



Lazybrook Baptist Church

GALATIANS: FREEDOM THROUGH CHRIST • GOD'S COVENANT WITH ABRAHAM •
GALATIANS 3:6-14 • 7/20/2020 - 7/26/2020

MAIN POINT

Salvation comes not by following the law, but by faith alone; however, true faith, believing in both God's existence and His promises, is one that freely compels us to radical obedience.

INTRODUCTION

As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.

When was the hardest you have ever worked? What motivated you to work so hard?

In what area of your life do you get the most reward for your hard work? Your job? Your parenting? Your relationships? Your physical fitness? In what area do you get the least amount of return on your investment?

Sometimes people mistakenly think they can do certain things to earn God's love. What are some ways people attempt to earn God's love?

In most areas of our lives, our success directly correlates to how hard we work. It is no wonder we have such a hard time accepting that our relationship with God isn't performance-based. When we understand that our salvation happens by grace through faith in Him alone and we can't do anything to earn or lose it, we're set free from the works that enslave us. Early Christians struggled to apply this truth to their lives just as we do.

UNDERSTANDING

In Galatians 3:1-5 we saw that the believers in the Galatian church desired to follow Jesus well. But we learn from Paul's letter that many had fallen into a trap that tempts us all—legalism. Legalism is the belief that we must fulfill certain requirements in order to gain God's favor. Even

though we know we're saved by grace through faith, we still try to make ourselves better in an effort to earn God's love. The Galatian church was under the influence of false teachers known as Judaizers, who taught that people had to keep the Jewish Old Testament laws even after becoming Christians. Their teaching negated Christ's work on the cross as the propitiation for our sins, which we discussed last week.

| HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ GALATIANS 3:6-9.

In proving his argument for justification by faith, Paul moved from an argument based on the Galatians' experience to an argument based on the teachings of Scripture. The first argument Paul used from Scripture was the example of Abraham, the first of the Old Testament patriarchs.

What is the relationship between faith and obedience?

Read James 2:14-26. How do you reconcile Paul's words about justification by faith with James' words about faith and works?

Why is it so easy for us to forget the role of faith in our relationship with God?

| HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ DEUTERONOMY 27:16-19, 26.

What, according to these verses, is the inevitable result for failing to obey the law?

What does it mean to be "cursed?"

God promised that everyone who does not obey His law would be cursed. To be cursed means to be cut off from God and to face His righteous wrath for our sin.

| HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ GALATIANS 3:10-14.

As Paul continued his warning, he illustrated the dire circumstances of people living as slaves to works and the law. Quoting the Old Testament, Paul reminded us we are cursed. Because of sin, we deserve eternal death. Our cursed nature is evident in the brokenness of this world and our inability to keep God's entire law.

What punishment from God do you deserve as a result of your sinful nature? Why can't works set you free from sin's curse?

If the law cannot save us, why did God give the law? (Romans 7:7)

How does Jesus solve the problem that no one can earn right standing with God?

What is the significance of Paul quoting Deuteronomy 21:22-23, "cursed is everyone who is hung on a tree?" How does this tree imagery relate all the way back to Genesis 2:8-9 and both the Tree of Life and the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil?

Note: [Click here to watch the Tree of Life video shown during the service.](#)

Paul demonstrated to the church at Galatia that it is not the strength of our faith that ultimately matters, but the object of our faith. When we are saved, we are made right before God, not because of how strong our faith is, but because Christ willingly became a curse for us.

What effect does Jesus' work on the cross have on your life? Do you think it's possible for it to have a greater effect? Why or why not?

What truth in Galatians 3:13-14 excites you most today?

APPLICATION

Help your group identify how the truths from the Scripture passage apply directly to their lives.

Describe your experience of becoming a believer in Christ. How is your story a reminder of the importance of grace?

Why is it more difficult for most of us to trust God in faith than to try to reach Him by works?

What are appropriate motives for obeying God's laws and practicing spiritual disciplines? How do they point us to the grace of God in Christ? How might we be tempted to view these practices as works?

PRAYER

Thank God for sending Christ on our behalf, freeing us from bondage to the law. Thank God for giving us the law, which shows us what righteousness and holy living look like. Thank God for the Holy Spirit's daily presence in our lives to guide, convict and comfort us as we seek to live by faith.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- [Relisten to Pastor Zach's sermon from Sunday, July 19.](#)
- [Watch The Tree of Life video used during Pator Zach's sermon.](#)
- Great commentaries on Galatians:

- [Exalting Christ in Galatians by David Platt and Tony Merida](#)
- [Galatians For You by Timothy Keller](#)
- [Re-watch the Virtual Town Hall Meeting with The Discovery Team](#)
- [Submit a question to The Discovery Team](#)
- [Complete the Congregational Survey from The Discovery Team](#)

Note: Please remind your small group members to 1) watch the virtual town hall 2) submit any questions that they might have and 3) participate in the congregational survey.

COMMENTARY

3:5. For God to give . . . His Spirit is an act of incredible grace. The Greek verb translated give means “to provide or furnish something at one’s own expense.” The term was used to denote the actions of financial underwriters of Greek plays. The noun translated miracles literally means “power.” God’s miracles demonstrate His power. The Galatian believers had received the Spirit and experienced God’s miraculous power through faith.

3:6. In proving his argument for justification by faith, Paul moved from an argument based on the Galatians’ experiences to an argument based on the teachings of Scripture. The first argument Paul used from Scripture was the example of Abraham. Paul reminded the Galatians that Abraham’s acceptance by God was rooted in his faith alone. Paul pointed to Abraham’s experience to prove that salvation is and always has been by faith.

3:7. The Judaizers were teaching that in order to share in the blessings promised to Abraham, the Galatians must submit to the sign of the covenant made with Abraham—circumcision. Paul countered that false teaching by emphasizing that believers become rightly related to God the same way Abraham did—not through circumcision, but through faith. Thus, Gentile believers did not need to be circumcised. All that was required was their faith in Jesus Christ.

3:8-9. The true children of Abraham are those who have been declared righteous by faith. Abraham was a man of faith. By faith, this patriarch entered into a right relationship with God and received God’s blessings. On the basis of faith, we, too, enter into a right relationship with God and experience the blessings of knowing Him.

3:10. Referring to Deuteronomy 27:26, Paul declared that obedience to every part of the law is required. Otherwise, the offender suffers the law’s punishment. No matter how upright the lawbreaker has been otherwise, the offender must bear the curse of the law because of one violation.

3:11-12. The Bible refers to one who has been saved by faith in Jesus Christ as justified. A greater understanding of the term can help us better appreciate the richness of God's salvation. Justification describes salvation from a legal perspective. Justification is granted by God on the basis of His grace, not through human efforts to please Him (Rom. 3:24). When God justifies us, He pardons all our sins, thus removing the separation our sins have caused between us and Himself.

God provides justification through faith, not by means of works or by keeping the law. None of us could be justified by works, because all of us are lacking in amount and quality. Neither can we be justified by keeping the law, because none of us can keep it perfectly. Justification is promised only through faith—not through works or the law. Emphasizing that the law is not based on faith, Paul quoted Leviticus 18:5 in Galatians 3:12. Paul also cited Habakkuk 2:4 in support of his defense of justification by faith (Gal. 3:11). Such faith is not merely mental assent to certain historical facts, but genuine acceptance in the heart of God's gift of eternal life (Rom. 10:9).

3:13. As believers, we have been redeemed or "purchased" by Jesus Christ, and thus delivered from the curse that our sins deserve. The Greek word translated redeemed literally means "to set free by paying a price." Christ paid the price to free us from the penalty of sin (1 Cor. 6:20). In describing the redemption Christ made available by His death on the cross, Paul referred to Deuteronomy 21:23. Although Christ was without sin, both the fact and the manner of His death brought Him under the curse of the law. Death by crucifixion was the most degrading and painful form of capital punishment in the ancient world.

3:14. This verse summarizes two benefits of Christ's atoning death which Paul has set forth in Galatians 3: (1) the blessing given to Abraham extends not only to Jews, but also to Gentiles who place their faith in Christ, and (2) the Spirit is given to every believer.