

## Ln 5 ... How to Resist Being Bewitched

Galatians 3:1-9

In the 1960's, there was a TV show entitled "Bewitched." In that show, "bewitched" meant being influenced by a witch. However, the Bible teaches being bewitched is being influenced by error and evil.

In this passage, we find **three** things required to **resist being bewitched**.

### Remember Christ's Sacrifice for Your Salvation (3:1)

Paul begins by writing: *O foolish Galatians* (3:1a). The word translated **foolish** (ANOËTOS, uh-nah'-ay-tos-) doesn't refer to mental deficiency but to **mental laziness and carelessness**. The Galatian believers were not ignorant or dumb; they simply failed to use their intelligence when confronted by unscriptural Judaizers. Jesus uses the same Greek word to rebuke the two Emmaus Road disciples who lost hope after His crucifixion.

What does He tell them in [Luke 24:25b-c](#)?

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The Galatians are *foolish* because they have been led astray by the Judaizers who taught they must add the Law to the grace of God before they could be saved.

Next, Paul asks, *who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth* (3:1b). The word translated **bewitched** (BASKAINŌ, bas-ki'-no-) means "to hypnotize, charm, or fascinate into error." The Galatians have been *bewitched* into believing their faith in Christ is not enough—they must add the works of the Law to be justified before God.

However, based on [1 Corinthians 2:2](#), what had Paul preached to the Galatians?

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Because Paul had preached the crucifixion to the Galatians so effectively, he writes: *before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you* (3:1c). The Greek root word translated **evidently set forth** (PROGRAPHŌ, pro-graph'-oh-) is the word from which we derive our word "graphic."

Therefore, Paul's preaching about the crucifixion was so graphic and vivid it was almost as if his listeners were eyewitnesses. Paul preached so graphically; the Galatians could "see" Jesus on the cross.

According to [Ephesians 1:7a-b](#), why is the cross so important?

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The Galatians had accepted this truth by faith. Yet, they were leaving the truth for a lie. This is why Paul calls them *foolish* and *bewitched*.

There are always people who want to bewitch us by telling us that something more than the cross is required for our salvation. Therefore, to resist being bewitched, **remember Christ's sacrifice for your salvation** and...

### **Reflect On the Spirit's Confirmation (3:2-5)**

The Holy Spirit is mentioned at least fifteen times in this epistle. Because the Holy Spirit assures us of our spiritual family status, He is a major part of Paul's defense of salvation by grace.

How does [Romans 8:16](#) describe this fact?

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To correct the Galatians' *foolish* thinking, Paul asks them four penetrating questions.

**Question #1:** *Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? (3:2b).* The Galatians had already accepted the Gospel and received the Holy Spirit ([4:6](#)). Did this happen because they obeyed the Law or because they believed the Gospel preached by Paul? The Galatian believers were mostly from Gentile backgrounds and didn't even know the Law of Moses. Therefore, they obviously received the Holy Spirit through faith in Christ's sacrifice; the Law had nothing to do with it.

**Question #2:** *Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh? (3:3).* In other words, they were trying to attain the goal of living according to God's purpose for their lives through human effort. This is impossible *by the flesh* alone.

How does [Philippians 2:13](#) describes what the Spirit does in us?

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The Holy Spirit transforms our attitudes and desires so we can fulfill God's purpose for our lives.

**Question #3:** *Have ye suffered so many things in vain? (3:4a).* As they preached in Galatia on the first missionary journey, Paul and Barnabas endured great suffering because of the Jews ([Acts 13:49-50](#) & [14:2-19](#)). Because of their faith in Christ, the Galatians no doubt also suffered much from Jewish hands. It is foolish now for them to turn to obeying Jewish laws. Paul did not see their foolishness as hopeless, so he adds, *if it be yet in vain (3:4b).*

**Question #4:** *He therefore that ministereth to you the Spirit, and worketh miracles among you, doeth he it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? (3:5).* Miracles would include the wonderful changes in the lives of Galatian believers, as well as miraculous signs and wonders.

How did God verify the preaching of Paul and Barnabas in Galatia ([Acts 14:3c](#))?

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*Signs and wonders* occur in the Bible in clusters at three critical times—the time of Moses, the prophets, and Christ and the apostles.

The purpose of miraculous *signs and wonders* is always the same—to confirm the message and messenger are from God. Apart from these three critical times, miracles are rare in the Bible. The miracles among the Galatians were the work of the Holy Spirit, confirming God’s message of grace through Paul and Barnabas to the Galatians. The *miracles* had nothing to do with observing *the law*.

To resist being bewitched, **remember Christ’s sacrifice for your salvation, reflect on the Spirit’s confirmation**, and...

### **Review the Ultimate Illustration (3:6-9)**

Paul now uses Abraham as an example to prove salvation has always been by grace through faith. Abraham is the father of the Jewish nation, and circumcision begins with him ([Gen. 17:10-14](#)). The Judaizers were teaching that to become a Christian, one must first become a descendant of Abraham by obeying Jewish laws.

However, how was even Abraham saved ([Galatians 3:6b](#))?

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The word translated *accounted* is an accounting term meaning “to put on one’s account.” Paul is quoting [Genesis 15:6](#), which occurs fourteen years before Abraham’s circumcision and more than 400 years before God gives the Law to Moses. So, circumcision and the Law had nothing to do with Abraham’s *righteousness*.

Paul continues: *Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham* ([3:7](#)).

This means all who are made righteous through faith alone are the true spiritual descendants of Abraham.

We are all saved the same way as Abraham—**by grace through faith**. Then, why did God command Abraham to be circumcised?

How does [Romans 4:11a](#) answer that question?

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Circumcision was a *sign*, or symbol, of Abraham’s salvation, not the means or the cause. It was also a symbol of his commitment to God. The Christian counterpart to circumcision is baptism, which is a *sign*, or symbol, of our commitment to Jesus Christ. Baptism is like a wedding ring. Does it make you married? No! It is a sign that you are married. What makes you married is your commitment to your spouse and the wedding vows you took. Baptism is an outward symbol of an inward commitment to Jesus Christ.

Paul now hammers the final nails in the theological coffin of the Judaizers by writing: *And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed* ([3:8](#)). From the very beginning, God’s promise was *all nations*, not just Jews, would be *blessed* through Abraham.

This was before circumcision or the Law of Moses. Therefore, God would justify *all nations* by faith, just like He did Abraham, who is the prototype for receiving salvation—the ultimate blessing for *all nations*.

Paul continues, *So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham (3:9)*. True spiritual descendants of Abraham are also saved by *faith*. When Abraham *believed* God, *righteousness* was put on his account (3:6). Like Abraham, when we place our *faith* in Christ, *righteousness* is put on our account.

How does [Romans 1:17c](#) express this truth?

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That is a quote from [Habakkuk 2:4](#). Therefore, being saved by *faith* is **not** a New Testament concept because it is found in the writings of the prophets. *Faith* has always been the channel through which the *righteousness* of God flows to His people.

To resist being bewitched,

**REMEMBER CHRIST'S SACRIFICE FOR YOUR SALVATION,**

**REFLECT ON THE SPIRIT'S CONFIRMATION**

**REVIEW THE ULTIMATE ILLUSTRATION.**