

Crucified with Christ

Lesson Three: The Blessing of Abraham

Galatians 3:1-9

1. What question does Paul ask the Galatians in Galatians 3:1? How does Paul's tone come across? What have the Galatians seen that makes their behavior so strange?
2. In Galatians 3:2, what does Paul say is the "only" thing he wants to find out from them? To what does this question refer? Acts 13:52 may help. What does this question imply about the significance of the Holy Spirit?
3. What first question does Paul ask in Galatians 3:3? What makes this question reasonable? What is illogical about the pattern that the Galatians have chosen to follow?
4. What question does Paul ask in Galatians 3:4? To what is this referring? What next question follows in Galatians 3:5? What is this intended to prove?
5. What Old Testament character is introduced in Galatians 3:6-7? What did he do? With what response did this meet? Who are the true descendants of this man? Why?

Those Who Are of Faith

We know very little about the rules and restrictions that God set out for the behavior of His people in the patriarchal era. The record of His expectations in the Mosaic dispensation is quite clear, and the directives of the law of Christ are clearer still. In these different times, God has asked for strikingly different things. David would probably be just as bewildered by our worship services without bloodshed as we are by his polygamy. However, through all of these different eras, one thing has stayed the same. God's people have always been justified by faith.

The righteous have never had this faith in themselves. They have never trusted in their ability to completely please God and achieve their objectives without His aid. Instead, their faith has been in Him, in His ability to make complete what is lacking in their righteousness, in His power to bring them to blessing beyond what they could ever possibly have imagined. This humble, obedient faith was just as evident in the life of Paul as it was in the life of Abraham, as clear in Peter as it was in David.

If we are the children of God at all, it is because we are the heirs of this faith. Works are important; indeed, as James points out, works are essential. They demonstrate to God our desire to walk according to the spirit rather than the flesh. However, those works by themselves can never save us. No matter how much effort we invest in pleasing God, we will never reach the standard set by His word. Perfect law-keeping is beyond us.

However, despite our failures, we can still be counted righteous, not through ourselves, but through Him who justifies the ungodly. Like Abraham, we must trust in God to fill us and bless us. Then, it is our faith that will be counted as righteousness.

6. According to Galatians 3:8, what did "the Scripture" foresee? What does it mean that "the Scripture" foresaw it? What did "the Scripture" do in response? Where is this found? Why is this important?

7. What does Paul reveal about all those who are of faith in Galatians 3:9? What does this mean? How does it relate to the previous discussion?

Galatians 3:10-18

1. What idea appears in Galatians 3:10? With what does it contrast? How do we know that this contrasting idea is true? Where is it found?

2. What statement does Paul make in Galatians 3:11? What does he offer in support of this statement? How does this support prove the truth of what he says? According to Galatians 3:12, what is not a part of the regime of faith? How does Paul establish this?

3. What does Paul describe Christ as doing in Galatians 3:13? What idea from the Law of Moses does he offer as proof? According to Galatians 3:14, what result does this have? Is "the promise of the Spirit" in Galatians 3:14 the same thing as the Spirit mentioned earlier in the chapter? Why or why not? Acts 2:38 and Galatians 3:8 may help.

4. What does Paul describe in Galatians 3:15? What does he here say about a human covenant? Why is this significant?

5. What is the subject of Galatians 3:16? To whom were these promises made? How was one of these promises worded? What is the significance of the wording? How does this relate to the previous argument?

6. What event does Paul describe in Galatians 3:17? When did this happen? What effect did this event not have? Why is this important?

7. What statement is made in the first part of Galatians 3:18? What is actually true? Therefore, what must logically not be true? Why is this important?