

3. Bewitched?

Galatians 3:1-14

Bewitched! Fools! Hypocrites! Paul uses strong words to describe what's happening to the Galatians. He's passionate about the gospel he preached to them, and he's in despair that they're in danger of getting things so badly wrong. They are being led astray by Jewish Christians who are telling them that they have to keep the Old Testament Jewish laws to be part of God's family. Maybe it seems like a small issue - but Paul is beside himself! Let's find out why.

1. Carefully read through Galatians 3:1-5. Paul asks a number of questions. Answer the ones below by ticking the box...

a) verse 2: Believe Law

b) verse 5: Law Believe

In summary (if your answers are correct!) how have they received the Spirit?

2. What are these people trying to attain, and how?

3. From verse 1, Jesus was clearly portrayed as crucified "before their very eyes." How does this idea link with the fact they are trying to attain a place in God's family by their own efforts?

Putting it together

Combining the ideas in verses 1 to 5, what does the death of Jesus on the cross made possible, and how do we become part of it?

Consider Abraham...

The Jews were exceedingly proud of their heritage. After all, they were the descendants of Abraham, and the heirs of God's great promises. But it seems like they might have missed the point! Read verses 6-8.

4. What one big thing did Abraham do 'right'?

5. On the one hand, you've got Jews who are saying "You have to keep the law to be right with God", and on the other hand, you've got Gentile Christians saying "All I need to do is believe in Jesus"... which group is the most like Abraham? (v7)

6. What ancient promise is fulfilled by the fact that the Gentiles are 'justified by faith'? (v7-8)

Trusting and Doing

Faith is simply resting your confidence on what *someone else* has promised or has done. Keeping *the law* though, is all about *doing*. Read verses 10 to 14.



7. According to the Old Testament (Dt 27:26), how much of the law do you *actually have to do* to avoid being cursed by it? (v10)

Where does that leave people who want to add a 'bit of law' to their Christianity?

8. The Old Testament also said there was a way to be right with God all along. What was it? (v11)

9. In short, the Israelites were in a terrible situation. God had given them the law - but they were cursed by it. However, those bad days are over! According to verse 13, what has Christ done for the Israelites now?

How?

What benefit flows on to the Gentiles from this? (v14)

The **blessing given to Abraham** in Genesis 12 was that **all nations** would be blessed through his family line. Now - through faith in Jesus - it's finally happened! Jews and Gentiles alike can be filled with God's Spirit, so they want to do God's will *from the heart*. It's exactly what the prophets had always promised.



Recommit

Do you see from this passage how it's possible to be right with God? It's not about what you do! It's simply about putting your faith in Jesus Christ, who was crucified to take God's curse on himself. When you put your faith in him, and become part of God's family of faith, and his Spirit begins to re-work your attitudes and inner-being. Have you taken that step of faith?

Check Questions:

How much does a person have to DO to be a Christian?



How much of the Old Testament law does a person have to keep to qualify as a Christian?

Do you find this surprising or offensive? (Some do!) But if you miss out on understanding this simple truth, Paul says you really have been bewitched!