

Galatians, Chapter Three, Lesson Two

HOLY BY FAITH Galatians 3:8-14

STIMULATE

** Last time, as we began chapter three of Paul's letter to the Galatians, we learned how important it is for a Christian to know and remember what he believes. Do you remember what happened when the Galatians became careless and lazy in their theology?

They forgot that before their own eyes "Jesus Christ was publicly portrayed as crucified", they forgot the heart of the gospel, which is salvation by grace through faith!

** To avoid the error of the Galatians, we asked the Lord to help us "gird our minds for action" and to stand "firm in our faith". Did anyone find it helpful to be preoccupied with this mental discipline during the challenges of this past week?

It is always helpful for me to gain God's eternal perspective of my trials. Whether they be small or large, when I keep myself depending totally on the truth of God's word alone, His grace is always sufficient for me. (2Corinthians 12:9)

MOTIVATE

** Knowing that our future is secure in Christ, how are we to live each day? We have learned that salvation by works is a burden or curse that no one can bear, so how does our practical holiness manifest itself on a day in, day out basis? To learn the answer, please join me now in Galatians 3:8-14 as we learn from the apostle Paul what it means to be "Holy by Faith".

Read Passage (V.8-10) (V.11-14)

Opening Prayer

Holy by Faith

INVESTIGATE

V. 8 ** When do you suppose that Scripture foresaw that God would "justify the Gentiles by faith" and not by works?

"...Scripture...preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham..." This is an amazing statement, we hear the gospel today, some 2000 years after the cross. Abraham heard the gospel (or good news) 2000 years "beforehand" or before the coming of the messiah and His death, burial and resurrection.

Genesis 12:1-3 "all the families of the earth"

Genesis 17:1-5 "a father of a multitude of nations"

Genesis 18:16-18 "all the nations of the earth"

Acts 3:25 "all the families of the earth" (Galatians 3:16)

** Was the gospel preached even before Abraham?

Yes, even in the garden of Eden, after the fall of mankind into sin God said to the serpent [Satan], "And I will put enmity between you and the women, and between your seed and her seed; He shall bruise you on the head, and you shall bruise him on the heel." This statement foretold the coming of the messiah who would defeat Satan and grant salvation by grace through faith.

(cf. Genesis 3:15 with 1John 3:7-8)

**** How does our opening verse for today say that God would justify the Gentiles?**

He would do it "...by faith..." We have learned that to be justified means to be found as "just" or holy before God, because He took our sin away at the cross and gave us the righteousness of Christ. We are no longer guilty, because the price was paid by Jesus Christ on our behalf.

V. 9 ** Knowing that we have been made "Holy by Faith", how can we also be "blessed with Abraham"?

We must be people "of faith", like Abraham. True saving faith will always produce obedience to the Word of God!

**** Paul calls him "Abraham, the believer", do you recall the greatest test of Abraham's faith?**

It was when God asked Abraham to offer his son Isaac as a sacrifice. Let's look at it together to better understand how important it is to obey God in faith. All see - Genesis 22:1-18, Abraham gives us four characteristics of obedient faith:

- 1) Immediate obedience - V. 3
- 2) Sustained obedience - V. 4
- 3) Willing obedience - V. 5
- 4) Contagious obedience - V. 6 & 8

Rewards of obedience:

- 1) God's providence - V.13
- 2) God's provision - V.14
- 3) God's promise - V.17
- 4) God's plurality - V.18

Reason:

"...because you have obeyed My voice." V.18

Even during times of testing, the hallmark of true saving faith is obedience. That is why Peter put so high a value on the "faith" that would trust the Lord and rejoice during trials.

cf. 1Peter 1:6-7

V.10 ** Now, back in Galatians 3:10, after hearing of the blessings available to those who are of faith like Abraham's, how does Paul describe people who would want to earn their own way to heaven by "the works of the Law"?

They are "...under a curse...!"

**** Why is that?**

Because the Law set the perfect standard which we cannot meet on our own and if you break one part of it, you are guilty of breaking it all. (cf. James 2:10, Galatians 5:3)

** What is the most condemning word in this O.T. quote?

The little word "all" - it gives no room for error. This quote is taken from Deuteronomy 27:26 and is in perfect agreement with New Testament teaching on the Law.

V.11 ** Before you were saved by the grace of God, what type of things did you do to show yourself a good person and to receive some kind of eternal reward?

A likely list might be: Helping others, giving to charities, paying your taxes, working hard and playing by the rules. I would like you to meet such a young man who thought he did everything right. All see - Matthew 19:16-22, read passage.

** Well, according to Galatians 3:11, do any of those "good" things justify us sinners before God?

Absolutely not! That is obvious, Paul goes so far as to quote Psalm 14 when he wrote Romans 3:10-11 and said, "There is none righteous, not even one; there is none who understands, there is none who seeks for God". Obviously, no one is justified by the Law before God!

** What two reasons can you think of that make that truth evident to all who consider it?

- 1) No one can keep the Law perfectly.
- 2) Scripture says that righteousness comes through faith.

** Alright then, if we are "Holy by Faith", how will it manifest itself on a day in, day out basis?

"...the righteous man shall live by faith"! Every day our lives will be subject to the obedience that true saving faith produces. We will live by faith in that we will strive to trust the Lord always and obey His written word to us. (cf. John 15:14)

V.12 ** What conclusion does Paul come to regarding the Law?

"...the Law is not of faith..."

** Why, how is it different from faith?

It requires no faith, only foolishness, to think that you can keep the perfect Law of God. You are saying that you are dependent upon yourself and not on what God has accomplished for you in Christ!

V.13 ** Well, all of mankind was at one time held captive to the curse of the Law, how did we ever get out from under that curse?

"Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law..." This truth is precious to the writers of Scripture, Paul repeats it again in chapter 4, verses 4-5.

** What does it mean to "redeem" someone?

Redeemed [exagorazo] means "to buy up" and is used figuratively saying, "to rescue from loss".

** According to this verse, how did Jesus redeem us?

By becoming a curse in our place! We were cursed, He was righteous and willing to trade. (2Corinthians5:21)

V.14 ** Why did this have to happen, why would Christ do it?

"...in order that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles..."

The same righteousness, and thus salvation by faith that was reckoned to Abraham could now be offered to the nations of the world, because Jesus Christ became the curse in our place!
That is incredible!

** Just to make sure that we don't miss it, what vehicle does God use to bring this blessing?

"...that in Christ Jesus..." It is only through faith in Jesus Christ that someone can become blessed like Abraham. (cf. John 14:6)

** Now that this blessing of Abraham has come to the Gentiles, what can we receive?

"...the promise of the Spirit.." Remember from last week that God provides us with His Spirit (V.5) and Jesus promised His disciples that He would send the Spirit in Acts 1:4-5.

** What are some of the benefits of having received the Spirit of Jesus Christ?

1) Ephesians 1:3 - We are blessed "with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ".

2) Ephesians 1:13 - We are sealed in Him and Ephesians 4:30 - (for the day of redemption)

3) John 16:7-8 - He convicts us of our sin.

4) John 14:16-17 - He helps us in our frailty.

5) Romans 8:26 - He helps us communicate our hearts to God in prayer.

** Now, does all of that come through the works of the Law?

No! It comes to us "...through faith."

EXTRICATE

** How did God justify the Gentiles?

"...by faith..."

** Now that we have been declared by God to be "Holy by Faith", if we are genuine, what will that faith always produce in us?

True saving faith will always produce obedience to the Word of God!

DELINEATE

** Like our father, Abraham, what will be the four characteristics of our obedient faith?

- 1) Immediate obedience
- 2) Sustained obedience
- 3) Willing obedience
- 4) Contagious obedience

** Today we learned four rewards of Abraham's obedient faith, do you recall them?

- 1) God's providence
- 2) God's provision
- 3) God's promise
- 4) God's plurality

EVALUATE

** If you have asked Jesus Christ to forgive your sins and to become the Lord and Savior of your life, God sees you through the righteousness of Jesus. But as a "righteous man (or woman)" are you living every day in obedient faith? For "the righteous man shall live by faith". (Galatians 3:11)

Please take a moment now to evaluate your own heart. Does your walk with Christ go beyond this weekly Bible study? Are you striving to please Him in everything you think, say and do everyday and not just on Sunday?

ACTIVATE

** Dear Lord Jesus, thank you for the forgiveness that you so freely give to me. Help me to be "Holy by Faith" in my everyday walk with You, so that others will know that there is salvation in no one else.

Closing Prayer