

Galatians 3:1 - 3:14

Go Back To The Basics

Image Church // Galatians: Week 3

Introduction

Good morning Image Family, **if you have your Bible turn to Galatians chapter 3** as we continue our journey through the book of Galatians...

- *BTW: if you don't have a Bible, we have one as our gift to you, Connection Center...*

I want think about this for a second... Let's say that you're a **Marketing Consultant** and you get brought on by the **Athletic Director** of a small college to assess how their football program can increase ticket sales...

The **AD** wants you to come in and help them with **marketing** and **merchandise** and the **gameday experience** to help increase ticket sales for the games...

So, you start in on the job and **you want to learn more about the team** and the coaches and so you start going to practice and doing some research on the team...

Well, you start to discover that the head coach is very rarely at practice, and the assistant coaches seem like they don't really care... **There's no team meetings or position meetings, no game film...**

So, you start to wonder *how the heck has this team won any games?!?* So, you go and you look at the past several years of wins and losses...

And you look and see that they have only won 5 games over the past 3 years...

Here's what's gonna happen... When you sit down with the **AD** to make your presentation to help increase ticket sales, you're gonna say...

Listen, what you **don't** need is a marketing strategy, or cooler merchandise or a better gameday experience...

Throwing money at a **marketing strategy isn't going to fix your problem**... *The last thing you need to worry about is whether or not Sparky the mascot needs to be at Fan-Fest*...

- You keep things up, and you're not going to have any fans...

What you need is to win ball games... And if you want to win ball games then you need to make a change at the heart of the program starting with the coaching staff, they're a joke and could care less!

The **Athletic Department's marketing strategy** wasn't the problem, the problem was with who was with who was at the core of the program- the coaches...

- The coaches **drive** the program...

Here's the parallel that I want you to see... For many of us we want to experience change in our life but we're looking in all of the wrong places...

We're throwing our *effort* and *energy* **at the wrong things**... When we really need an infrastructure overhaul at the core of who we are... There needs to be a change in what **drives** us...

Sin is pervasive and what we have to understand is that we not only need to be saved from the consequences of sin, but we need to be freed from the **power** of sin in everyday life...

For some of you, you view *Jesus as your forgiveness-provider, but not Christ as your righteousness-producer*.¹

In other words, you don't **just** need a clean record and a fresh start through Christ. You also need the ability to walk in the new life that Christ has given you...²

Here's the disconnect for many of us. We believe that our salvation comes through Christ, that he died on the cross for our sins, but after that, the **functional change** is on us...

What Paul's going to get at here in **Galatians Chapter 3** is the heart of change, where it comes from, and how it happens...

Introduction

1 You foolish Galatians! Who has cast a spell on you, before whose eyes Jesus Christ was publicly portrayed as crucified?

So, remember, there was a group of **false teachers** called the **Judaizers** that had come to the region of Galatia and were teaching a perverted gospel... **Jesus + works of the law = Salvation...**

- Which is the opposite of the **true gospel**, that is **faith alone in Christ alone = salvation...**
- Which **BTW** is the message that Paul taught that had founded the churches to begin with...

And so Paul's writing this letter to confront what is happening in the region of Galatia...

Paul told them that there was no other version of the gospel, and he validated his claim by walking them through his story. And in that, we also got to see the **impact** and **implications** of the **true gospel**...

¹ Ray Cortese, "It is Finished: The Present Power of These Three Words," Liberate 2015, accessed September 18, 2017

² Some thoughts adapted here from JD Greear, sermon. *Freed to Change*. Oct. 8 2017.

And now we get to **chapter 3** where Paul's like, you foolish Galatians, what the heck is going on?!? I preached Jesus so clearly to you, that it's almost as if he died right in front of your eyes!

- *How have you drifted away from that?!?*

Illustration: *This is like me when I go to the grocery store, and my wife gives me clear instructions on what to get, and I get there, and I start grabbing a hunch of stuff that she didn't tell me to get, and I come home with everything but what she asked for...*

Verse 2:

2 I only want to learn this from you: Did you receive the Spirit by the works of the law or by believing what you heard?

So, Paul asks a key question right here... **Did you receive the Spirit by works of the law or by faith?**

- Now, this is the first time that Paul mentions the **Spirit** in his letter, but it's about to become a primary focus...

And his point here is that access to the Spirit doesn't *happen by working for God, you received the Spirit because of God's work for you!*³

So often, ppl don't understand the Spirit...

- We receive the Spirit through **faith** in the finished work of Jesus **Eph. 1:13**...
- The Spirit is how we receive the work of Jesus...
- It's how we're hidden in Christ... How we are made one with Christ...
- It's how we receive a new heart and new life...

Your works can't produce a new heart in you...

- You need a change at the core of who you are, and you can't manufacture that...
- *Jesus didn't die so you could work your way to Him... He died because you could never get there by your works...*

³ John Piper, sermon. *Can you begin in the Spirit and be compelled by the flesh?* March 13, 1983.

Illustration: *I can stick my head in the oven, but it won't make me a biscuit...*

- *I can stand in the garage, but it won't make me a car...*

No matter what I do, I can't manufacture that kind of transformation...

- The same is true when it comes to Christianity... You need a *radical change* at the core of who you are...
- The Spirit is the only thing that can bring that...
- And you receive the power of the Spirit when you see Jesus for who He is that He is God that came down to do everything necessary to save you...
- And you surrender in faith...

So the way you receive the Spirit is not by works, but through faith...

That leads Paul to a second question in Verse 3:

3 Are you so foolish? After beginning by the Spirit, are you now finishing by the flesh?

Let me hold up 2 words for you and **define** them to help make this practical for you...

- **Justification**
- **Sanctification**
- The same power that saves you is the same power that transforms you...
- **How?** Through faith...

This is Paul's point: If you receive the Spirit through **faith**, abandoning self-efforts and self-trust... Why in the world would you think that the way that you continue in the Christian life is any different?

Such a huge misconception in the Christian realm...

- The gospel is only the entry point into the Christian life...
- Pray a one-time prayer, Jesus died for me... And move on...
- The rest is on us...
- We have to muster up and do the things the Bible says...

And we wonder why we feel unmotivated?!?

***A low view of our need for justification will lead to little growth in our sanctification...**

- *Flesh out*
- *When we don't see our sin and the need we have for the gospel, then we will not be people that deeply depend on the gospel in everyday life...*

So we lack awareness of the thing that Scripture called the **power of God**... *Rom. 1:16*

Functionally for many of us, we live as though **Jesus is our forgiveness-provider, but not Christ as your righteousness-producer**.⁴

We need to talk about this...

Dick Kaufmann says: *Christians think that we are saved by the gospel, but then we grow by applying biblical principles to every area of life. But we are not just saved by the gospel, we grow by applying the gospel to every area of life.*⁵

Flesh out...

Not looking at the principals in Scripture and trying to apply them at face value...

- Understand what's at the root... the motivation...
- Jesus... I will be to others as Jesus has been to me...
- I will view myself as Jesus has viewed me...

Not God help me with my pride, make me more humble...

- What's at the root?
- God where am I missing what Jesus has provided me?

⁴ Ray Cortese, "It is Finished: The Present Power of These Three Words," Liberate 2015, accessed September 18, 2017

⁵ Via. Tim Keller, *The Gospel and Faith*.

Your justification drives your sanctification...

- **Identity drives activity...**
 - When we miss our gospel identity we become insecure people and we act in ways that don't honor God...
 - The root of our behavior is a gap in our gospel identity...

Verse 4:

4 Did you experience so much for nothing—if in fact it was for nothing?

IOW: was everything that happened to you really for nothing? It seems that Paul's hopeful that everything that happened to them wasn't for nothing...

Verse 5:

5 So then, does God give you the Spirit and work miracles among you by your doing the works of the law? Or is it by believing what you heard—

Paul moves to the **present tense** here...

- The change you want to see happen, happens through the Spirit, not your works...

Paul's going to give an example to drive home proof of what he's been holding up... **Verse 6:**

6 just like Abraham who believed God, and it was credited to him for righteousness? 7 You know, then, that those who have faith, these are Abraham's sons. 8 Now the Scripture saw in advance that God would justify the Gentiles by faith and proclaimed the gospel ahead of time to Abraham, saying, **All the nations will be blessed through you.** 9 Consequently, those who have faith are blessed with Abraham, who had faith.

Abraham, and **credited righteousness**...

- This is more than just general belief...
- This is a heart-shaping reality...
 - Abraham **believed** God... Not believed in God...

What we see is that **saving faith is faith in God's provision, not our performance.**

And we get 2 outcomes of Abraham's faith in God...

- God brought extended righteousness to Abraham when he wasn't righteous...
- God brought life through Abraham when he wasn't capable of producing it...
 - That life would lead to Abraham's salvation...⁶

Abraham couldn't produce any of this... God did it all, Abraham just believed in faith!

How did this happen? **Through Faith!**

Faith is mentioned **4 times** in **verses 6-9** because Paul's making a point that the way that righteousness is distributed by God is **not** through works of the law, or affiliation to a people group, but through **faith in the finished work of Jesus**...

Faith by definition is a complete trust or confidence in **someone** or **something**... And it's a noun, not a verb... Which means it isn't just something that you do, it's a state of being, a posture that's assumed where your confidence rests in something outside of yourself...

Verse 10

10 For all who rely on the works of the law are under a curse, because it is written, **Everyone who does not do everything written in the book of the law is cursed.** 11 Now it is clear that no one is justified before God by the law, because **the righteous will live by faith.**

James 2:10... do everything and miss one- guilty...

The curse is our inability to keep the law...

⁶ Thoughts in this section credit Ibid.

Verse 12

12 But the law is not based on faith; instead, **the one who does these things will live by them.**

IOW: his point is that, at face value, the law is not a system of faith it is a system of doing...

- The problem is that no one can do what the law requires perfectly...

But then we get to the incredible hope...

Verse 13:

13 Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us, because it is written, **Cursed is everyone who is hung on a tree.** 14 The purpose was that the blessing of Abraham would come to the Gentiles by Christ Jesus, so that we could receive the promised Spirit through faith.

Gospel