

### **(Chapter 3) By Faith, or by Works of the Law?**

**3** O foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you? It was before your eyes that Jesus Christ was publicly portrayed as crucified.

*(Paul is asking who could possibly put you in such a trance to take your attention off of the crucifixion of Christ? Paul repeatedly emphasizes the crucifixion to the Galatians because again... according to Paul's own words in Ephesians 2:14-15 and Colossians 2:14-15: all man-made dogma including working for salvation was nailed to the cross, resulting in freedom)*

**2** Let me ask you only this: Did you receive the Spirit by works of the law or by hearing with faith?

*(Paul is trying to remind the gentiles "Wait a minute gentiles! Not that long ago you had zero knowledge of the oral or written law when you came to faith because you were ex-pagans yet God still gifted you the Holy Spirit and worked miracles among you by faith. God didn't qualify you first to see if you were worthy. So why are we all of a sudden now qualifying ourselves by human standards and human traditions?")*

**3** Are you so foolish? Having begun by the Spirit, are you now being perfected by the flesh?

*(Paul is saying "are you so foolish to think anything you did afterward was a cherry on top to Christ's crucifixion? Is God looking at you like wow when you first believed in my son for your sins and publicly confessed to follow him as Lord, I credited his righteousness to you. But now that I see you starting to keep these man-made traditions I never commanded, you're just super righteous in my eyes now! You got rabbinically circumcised? Wow! Now you're super saved!")*

*To give a modern example this would be like God saving 2 people today that don't know anything about the bible; God supernaturally removing both of their hearts of stone, giving them both a heart of flesh, empowering both of them with the Holy Spirit and giving both a new nature that wants to walk in obedience to God's commandments and then after the entire spiritually born again work of God by his grace... 1 of them puts a Jewish Kippah on their head telling the other person "Look I know it's not in the bible but actually I don't think you're really saved yet til you start wearing a Kippah too".*

*This is what Paul means when he rebukes anyone thinking they are perfecting the work of God with fleshly things. The reason we know Paul is not preaching against the Law of God is because Romans 7:14 he says "For we know that the law is spiritual, but I am of the flesh, sold under sin". The Law of God is spiritual but all man-made rules or man-made interpretations such as circumcision for salvation only glorify the flesh. Instead we are to live our lives by the spirit)*

**4** Did you suffer so many things in vain—if indeed it was in vain?

*(If you give into the pressure of becoming a slave to men then all your persecution was in vain)*

**5** Does he who supplies the Spirit to you and works miracles among you do so by works of the law *(oral or written)*, or by hearing with faith —

*(Paul is trying to get the gentile believers to remember the miracles they witnessed when they first came to faith in our Lord because at that time they came from paganism! Peter makes the same argument in Acts 15:7-11 when he reminds the apostles how the Holy Spirit fell on gentiles without them having any prior knowledge of the oral or written law. Yet God still worked miracles among them from faith alone. So Paul is explaining that in order to continue living a life where the Spirit continuously works miracles in their churches they needed to stop getting distracted by fleshly things)*

**6** just as Abraham “believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness”?

*(Paul is quoting Genesis 15:6 to demonstrate that this has always been God’s model. Abraham is the perfect example because he technically was not a Jew and he was justified/declared righteous by faith BEFORE he was circumcised and BEFORE the Law of God was codified on Mount Sinai. This is the exact position the gentile believers coming to faith listening to this letter would have been in. They would come to Christ with absolutely nothing to boast about yet God still saves them and declares them righteous by their faith alone. And it’s from salvation not for salvation they would learn the rest. But in order to continue growing in the rest God has for them they need to crucify the flesh and walk by the Spirit. Again you keep the commandments from salvation not for salvation. Read Romans chapter 4 for Paul’s complete breakdown)*

**7** Know then that it is those of faith who are the sons of Abraham.

*(Paul here and in many other places teaches that by faith all believers are spiritually Israel)*

**8** And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, “In you shall all the nations be blessed.” **9** So then, those who are of faith are blessed along with Abraham, the man of faith.

*(God chose Abraham by grace and Abraham responded to his calling by faith. He as the father of our faith is the model for both Jews & gentiles. Paul says in Romans 11:5-6 So too at the present time there is a remnant, chosen by grace. But if it is by grace, it is no longer on the basis of works; otherwise grace would no longer be grace. None of us earned or deserved it by our own obedience to the written or oral law yet God chose to save us in Christ Jesus anyway)*

## The Righteous Shall Live by Faith

**10** For all who rely on works of the law (*oral or written for salvation*) are under a curse; for it is written, “Cursed be everyone who does not abide by all things written in the Book of the Law, and do them.”

*This is one of the most misquoted verses in all of the New Testament. There are people that will read this and truly believe Paul just said “all who obey the ceremonial parts of the law are under a curse”. Where are those words anywhere in the text? Where are those words anywhere in Paul’s writings? Where are those words anywhere in the New Testament? It doesn’t exist! Or even worse some will think Paul said “if you obey any part of the law you’re under a curse, even the 10 commandments. Murder and kidnap all you want that’s fine, but if you obey the commandments to not murder and not steal you’re under a curse. Really? Heaven forbid! Let’s look again slowly at what Paul actually said... He says all who “RELY” on works of the law are under a curse. By faith we are to rely on the finished work of Christ for our salvation)*

**11** Now it is evident that no one is justified before God by the law, for “The righteous shall live by faith.

*(Paul is quoting Habakkuk 2:4 where the full verse reads “Behold, his soul is puffed up; it is not upright within him, but the righteous shall live by his faith”. The context is God answering Habakkuk’s complaint of God seeming to do nothing when the law is trampled. God responds saying live by faith because in the last days God will do things we won’t believe even if told)*

**12** But the law (*as interpreted by traditional/rabbinic Judaism*) is not of faith, rather “The one who does them shall live by them.”

*(the law of God was supposed to be a law of faith but it was turned into a law of works by man’s dogma. As Paul expanded on in Romans 3:27-31 “Then what becomes of our boasting? It is excluded. By what kind of law? By a law of works? No, but by the law of faith. For we hold that one is justified by faith apart from works of the law. Or is God the God of Jews only? Is he not the God of Gentiles also? Yes, of Gentiles also, since God is one—who will justify the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through faith. Do we then overthrow the law by this faith? By no means! On the contrary, we uphold the law.”)*

**13** Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us—for it is written, “Cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree”— **14** so that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles, so that we might receive the promised Spirit through faith.

*(Paul is quoting Deuteronomy 21:23 to explain how through Christ’s crucifixion, the curse of the law is removed because Christ took the curse upon himself. So not only was man-made dogma nailed to the cross but our punishment for disobedience was as well.*

*This is why Paul repeatedly keeps pointing back to the crucifixion. Notice how Paul does not say “through Christ we are redeemed from the Law” but redeemed from “the curse of the law”. It is because of Christ’s sacrifice that those who have faith in him don’t have to fear God’s wrath. They can have peace with God and are under no condemnation according to Romans 5:1-2, Romans 8:1. The blessings and promises made to Abraham were unconditional. Therefore if God makes an unconditional promise he will fulfill it! God is not a man that he should lie and no person, power, or spirituality can stop him fulfilling his covenants!)*

## **The Law and the Promise**

**15** To give a human example, brothers: even with a man-made covenant, no one annuls it or adds to it once it has been ratified.

*(in modern terms; even if 2 people enter a man-made contract someone can’t just later add things to it that were never in the original agreement)*

**16** Now the promises were made to Abraham and to his offspring. It does not say, “And to offsprings,” referring to many, but referring to one, “And to your offspring,” who is Christ.

*(this verse is another proof-text that Paul saw the believing gentiles spiritually joining the offspring of Abraham through the prophesied Messiah - Genesis 49:10. Paul never saw the gentiles as excluded, replacing, or joining the promises as a separate lineage)*

**17** This is what I mean: the law, which came 430 years afterward, does not annul a covenant previously ratified by God, so as to make the promise void.

*(the Law being codified on Mount Sinai didn’t change the unconditional covenantal promises previously made by God to Abraham)*

**18** For if the inheritance comes by the law, it no longer comes by promise; but God gave it to Abraham by a promise.

*(if the promises made to Abraham came by perfect obedience to the law then God made false promises since nobody can keep the law)*

**19** Why then the law? It was added because of transgressions, until the offspring should come to whom the promise had been made, and it was put in place through angels by an intermediary.

*(I’ve seen multiple interpretations of this verse. I’ve seen some people say the law was fully given as a result of the golden calf incident. The reason some say this is because the original Sinai covenant ratified by blood and a covenantal meal contained a shorter list of commandments only from Exodus 20-24:11.*

*This group would hold the view that “the book of the covenant” is separate from “the book of the law” or “second legislation” as some call it because it was not blood ratified the way the commandments in Exodus 20-24:11 were... There are others that would say this is reading Exodus too chronologically. And instead hold that the entire law was given at Mount Sinai in order to simply show our transgressions. Meaning if we measure ourselves by the Law we would come to the obvious realization we fall short and are in desperate need of a savior. Either way the law clearly highlights our transgressions and need for salvation until Yeshua came)*

**20** Now an intermediary implies more than one, but God is one.

*(Moses was the intermediary of the Sinai Covenant between Israel & God so I'm not 100% sure what Paul is trying to communicate here. If I had to guess, I think Paul might be implying Yeshua was also an intermediary of the Sinai Covenant since the Father and the Son are more than one person yet one in unity as God. But I'm not entirely sure to be honest)*

**21** Is the law then contrary to the promises of God? Certainly not! For if a law had been given that could give life, then righteousness would indeed be by the law.

*(the law can't be against the promises of God because again if God promises something unconditionally, he will fulfill it regardless of what disobedience takes place afterwards otherwise he would be a liar, heaven forbid)*

**22** But the Scripture imprisoned everything under sin, so that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe.

*(God allowed the scriptures to reveal our slavery to sin and utter hopelessness in our own strength to fulfill the law... So that we would have no choice but to place any faith we had in ourselves to the only person who did keep the law 100% perfect, Jesus Christ/Yeshua Hamashiach. Paul is now about to expand what this means for Jews first then gentiles)*

**23** Now before faith came, we (Jews) were held captive under the law, imprisoned until the coming faith would be revealed.

*(Paul is saying before justification by faith alone in Jesus Christ came, we were held captive under the oral and written law for salvation)*

**24** So then, the law *(the oral and written law for salvation)* was our guardian until Christ came, in order that we might be justified by faith.

**25** But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a guardian *(the oral and written law for salvation. Remember... “not being outside the law of God but under the law of Christ” 1st Corinthians 9:21 ESV)*

**26** for in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith. *(not by works of the law)*

**27** For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. **28** There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. **29** And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise.

*(It's amazing to me how people can read this and still deny that gentiles who come to believe in Christ have put on his righteousness and spiritually become the seed of Abraham by faith)*

#### **(Chapter 4) Sons and Heirs**

**1** I mean that the heir, as long as he is a child, is no different from a slave, though he is the owner of everything, **2** but he is under guardians and managers until the date set by his father.

*(in modern terms as a child you still have school teachers, babysitters, and other people that watch over you until you're ready to graduate to adulthood)*

**3** In the same way we (Jews) also, when we were children, were enslaved to the elementary principles of the world

*(Paul says we were enslaved to the man-made Jewish oral law. Notice how Paul explicitly said enslaved to the principles "OF THE WORLD". He does not say "enslaved to the ceremonial commandments". Read Collosians 2:20-22. This is going to be key when people ask you why you are putting yourself back under slavery. This whole epistle has consistently since chapter 1 stayed on topic of leaving man-made doctrine)*

**4** But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law (under the oral and written law for salvation),

*(born under Pharisaic/Rabbinic Judaism)*

**5** to redeem those who were under the law,

*(to redeem those under Pharisaic/Rabbinic Judaism - the oral and written law for salvation)*

so that we might receive adoption as sons.

**6** And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" **7** So you are no longer a slave, but a son, and if a son, then an heir through God.

*(Paul is saying that you Jews reading this letter have been set free from the oral and written law for salvation - the guardian - the schoolmaster - the test)*

## Paul's Concern for the Galatians

**8** Formerly, when you (*gentiles*) did not know God, you were enslaved to those that by nature are not gods.

*(Notice how whether it's Jewish man-made doctrine or Pagan man-made doctrine both are considered slavery and both are considered "worldly")*

**9** But now that you have come to know God, or rather to be known by God, how can you turn back again to the weak and worthless elementary principles of the world, whose slaves you want to be once more?

*(Notice the subtle wording of this verse! He goes from knowing God to "rather to be known by God". Demonstrating God's grace reached them first. But even so, Paul is clearly rebuking the ex-pagans who fell into the pressure of mixing the gospel with their old pagan practices)*

**10** You observe days and months and seasons and years! **11** I am afraid I may have labored over you in vain.

*(notice how the context from verse 8 shifted to people who used to be enslaved to those that by nature are "not gods". This is how we know Paul can't be rebuking going back to the biblical calendar. How could gentiles go back to the biblical calendar? They were never on it to begin with! They were pagans! Modern rebuke: You still observe horoscopes and zodiac signs!)*

**12** Brothers, I entreat you, become as I am, for I also have become as you are. You did me no wrong.

*(became as I am - follower of The Way - Under the Law of Christ - Messianic Judaism)*

**13** You know it was because of a bodily ailment that I preached the gospel to you at first, **14** and though my condition was a trial to you, you did not scorn or despise me, but received me as an angel of God, as Christ Jesus. **15** What then has become of your blessedness? For I testify to you that, if possible, you would have gouged out your eyes and given them to me. **16** Have I then become your enemy by telling you the truth?

*(Despite the rebukes in this letter Paul still gives credit by commending their initial acceptance of him)*

**17** They make much of you, but for no good purpose. They want to shut you out, that you may make much of them.

*(The enemies want you to boast in your flesh so they can boast in their flesh by distracting you with works-based salvation. Again by following the oral and written law for salvation)*

**18** It is always good to be made much of for a good purpose, and not only when I am present with you, **19** my little children, for whom I am again in the anguish of childbirth until Christ is formed in you! **20** I wish I could be present with you now and change my tone, for I am perplexed about you.

*(Paul is at a loss of words why on earth they are being persuaded by these people)*

### **Example of Hagar and Sarah**

**21** Tell me, you who desire to be under the law *(the oral and written law for salvation)*, do you not listen to the law?

*(“Cursed is anyone who does not fulfill the words of this Law by doing them.” And all the people shall say, ‘Amen.’ Deuteronomy 27:26 NASB)*

**22** For it is written that Abraham had two sons, one by a slave woman and one by a free woman.

*(Abraham had two sons: Ishmael through his concubine Hagar and Isaac through his wife Sarai)*

**23** But the son of the slave was born according to the flesh, while the son of the free woman was born through promise.

*(This is the pinnacle of Paul’s entire argument. God made unconditional promises to Abraham and his offspring. But Abraham and Sarai thought they had gotten too old to have kids. So they started thinking in the flesh rather than the spirit. They thought surely, in order to continue the promises God made to Abraham’s seed they needed to help God by giving Hagar to Abraham. In the natural it made sense because Sarah appeared physically too old. But that’s the point. It doesn’t matter how things look to us in the natural! God was not phased! Sarah even in her old age became pregnant with Isaac despite her doubts because God always keeps his promises. He didn’t need their help to get Hagar. All they had to do was remain in faith and God was already going to do exactly what he said he was going to do. In the same way Jesus Christ already did all the work for us. He already lived a perfectly righteous and sinless life. We don’t need to help him by adding man-made traditions on top of his already finished work)*

**24** Now this may be interpreted allegorically: these women are two covenants. One is from Mount Sinai, bearing children for slavery; she is Hagar. **25** Now Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia; she corresponds to the present Jerusalem, for she is in slavery with her children.

*(Hagar represents striving to fulfill God’s promises by our own efforts. The 1st century present Jerusalem lived by the oral and written law for salvation. It’s the same exact situation today)*



**26** But the Jerusalem above is free, and she is our mother.

*(The new Jerusalem that will come down out of Heaven - Revelation 3:12, Revelation 21)*

**27** For it is written,

“Rejoice, O barren one who does not bear;  
break forth and cry aloud, you who are not in labor!  
For the children of the desolate one will be more  
than those of the one who has a husband.”

*(Paul is quoting Isaiah 54:1 where the full context is God talking about the eternal covenant of peace that is still prophesied to come)*

**28** Now you, brothers, like Isaac, are children of promise.

*(that means you don't have to physically strive. God will save you through his grace)*

**29** But just as at that time he who was born according to the flesh persecuted him who was born according to the Spirit, so also it is now.

*(this is precisely why those of the flesh/those without the Holy Spirit persecute us. A large number of Muslims today actually claim to come from the lineage of Ishmael. They can't stand that no matter what anyone does, no one can stop the promises God made to Abraham and continued through Isaac and Israel. They can't stop Christ from coming back for us and they can't stop him returning to rule reign as King over the whole world from Jerusalem)*

**30** But what does the Scripture say? “Cast out the slave woman and her son, for the son of the slave woman shall not inherit with the son of the free woman.”

*(Paul is quoting Genesis 21:10 to show despite the good intentions Abraham and Sarah might of had physical striving to make God's promises come true, it earned them nothing just as if you try to justify yourself before God by your own personal righteousness rather than just trusting in the promised righteousness of Christ, it'll earn you nothing. It actually will backfire like Ishmael)*

**31** So, brothers, we are not children of the slave but of the free woman.

*(“If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth.” Colossians 3:1-2. We are not slaves to man-made Jewish traditions, man-made pagan traditions, or man-made Christian traditions. “Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom” 2nd Corinthians 3:17.)*