

Wednesday, May 1, 2019:
JUSTIFICATION BY GRACE THROUGH FAITH –
“A Study of the book of Galatians”

Unless otherwise indicated, all scripture quotations are taken from the *New Kings James Version* of the Bible.

JUSTIFICATION BY GRACE THROUGH FAITH - "A Study of the book of Galatians"
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LESSON THREE: GOD'S GRACE CONFIRMED BY SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCE: Gal. 3:1-29

Paul had clearly instructed the Galatians about the meaning of Jesus' death - that through it He paid for all our sins, so that we may be fully and permanently accepted by God by simply putting our personal faith in Jesus.

The false teachers (called "Judaizers" because they were from Judea) cast a spell on the Galatians Christians. They rejected "justification by faith alone".

Paul called the Galatians "foolish" because they should have known better.

So Paul writes to refute the Judaizer's objection about God's grace.

In his ongoing defense of the message he recalls two main things:

- Their own spiritual experience: Gal. 3:1-5.
- The Old Testament corroboration: Gal. 3:6-29

Spiritual experience:

Paul reminds them that when they believed the gospel, they received God's Spirit.

The Holy Spirit is the person who confirms our adoption.

He questions what basis they received the Holy Spirit - by obeying the law OR simply believing? (vs.2).

He further asked: "having begun in the Spirit, are you now made "perfect" or "complete" by the flesh? Laying the groundwork for transition to "Flesh vs Spirit", the second major theme of the book of Galatians - "You are complete in Him...." Col. 2:10 (vs.3)

Since they received the Spirit by believing, it is foolish to think they can become more spiritual by law-keeping through moral will power (use the example of trading free medicine that worked for an expensive one when you're already healed) - were they ready to "discount" the experience they have had with the Holy Spirit? (vs.4)

He reminded them of the ongoing experience of the Holy Spirit in their midst - he mentioned miracles as an example of the Spirit's work (Acts.14:8-10). Paul's point is that even after their conversion, they had experienced the Spirit's activity not because they became religiously observant Jews, but simply because they exercised faith in Christ.

Observations:

1. People receive the Holy Spirit when they believe in Christ, not some time later. John 3:6; 20:22, Rom. 8:9, Gal. 4:6, Eph. 1:13-14.
2. It is normal for Christians to "experience" the Holy Spirit when or soon after they believe. He is the Helper; John 14:16-18; given to us by Jesus through His death on the cross. Here are some of the ways He provides help:
 - a. He helps you to relate personally to God. Rom. 8:15-16
 - b. He makes the Bible come alive. 1 Cor. 2:12
 - c. He sensitizes your conscience. Eph. 4:30-32
 - d. He gives you special bond with other Christians. Phil. 2:1-2
 - e. He gives you desire to defend Jesus and share your faith. Acts 1:8
 - f. He delivers you from destructive habits. Gal. 5:16
 - g. He prompts you to love people in specific ways. Acts 8:26-38
 - h. He gives you hope in spite of difficult circumstances. Rom. 15:13

The Bible didn't say we will experience all of these immediately when we receive Christ or that we will experience all of them all the time or that our experience will be exactly like other people. We are unique persons and the Holy Spirit gives each of us exactly what we need to assure us of His presence.

3. Thirdly, we receive the Spirit's help by simply believing God's promise. Luke 11:10, 13

Was salvation by faith or the Law in the Old Testament? – Gal. 3:6-25

The New Testament hadn't been written as yet, so Paul proceeded to use Old Testament scriptures to make his point.

- Abraham was saved by faith. Gal. 3:6-7, Gen. 15:1-6 - the Law had not been given as yet, and we know he was not saved by "his righteousness"; By the way, God never mentioned Abraham's discretions of lying and unbelieving moments.
- Salvation by faith is for "EVERYONE", not just for Abraham and his descendants. Gal. 3:8-9

- People have never been saved by the Law. Gal. 3:10-12: May address the issue of tithes as a “sidebar”; it is not of faith only an obligation. How many of the laws could we keep? Deut. 6:5, Lev. 19:18
- We were redeemed from the curse; why do you want to go back? Gal. 3:13-14
- Faith saved us from the curse of the law.
- The giving of the law does not “NEGATE” the promise made to Abraham: Gal. 3:15-18. If humans honor their agreements, why wouldn’t God keep His agreement with Abraham?
- A promise is a will that cannot be altered (Gen. 12:1-3) “I will.....”
- The promise was unconditional (wasn’t up to Abraham, except to believe).
- Law is subordinate to the promise and must be understood in relation to the promise.
- Was the blessing of salvation by faith displaced the Law? **NO!** (i.e. Rahab; Ruth).

WHY DID GOD GIVE THE LAW?

There are hundreds of laws in the Old Testament. What’s the point if people are saved by faith alone? – Gal. 3:19-24

- It was added because of transgressions; as a guide so they don’t destroy themselves; just as a riverbank provides direction for the flow of water; i.e. example of the cardiogram that exposed my blocked artery. It exposed it but didn’t treat it.
- Not to give life but to shut up “everyone” under sin and lead us to Christ.

NOW WHAT?

- Exchange your sin for Christ’s righteousness.
- Realize you are no longer under the law. Gal.3:25
- God wants you to exchange law keeping for a life of faith.

SUMMARIZATION OF LAW vs GRACE

Law	vs.	Grace
Man does	emphasizes what	God does
Flesh (Self-life)	lives out of the	Spirit (Christ'-life)
Man's Resources	draws on	God's Resources
External, Regulations, Rules, Standards	deals with	Inner Heart Attitude
Ought-to's, Should's, Have-to's, Must's	primary focus	Want-to's
Bondage, Duty, Obligation	creates	Freedom
Outside – In	lives life from the	Inside - Out
Do in order to be	declares	You are, therefore do
Defeat	results in	Victory
Try Harder, Work, Effort	operating principle	Receive, Trust, Abide, Rest
Trying to be "like" Jesus	instead of	Letting Jesus be Jesus in and through me
Flesh		Spirit