

Chapter 3

v. 1-6

Faith comes from the Holy Spirit

- Paul turns his attention away from recounting his confrontation with Peter and readdresses the Galatian churches.
- He speaks strongly to them “O foolish Galatians”.
- Apparently the Galatian churches were struggling with the concept of salvation by grace through faith in Jesus and had turned to a form of works.
- Paul uses his confrontation with Peter to emphasize the point that there is nothing else that can save them.
- He uses contrast and comparison in order to make this point.
- If the Spirit starts something, does the law finish it? No. If the law starts something, does the Spirit finish it? No. The Spirit finishes what the Spirit starts. This is a picture of sanctification.
- Sanctification: the process of becoming more like Christ.
- The Holy Spirit is the one who initiates this process when He saves us and because He is the One that started that process He is the One who has to finish it.

Abraham

- Genesis 15:6
- In Genesis 15, God made a covenant with Abraham and Abraham believed God and it was counted as righteousness on his behalf.
- The faith and trust that he had for the Lord was his righteousness until Christ came.
- Part of the promise to Abraham was that all the nations would be blessed.
- Those who are of faith in Christ are the sons of Abraham that God was talking about in Genesis 15.
- The Church, the bride of Christ, is made up of believing Jews and Gentiles.

- No more distinction between Jews and Gentiles.
- The chosen people of God are believers of all tribes, tongues, and nations.

v. 10-14

The Curse of the Law

- Deuteronomy 27:26
- Everyone who is relying on the law must keep it perfectly or else they will be under the judgment of God.
- No one could or can keep the law perfectly and that is precisely the point of it.
- The law was unable to save.
- Habakkuk 2:4
- The righteous live by faith not the law.
- The law requires perfect obedience and works but that is impossible for us.
- Christ came to redeem us from the curse by taking on the curse Himself.
- He fulfilled the law to perfection and therefore completed it. He then went on to take the wrath of God on the cross that was owed to every person that has ever lived. \
- Now that Jesus has come, He has unified the Jews and Gentiles under one banner and there shall be no more division.
- We are all children of Abraham.

Small Group Questions

- 1) The Galatian church was struggling with the concept of salvation through faith so they turned back to a form of works-based religion. Why is this a problem?
 - Because Jesus did all the work necessary for the salvation of all of His people. If we have to add anything to salvation then we are saying that the work Christ did wasn't enough. This would qualify as a false gospel and Paul warned against that in chapter 1.

2) Who initiates salvation for every believer?

- The Holy Spirit. Because He is the One who started the work He has to be the one to finish it. Therefore, we need to be plugged into the Spirit as much as we can so we will grow as much as we can before our time here is over.

3) Who did God make a covenant with Genesis 15?

- Abraham

4) What did Abraham do that God counted righteousness unto him?

- He believed what God was telling him. That faith was counted as righteousness for Abraham. The same is counted to us as we believe on Christ. It's a parallel.

5) What is the curse of the law?

- The curse of the law is that it must be kept perfectly or else face condemnation and judgment. It was a heavy burden. It could not save only oppress.

6) How are we freed from the curse of the law?

- Jesus came and fulfilled the law perfectly because He didn't have a sin nature. He took the curse of the law upon Himself and nailed it to the cross thereby setting all those who trust in Him free.
- Eye problems stemming from his encounter with Christ on the road to Damascus. This would have led to all sorts of problems for Paul. First, he was a preacher. Second, he was a writer. Third, he was a tentmaker. Imagine reading, writing, and working with leather when your eyes are damaged. This would cause Paul to lean on the Lord rather than himself.