit of their efforts in keeping the law –

**But – Rom 8:3-4** says

*For what the law could not do [provide righteousness before God] in that it was weak thru the flesh, God did, by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, on account of sin . . . that the righteous req might be fulfilled in us who do not walk accdg to . . . flesh . . . but accdg to the Spirit*

The subject here is Righteousness before God – & the point is **NO AMOUNT** of our own effort (following the law) can make us Righteous before God

We either receive the Righteousness of God In Christ - thru Faith . . . or we reject it . . .

& if we reject it – we will find ourselves 1 day – standing before God with our own righteousness – which *Isa \_\_\_\_\_ says* is as filthy rags

So then . . . what should our **MOTIVE** be to live for God in all that we do ??

if Jesus is our example;

our motive should **NEVER** be to earn Righteousness before God – but our **motive should be** - our love & oneness with Christ

We serve Him & Obey God in **RESPONSE** to our understanding of His great love for us - & in response to the greatest eternal gift . . . that is us being Declared Righteous before God in Christ

We must know – that even our most incredible & best efforts – could never increase our standing before God - & could never elevate us to a higher status w/ God

Then – WHAT are the works talked about in the book of James referring to ??

They are VERIFYING WORKS – Works that **verify** our *salvation by faith*

The fruit of our actions VERIFY our love for God, & our Relationship with God but they never **earn us** any kind of “*Right Standing*” before God

Does that make sense??

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## **OK – to kinda regroup here – let’s re-read Gal 3:1-3**

*Gal 3:1-3 text*

& then we pick back up the flow of thought in **V.4**

### **Gal 3:4**

*Have you **suffered** so many things in vain – if indeed it was in vain?*

Some translations have here “**Experienced**” for the word “**Suffered**” –  
& the original word can be translated either way

no record in Acts of the church in Galatia specifically suffering persecution –  
instead - we see them in the early days actually persecuting Paul

But that doesn’t mean they hadn’t suffered - they may’ve gone thru some  
persecution for their belief in - “**Righteousness thru Faith Alone**”

They may’ve endured some persecution from the Judaizers –  
**prior to** giving in to their demands that they follow the law

Or Paul may be referring to their **experiences** as a whole ;

when they first received the **Spirit** . . .

when they 1<sup>st</sup> felt the rush of **eternal life** pour thru them

when they 1<sup>st</sup> experienced the **miracle** of faith in Jesus Christ

Paul’s saying – didn’t you guys learn anything from those experiences  
(or sufferings) from when you were 1<sup>st</sup> saved ??

& then – as Paul often does – he kinda pulls back the punch a bit . . .

(**end of v.4**) . . . *if indeed it was in vain* . . .

leaving open the hope that it was **NOT** in vain

Then - this reference to their experiences continues in **V.5** . . .

in **V.5** – Paul uses those thoughts about their initial experiences w/ Christ  
to once again – make his point about “Faith Alone”



& it's one more powerful Appeal – for us to see that ALL we receive from God comes by Faith - & nothing comes - by our own effort . . .

### **Gal 3:5**

*Therefore He who supplies the Spirit to you and works miracles among you, does He do it by the works of the law, or the hearing of faith?*

the word “supplies” – Means LIT - “Super-Abundant Generosity”

*“He who gives in Super-Abundant Generosity” to you, & works miracles among you, does He do it by the works of the law – or by faith ?*

do you think God's incredible generosity of pouring out His Spirit on us – is because we've somehow earned it ??

Do you really think God says “Well, they deserve it – so I'll give them My Spirit & work miracles among them?” (*you're kidding, right?*)

Guys – we can never ever earn the Super-Abundant Generosity of the Holy Spirit living in us, and working miracles among us –

That would make God our employer - who would owe us wages - for the works of our sinful flesh that we've done for Him –

but **Rom 6:23** tells us what God owes us for the works of our own flesh  
*For the wages of sin is death – but the gift of God is eternal life*

guys - all of our own efforts - come from our “Sin Nature” - & that sin nature can never earn anything from God except what it deserves – death !!

### **Romans says again in 7:18**

*For I Know that in me (that is in my flesh) no-thing good dwells . . .*

If God had to supply His Spirit & His miracles to us - based on what we earned the grand total would forever be . . . **ZERO**

But the Super-Abundant Generosity of His Spirit poured out in our lives is **NOT** by our earning, **NOT** by us deserving it . . .

it's **BY His Grace** & **THRU our Faith** in Him alone

It's thru Faith alone – not of works, lest anyone should boast

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Is it possible that someone has Bewitched you ??

It could be possible - Paul is talking to you . . .

Maybe you received Christ by faith alone ,  
you knew at that time you could NEVER earn your salvation –

But maybe some seemingly “Mature Christian” has implied to you  
that you need to be a bit more like them – if your really saved

Don't you give up the fight for your Righteousness by God's Grace alone -  
Do Not let the Judaizers of today bewitch you –

The only way you can be accepted by God is solely & completely  
BY His great love for you, & THRU Christ's great sacrifice for you . . .

& there is **nothing** you can do to increase that love –  
or increase your Righteousness in Christ. . . **never forget that !**

Never let your experience of Salvation thru Faith alone –  
be jeopardized by Religious works –

Always come to God the exact same way you did the 1st day you were saved  
With NO merit of your own – not deserving anything –  
but simply overwhelmed at His great love for you . . .

May we always be in awe of His Amazing Grace –  
whereby we have received **God's Riches At Christ's Expense**

& may we always know what 2Cor 5:21 tells us –  
That He became sin for us – because it was the only way we could  
become the Righteousness of God in Him . . .

& there will never be anything we can DO – to add to that !!

**Let's Pray**