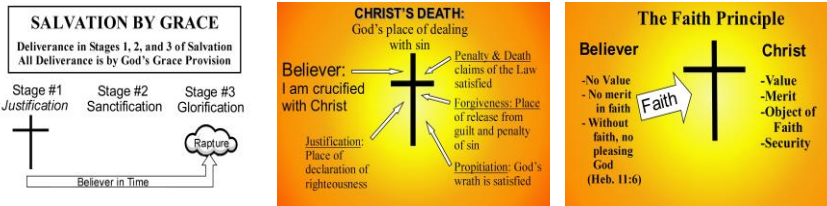


Galatians

Salvation by grace! Justification by faith! Sanctification by faith!



GALATIANS 3

The Doctrinal Defense of Justification by Faith

From Experience – 3:1-5

From Abraham – 3:6-9

From the negative effect of the Law – 3:10-14

Verses 1-5 – Five questions from their very own experience

Question 1: Who has bewitched you? “foolish” = senseless or unthinking “bewitched” = ‘to delude’ or ‘cast a spell on’

Question 2: How did you receive the Holy Spirit?

- By the works of the Law? By hearing with faith?

Question 3: How is God sanctifying you?

- Perfected by the flesh? Perfected by the Spirit?

Question 4: Have your sufferings been useless?

- Suffered because of Law? Suffered because of faith?

Question 5: What is the basis of God’s present work among you?

- By the works of the Law? By hearing with faith?

Two Main Props of Ritualistic Judaism

1. Abraham as father with the covenant rite of circumcision (given 2100 BC).
2. The Sinaitic Law, Israel’s magna carta which bound them to Jehovah (given 1446 BC).

The issue Paul raises: Are circumcision and the law the basis of true spiritual life and blessing? Answer: categorically “NO” as illustrated in Abraham (v. 6-9) and in the effect of the law (v. 10-14).

Ronald C. Merryman

Verses 6-9 – Justification as seen in the life of Abraham

“Abraham believed” - “It was reckoned to him as righteousness”

Reckoned = An ancient bookkeeping term that meant ‘to put to one’s account’.

God imputed righteousness to Abraham on the basis of faith!

Faith always looks to or relies on the merits of its object.

God does not give men faith; He expects faith as a response to His message of grace.

“So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.” Romans 10:17

Physical descendency from Abraham does not insure or bring with it spiritual descendency.

Personal faith is necessary for spiritual identity with God in every age.

The heathen Gentiles *were* and *are* justified precisely as was the patriarch Abraham.

Conclusion:

It is not the essence of Abraham’s circumcision that makes a Gentile a spiritual son, but the essence of his faith! The Abrahamic blessing is through the faith-rest principle, not the works-merit principle.

Verses 10-14 – The negative effect of Law on human experience!

Not only is it vain to seek justification by works, it is self-defeating, for failure to live up to the demands of law-works incurs a curse!

If we are going to live by the Law then we must keep ALL the Law.

“...every man who receives circumcision... is under obligation to keep the whole Law.” Galatians 5:3

“For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles in one point, he has become guilty of all.” James 2:19

Law ≠ Faith - Since there are none who perfectly perform in accord with the law, there are none that are justified by it.

Redeemed = delivered by the payment of a purchase price.

Three verbs:

1. To buy in the market place.
2. To buy out of the market place.
3. To loose or set free by paying a ransom.

Christ:

- bought us out of the slave market of sin
- will not resale us
- set us free from sin’s bondage
- paid the price sin demanded – death

The purpose of redemption:

1. The blessing of Abraham – justification by faith!
2. Regeneration – the Spirit received through faith!

Paul proves from the Old Testament scriptures that justification by faith is an Old Testament doctrine.

He quotes six different Old Testament passages to show that his argument rests firmly on the authority of God’s written record.