

## Gal 06 – Has it Always been “through faith”? - Gal 3:6-18

Sometimes - it seems that God dealt differently w/ people in the O.T.  
than in the N.T.

& sometimes – when we’re studying the Bible we make the mistake of saying  
. . . *“Oh, that was then – this is now”*  
& we imply somehow God changed between Malachi & Mathew (O.T./ N.T.)

But we know one of God’s attributes is His **Immutability** (unchangeableness)  
& **Heb 13:8** says “*Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever*”

well, today we’re going to see something that should give us great confidence  
in how God has **ALWAYS** dealt with man . . .

today – in Galatians – the subject isn’t big words like **dispensationalism** –  
Our subject today is **Righteousness** before God  
& specifically - how we **receive** that Righteousness from God

& so the question before us is this – **WHEN** was it, that **God** began granting  
**Righteousness** to man **BY** His Grace & **THRU** Our Faith . . .

Has it always been “**Thru Faith Alone**” ? – Or did the O.T. saints get to **earn**  
their Righteousness before God - *like we want so badly want to do* ?

Please – take some time this week – to read **Heb Ch 11** – (*over & over again*)  
The word **FAITH** is used **25 times** regarding the greatest O.T. Saints

We need to know very clearly – the saints of the O.T. were made righteous  
the exact same way we are – “**Thru Faith Alone**”

Their works never saved them – their works were a natural result (outcome)  
of the Faith that saved them – just like us

But the Judaizers of Paul’s day were mistakenly teaching  
that the laws & traditions of the O.T. must be followed  
to complete your Righteousness before God

& so in this section of Gal – Paul’s going to “**clear up**” that misunderstanding -  
& he’s going to use a bunch of O.T. scripture to do it

## Let's Pray

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We ended last week w/ Paul saying in **Gal 3:5** – *Does God give you His Spirit & work Miracles among you by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith ?*

then pick up in **Gal 3:6**

6 **just as** Abraham “*believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.*”

Paul goes right to the beginning – w/ “*Father Abraham*”

& he quotes **Gen 15:6** – where it very simply - & very clearly says . . .

### **Gen 15:6**

6 *And he [Abraham] believed in the LORD, and He accounted it to him for righteousness.*

### **Gen Ch 15 – is a wonderful & critical Ch to understand . . .**

1) Abraham was made righteous THRU his Faith

2) God made a ONE SIDED Covenant w/ Abraham (all God's doing) . . .

*in fact He put Abraham to sleep during the covenant process –*

*to make sure Abraham couldn't claim any part in making the covenant*

& what we also see studying Gen 15 is that;

1) Abraham was made righteous thru faith about **15 years BEFORE**  
the sign of circumcision was required by God

2) Abraham was made righteous thru faith over **400 years BEFORE**  
the law ever existed . . .

& there's one other thing - in Abraham's *being made righteous*  
that should really **blow your mind** . . .

We've got to realize - when Abraham was made righteous thru his faith . . .  
Judaism did not even exist – the Jewish people didn't exist . . .

at the moment of his faith – Abraham **became** the 1<sup>st</sup> Jew –

so technically when Abraham believed God - & exercised his faith in God

. . . he would have been - a Gentile – just like Abel, Enoch, & Noah  
who all came before him – who were all made righteous **thru faith,**  
**before** Judaism – or the law – ever existed

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Now - the Judaizers were hung up specifically on circumcision – & had kinda  
picked this one sign - & made it a **prerequisite** for receiving righteousness

The problem is – they had reversed the timeline of which came first –  
Righteousness or Circumcision ??

Paul deals with this superbly in **Rom Ch 4** – which we just studied last WED

### **Rom 4:9-11**

*9 Does this blessedness then come upon the circumcised only, or upon the  
uncircumcised also? For we say that **faith** was accounted to Abraham for  
righteousness.*

*10 How then was it accounted? While he was circumcised, or uncircumcised? Not  
while circumcised, but while uncircumcised.*

*11 And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith  
which he had while still uncircumcised, that he might be the father of all those who  
believe, though they are uncircumcised, that righteousness might be imputed to them  
also,*

Now – the circumcision thing may not sound like a big deal to you . . .  
but we can substitute **ANY religious requirement** of today  
w/ the Judaizers **requirement** of circumcision . . .

If someone today implies that you have to **DO anything** . . .  
**before** you can be made righteous before God –

then they are Present Day Judaizers . . . &  
they do not understand God's **Grace** –  
they do not understand how God has **ALWAYS** made people righteous -  
they do not understand the book of **Galatians**

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So – back to **Gal Ch 3** – in **v.7** Paul's going to Rattle some Cages

## **Gal 3:7**

7 **Therefore** know that only those who are of faith are sons of Abraham.

The only way we can be sons of Abraham is thru Faith . . .

Now – **THAT** would be a ‘Bombshell’ to the Jews, who believed that:

- 1) being a physical descendants of Abraham gave them a certain position with God - &
- 2) the more closely you followed their law & traditions – the more you could “improve” your position with God . .

& here Paul says – it is strictly a matter of faith that makes a person a true descendant of Abraham . . .

Remember – it was thru faith, the Galatians had been saved –  
& Paul can’t understand why they’re trying to go back  
to earning their standing before God . . .

by following requirements that not even the Father of the Faith – Abraham –  
had been required to follow

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so Paul continues to drive his point home in **v.8**

## **Gal 3:8**

8 And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel to Abraham beforehand, saying, “In you **all the nations** shall be blessed.”

Word ‘nations’ **is Lit** – “people groups” –  
same word translated Gentiles throughout the N.T. (that’s us)

God told Abraham the “good news” of Righteousness thru Faith –  
long beforehand - & told him all people groups would be blessed thru him

Guys – God’s “good news” has ALWAYS been – Salvation **BY** Grace –  
**THRU** Faith alone – & perfected by the sacrifice of **Jesus Christ**

If there were Salvation by our own efforts, or works,  
that would **NOT** be “good news” – that would be “bad news”

**Faith** has always been – the **ONLY** way  
to be blessed with Righteousness from God

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**V.9** is another bombshell for the Jews to hear . . .

### **Gal 3:9**

*9 So then those who are of faith are blessed with believing Abraham.*

“are of faith” implies - “those who take the same step of faith” (as Abraham)

***those who believe in faith with Abraham . . . are blessed with Abraham***

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Now – let me make something clear here – the fact that we are  
blessed w/ Abraham – as sons & daughters of Abraham . . .

does not, in any way, change the fact that the Jewish people  
are still God’s “chosen people” . . . they have been since Abraham -  
& they will continue to be . . .

### **Paul addresses this in Rom 11:1a-2a**

*1 I say then, has God cast away His people? Certainly not! . . .*

*2 God has not cast away His people whom He foreknew . . .*

Paul is **NOT saying** God is replacing the Jews as God’s chosen people . . .

he’s saying – there’s never been a time in history when righteousness  
has ever come **any other way** than **THRU FAITH** (*inclgd to the Jews*)

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Now – Paul’s been using what we call a “positive proof” in **v’s.6-9** . . .  
in **v.10** – he’s going to use what’s called a “negative proof”

### **Gal 3:10**

*10 For as many as are of [depend on] the works of the law are under the curse; for it  
is written, “Cursed is everyone who does not continue in all things which are written  
in the book of the law, to do them.”*

Again Paul quotes scripture to prove his point – this one is **Deut 27:26**

The Religionists were saying the Galatians must keep certain parts of the law in order to be righteous before God

& Paul says listen – the very scripture you’re relying on says - if you’re going to be righteous by keeping the law . . .

then you must keep THE ENTIRE law - & if you miss just one little thing . . . then you are out

Isn’t it interesting that the Judaizers were saying - you had to keep the law to become righteous – but their own scripture says Abraham was made righteous over 400 yrs BEFORE the law existed . . .

how did the Rabbi’s deal with that scripture – that Abraham was made righteous 430 yrs before the law . . . ???

The Jewish leaders turned Abraham’s incredible faith *into* total works . . .

The **Mishnah** - a collection of the traditional Jewish laws says;  
*“we find that Abraham our father performed the whole law before it was given”*

The **Book of Jubilees** – Commentary written by the Rabbis says;  
*“For Abraham was perfect in all his deeds with the Lord, well-pleasing in righteousness all the days of his life”*

Guys – that’s not true – in fact there are sins of Abraham recorded in scripture

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So Paul continues his O.T. Bible study in **Gal 3:11** – w/ a quote from **Hab 2:4**

### **Gal 3:11**

*11 But that no one is justified [made righteous] **by the law** in the sight of God is evident, for **“the just shall live by faith.”***

Back in **V.10** - Paul quoted **Deut 27** to prove Righteousness **CANNOT come** thru the **Law** . . .

here in **V.11** – Paul quotes **Hab 2:4** to prove Righteousness can **ONLY come** THRU **Faith**

& these two ways to receive righteousness from God are **Mutually Exclusive** you **CANNOT** Mix them . . .

You either do it by following every single detail of the law perfectly –  
or you do it thru Faith in what God has already done for you . . .

YOU DO NOT GET TO MIX & MATCH – like some kind of Chinese food buffet

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& Paul completes what we call his “negative proof” in **V.12**

### **Gal 3:12**

*12 Yet the law is not of faith, but “the man who does them shall live by them.”*

This quote is from **Lev 18:5** – & again Paul is saying the law & faith –  
are “Mutually Exclusive” . . . You cannot have some of each . . .

you must choose One - & the man who chooses the law – shall live by it -  
& Paul’s already proven by scripture – that is a hopeless thing to do . . .

Because Paul’s already said in **v.10** – trying to follow every detail of the law  
only ends in **being accursed** – because it’s impossible to do

& that’s why **Rom 8:3-4** are such wonderful words of salvation . . .

### **Rom 8:3-4**

*3 For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God did by  
sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, on account of sin: He condemned  
sin in the flesh,*

*4 that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who do not walk  
according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.*

What an Amazing Grace – that would allow us to fulfill the righteous  
requirements of the law by putting our Faith in Jesus Christ - -

how can that be . . . **Gal 3:13 tells us . . .**

## **Gal 3:13**

13 Christ has **redeemed** us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us (for it is written, “Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree”),

The curse of the law was the **punishment required** upon any person who could not keep the Whole of the law . . .

But **Jesus Christ** took that curse upon Himself – in our place – substituting for us - He became a curse for us . . .

## **1Pet 2:24 says**

24 who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness— by whose stripes you were healed.

& remember – the word “redeemed” – was most often used for the price that had to be paid to buy a slave out of slavery in order to set them free

& the only price sufficient to set us free from the slavery of our sin – was the shedding of the blood of Jesus Christ – in our place

the only way Jesus could “redeem” us from the curse of the law - was to become a curse for us

& we must never forget that our Righteousness before God - required the full penalty of our sins, to be poured out on Jesus Christ

& again we see - in **v.13** - Paul quotes scripture (from **Deut 21:23**) – “Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree”

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WHY would He do that for us . . . ?

## **Gal 3:14 tells us**

14 that the blessing of Abraham might come upon the Gentiles in Christ Jesus, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.

Jesus Christ became accursed by God - - taking the full penalty of our sin – so we could receive the blessing of Abraham in Him . . .

So we could receive the **promise of the Spirit** – THROUGH FAITH



So we could receive all of God's Riches through Faith alone . . .

Because we couldn't 'add' anything - to the "All Sufficient" work of Jesus Christ on our behalf . . .

God poured out the judgment due us – upon Christ –  
So we could "**THRU FAITH IN CHRIST**" – stand Righteous before God

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Now – in Vs's 15-18 – it seems Paul is kind of "anticipating a argument"  
in response to his proof of Righteous thru Faith using Abraham

& it's as if Paul's anticipating them saying – well that was fine for Abraham –  
but when the law finally did come – it replaced, or added to,  
the way Abraham was made Righteous . . .

### Gal 3:15

*15 Brethren, I speak in the manner of men: Though it is only a man's covenant, yet if it is confirmed, no one annuls or adds to it.*

**William Barclay Translation:** *Brothers, I can use only a human analogy. Here is the parallel—when a covenant is duly ratified, even if it is only a man's covenant, no one annuls it or adds additional clauses to it.*

Paul's saying even a man's covenant – once it's confirmed –  
it can't be changed or added to . . .  
*even mere men - don't change a confirmed covenant . . .*

Now – as he moves to V.16 – He's going to use what's called  
a "lesser to greater" argument – which just means if something  
is true in the lesser – how much more true is it in the greater . . .

So Paul has said that even a man's covenant cannot be changed –  
so how much more so - a covenant involving the Father & the Son

### Gal 3:16

*16 Now to Abraham and his Seed were the promises made. He does not say, "And to seeds," as of many, but as of one, "And to your Seed," who is Christ.*

This is an extremely powerful vs – you just have to look closely to see it

1<sup>st</sup> Paul (by the Holy Spirit) actually interprets the vs in **Gen 22:18**  
re: the promise of God to Abraham in the Covenant he made with him

& Paul says – in that vs – when the Scripture says “and to your Seed” –  
it is speaking of **Jesus Christ** (the Bible best interprets the Bible) . . .

& so in the simple terms – the promise to Abraham – was connected to Christ

& actually all of God’s promises – including those made to Abraham –  
are all fulfilled in Christ . . . & fulfilled in Christ alone

That is why we can only be partakers of God’s promises if we are “In Christ” –

& so here – in exceptional form – Paul directly connects  
the promise to Abraham with the fulfilling of the promise - in Christ . . .

& the implied proof is – it’s always been **ONE PROMISE** –  
God never set aside the promise that came thru faith to Abraham,  
in exchange for the “earning” of Righteousness thru the law

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In **v.17** - Paul again connects the covenant w/ Abraham,  
to the fulfillment in Christ – with the law stuck there in the middle . . .

### **Gal 3:17**

*17 And this I say, that the law, which was four hundred and thirty years later, cannot annul the covenant that was **confirmed before by God in Christ**, that it should make the promise of no effect.*

Paul makes it very clear – the Promise of Righteousness **THRU** Faith Alone –  
was never **annulled** or **changed** by the law –  
the law never made the promise - of no effect . . .

& so finally – we close today in **V.18** . . .

## **Gal 3:18**

*18 For if the inheritance is of the law, it is no longer of promise; but God gave it to Abraham by promise.*

### **It's one or the other;**

Either we're made sons & daughters of God by following **the law** –  
Or we receive it **thru faith** - the same way it was given to Abraham

& that Promise given to Abraham came

**BY** God's Grace Alone – **THRU** Abraham's Faith Alone –  
& **it was finished** . . . there was nothing that could be added to it . .

& nothing has changed – from that day – to today . . .

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Next week – we'll see the purpose of the Law . . .

But for this week – we must leave knowing beyond a shadow of a doubt  
that God never changes . . .

The way we **receive** *Righteousness before God* has **never** changed -  
& it never will – We receive the Promise of Righteousness - the exact  
**same way** Abraham received it . . . **THRU FAITH ALONE** . . .

### **Gen 15:6** says;

*[Abraham] believed in the LORD, and He accounted it to him for righteousness.*

### **Let's Pray**