

Galatians 3:1-4:31

Paul's Defense of the Gospel

Galatians 1 and 2 was Paul's personal experience with the message of Grace and the Spirit.

Galatians 3:1-5 was the Galatian's personal experience with Grace and the Spirit.

Galatians 3:6-9 is Abraham's personal experience with the same thing.

Chapters 1 and 2 was a defense of the gospel from Paul's own personal experience and calling.

3:6-9	The Faith of Abraham
3:10-14	The curse of "faith" in the law
3:15-18	The Unilateral (Unconditional) Covenant of Abraham (free to believe promises)
3:19-22	The Two-party (Conditional) Covenant of the Law (Purpose: Sin becomes transgression)
3:23-29	Position of sonship and full rights of an heir
4:1-7	Bondage to the law holds you away from privileges of the "Faith Estate"

3:1 He addresses them as "Galatians" not "brothers" as earlier in the letter.
It is an impersonal greeting.

"Bewitch" means to have a magic spell cast on them that controls their thinking and behavior.

- It means to have damage brought on them through an evil eye that drew them away from their convictions by getting them to focus on this one thing. They have been hypnotized by someone's evil eye.

3:1-3 Paul calls their turn from the true teaching to a different teaching as irrational for three different reasons.

1) He addresses them as "foolish" in verse one.

The word for foolish is *not* the Greek word for foolish "moros."

Jesus used this in Matt. 5:22; 7:26; 25:2. It means mentally deficient and refers to those who play the fool in moral or spiritual matters.

The Word in Gal. 3:1 is "**anoetos**" ("anotoi") which is:

- The actions of one who can think but fails to use his powers of perspective.
- It denotes stupidity that arises from deadness and impotence of intellect.
- Refers to one who does not reflect.
- It is the failure of moral responsibility to think.
- This was not a reference to their limited ability, but quite the opposite. It was a reference to failure to use what they knew.
- They had knowledge, but not the application (or, wisdom)
- Paul does not accuse them of lacking intelligence but of the inability or refusal to recognize the real situation.

"Foolish," or, "anoetos" is used in: Luke 24:25; Romans 1:14; 1 Timothy 6:9; Titus 3:3 where it is used along with "foolish, disobedient, deceived, enslaved."

The Galatians were refusing to think and be rational.

While Christianity is based on the death of Jesus, they were embracing teaching that resulted in the death of Christ being unnecessary.

This is "anoetos," foolishness. See Galatians 2:21.

2) Their conduct was inexplicable because the gospel was clearly preached to them.

The word "portrayed" is the Greek word "proegraphie" ("proegraphn") meaning:

- to write before
- to write up in public
- describes all public notices, proclamations and indicates a public announcement in which the **validity** of a particular fact or condition is proclaimed. The gospel had not been obscured by non-essentials.

Notice then that the heart of the gospel was "Christ crucified."

"Crucified" is in the perfect tense indicating an action completed in the past with results abiding into the future.

3) It is totally contrary to their initial experience as Christians

Did they become Christians by living up to a standard or by believing the message?

Point: Begin in faith, so continue in faith.

Three comparisons made in 3:2 and 3:

- | | | |
|----------------------|-----|---|
| a) Observing (works) | vs. | hearing |
| b) Law | vs. | faith |
| c) Flesh | vs. | Spirit (chapters 5,6 are devoted to this) |

3:4 “suffered so much for nothing”

This is a continuation of appealing the Galatians to remember and consider their own experiences. Evaluate the “true gospel.”

“Suffered” is the Greek word “epathete” and means “to experience.”

- It can mean to experience evil (and so, “to suffer”), or
- It may be used in the neutral sense as in “to experience.”

In verse five these things are identified:

- being given the Spirit (New Birth)
- Miracles (manifestations of the Spirit’s presence after the New Birth)

3:5 Did the things they experienced occur because they kept a law or because they believed the message? They know! They were there! No one was teaching the law! They had been taught the message of truth and they received it. The result was their salvation and the manifestation of the Spirit of God.

According to Wuest the Greek construction demands that the same one who gave the Spirit must be the one who did the miracles. This would be God.

NIV:	“Does God	<u>give</u>	you	his	Spirit”
Greek:	ο	ουν	<u>επιχορηγων</u>	υμιν	το νευμα
Literal:	“The (one)	therefore	<u>supplying</u>	to	you the Spirit”

“epicoregon” (“give” in NIV, “supplying” in interlinear, “ministereth” in the KJ) means:

- the simple verb means “to defray the expense of providing a chorus at the public feast.”
- This use as a preposition means “to supply abundantly and bountifully”
- It is in the present tense which means the action is permanent.

“work” is in the present tense also the word means “to be energetic, to work.”

“miracles” is from the word “dunamis” and is used in 1 Co.12:10 and 2 Co. 12:12. In each of these places “dunamis” is a reference to the Spirit giving miracle working power on certain believers.

POINT: The same Spirit that sanctified them (born again) empowered them to do miracles.

And, both are in the present tense meaning these activities were current in their midst even among the law.

But, obviously they were being hindered by the turning to the law which was not the Spirit but the flesh.

The following verses in chapters 3 and 4:1-7 are Paul’s argument against the law and for the Spirit.

3:6-9	Faith (“Abraham”)	compared with	3:10-14	Law (the “curse”)
3:15-18	Faith (“covenant”)	compared with	3:19-22	Law (“transgressions”)
3:23-29	Faith (“heirs”)	compared with	4:1-7	Law (“bondage”)

Also note: The last three (“transgressions,” “heirs,” and “bondage”) digress into their own comparisons with in the argument.

“Transgressions”	compared with	“promises”
“Heirs”	compared with	“a slave teaching the underage son”
“Freedom”	compared with	“bondage”

Galatians 3:6 - “Abraham believed in the LORD”

To except what God has done for us reveals that we realize that we can do nothing to please him.

If we reject what God has offered and continue in our own efforts it is a result of:

- 1) Pride
- 2) Self-righteousness (See: James 4:6)

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NOTE: The last three (“transgressions,” “heirs,” and “bondage”) digress into their own comparisons within this argument.

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the doctrinal teaching begins - - -

The Judiazers had failed to distinguish between:

- 1) The purely Jewish and national covenant God made with Abraham's descendants that included an assignment (ministry) and the provisions (material blessings) to fulfill it. These chosen people were to be a channel to bring salvation to the earth and that salvation also came through a descendent of Abraham, the Messiah.
- 2) The covenant of salvation, which had nothing to do with the Jewish covenant above.

3:6 "He believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness." This is from Genesis 15:6

"Believed" here is *ἐπιστεύσεν* and is in the:

- **aorist tense** - He did it all at one point in time. A single experience. Simple time past. It is not the imperfect which means he did it over a period of time or progressive. It is not the perfect which means he did it once in the past with results that continue into the present.
- **indicative mood** - Which is the mood of reality. It really did happen. It occurred. It is not in the Subjunctive which is the mood of potential.
- **active voice** - Which means the subject, Abram, produced the action. It is not the middle voice where the subject produces the action to benefit the subject. It is not in the passive voice where the subject receives the action.

Abraham had believed in God long before. He was a believer in the covenant of salvation and so, as a believer he was worth of being given a second covenant or an assignment.

Gen. 15:6 in different translations:

Rotherham's: "And he had faith in Yahweh, - so he reckoned it to him as righteousness."

Revised English Bible: "Abram put his faith in the LORD, who reckoned it to him as righteousness."

New American Standard: "Then he believed in the LORD; and He reckoned it to him as righteousness."

King James: "And he believed in the LORD; and he counted it to him for righteousness."

NIV: "Abram believed the LORD, and he credited it to him as righteousness."

Quoted twice by Paul in Romans 4:3 and Galatians 3:6

Quoted once by James in James 2:23

Romans 4:3 and James 2:23 have the same word "believed" with the same tense, mood and voice as Galatians 3:6.

Romans 4 presents faith not as a crowning merit but as readiness to accept what God promises.

James 2:23 speaks of righteousness by faith to confirm that justification has always been by faith but also that faith must show itself genuine in James 2:18.

Abraham's faith for salvation had already occurred as in "faith in the Lord" which already existed before Chapter 15 of Genesis.

But, Abraham's faith responded to the word of God, or the promise, or the plan, or the assignment God gave in response to a man that stood justified before him. (Genesis 12:1-4; Acts 7:3,4; Hebrews 11:8-10)

Galatians 3:19-22

First -	faith 3:6-9. . . faith of Abraham	<i>He believed in the Lord</i>
Second-	law 3:10-14. . .curse of the law	<i>No one gets the blessings</i>
Third -	faith 3:15-18. . .covenant of Abraham	<i>A unilateral covenant</i>
Fourth -	law 3:19-22. . .purpose of the law: Reveal transgressions	
Fifth -	faith 3:23-29. . .heirs of the covenant	
Sixth -	law 4:1-7 . . . bondage to covenant	

3:19

If Abraham and his people had a unconditional covenant with God why were they \given the Law of Moses??

Does the Law of Moses have no purpose for the plan of salvation??

Is the Law of Moses opposed to God's plan of salvation??

Paul's answer is, "It was added because of transgressions."

Does he mean that the Law would restrain sin until the Messiah came?

This answer is "No."

Does he mean it was given to make transgressions known?

This answer is "Yes."

The word for transgression is "parabasis" or *παράβασις* and means "stepping over the boundary."

It is not the word "hamartia" or *ἁμαρτία* which is the word for "sin" and means "to miss the mark."

“Sin” always has existed since Adam. A “transgression” cannot occur until a law is broken. So, though “sin” existed, there was no “transgression” until the law was given and then broken. The “Law” turns “sin” into “transgression.”

Romans 3:20 “through the law we become conscious of sin.”

Romans 4:15 “where there is no law there is no transgression.”

The law is what makes “sin” a “transgression.”

Sin has always existed but without a statement of the law it would not be a transgression.

Romans 5:20, “The law was added so that transgressions might increase. . .”

Romans 7:1-4

- a) first example: a woman is married to a man,
the man dies,
the woman is free to marry another
- b) second example: the person had a binding relation with the law
the person dies to the law when they enter into Christ
the person is free to be joined to another, the risen Lord

Note why you have been separated from the law and to Christ. . .7:4

John 15:1 - Jesus introduces the same subject. This is also the topic of Gal. 5,6.

The law reveals man’s need for a savior. It compares man to the holiness of God.

The law then has prepared man’s heart and soul to look for the covenant of Abraham.

Abraham asked, “How can I know that I will gain possession of it?” See Hebrews 11:8-10

Second half of 3:19

“Until the seed” meaning there was a time limit for the usefulness of the law.

“The seed to whom the promise referred had come.” What promise?

Which promise contained the ‘promise of the seed?’

Answer: The one in verse 15,16

“The law was put into effect through angels by a mediator.”

The mediator is Moses.

The angels are suggested in Deut. 33:2 and Psalm 68:17

And referred to in Acts 7:53 and Hebrews 2:2

3:20 “A mediator, however, does not represent just one party; but God is one.”

There are over 300 interpretations of this verse.

It is the most obscure verse in Galatians and maybe the whole Bible.

It is difficult because it is an abrupt, short statement of a principle.

“God is one.” This is true. But what is the point of saying that now??

The Law of Moses is said to have been mediated. Meaning there were two parties involved: God and the people.

But, God is one, in the sense of the Abrahamic Covenant. He did not mediate it, although there were two there, the smoking pot and the blazing torch. The NT mediator is Christ, but still, he is God, so there is still just one.

The point: Salvation is a unilateral covenant. The law is between two parties.

3:21 “Is the law opposed. . .”

This is a response to those who take Paul’s teaching and try to make it ridiculous.

They would say, “So, the law of Moses is an evil document.”

Paul is saying this is nonsense. The law is the character of God.

Rom. 5:20 says it increases transgressions, but the law is not sin.

Rom. 7:7-11 says the law even kills

In fact, if you can fulfill the law you would have life: Lev. 18:5 and Gal. 3:12

3:22 The problem is not with the law. The problem is with man.

When you fully realize this you look for an answer elsewhere and find the promise of the unilateral covenant that is Christ.

When you find Christ, you have salvation.

If you hold to the law, you show you do not fully understand the promise of Salvation through Jesus Christ.

3:23 “the faith” of salvation

3:24 The word for “put in charge” (NIV) or “schoolmaster” (KJ) is “paidagogos” which means “a child-custodian” or “child-attendant.” The law exposed our sin as transgressions and caused us to stop rationalizing that we were good enough and forced us to look for another way to God. That way is justification by faith and not justification by good works.

3:25 There is no need now for the law since we have found Christ.

3:26 We are now sons of God

“We are now sons of God in Christ . . . we are in Christ through faith.”

3:27 “Baptized into Christ” is “placed, or positioned” into Christ.

We have spiritually been moved from our first location, or condition, into the location (condition, position, relationship) of Christ. In this new condition we are, like Christ, sons of God.

- **Sonship by Creation** . . . natural to all men and referred to in Acts 17:28
- **Sonship in Christ** not natural or given to all men. It is the same phrase but refers to something other than being a creation of God.

- **Mature Sonship** . . . This is the sonship of Galatians 3:26 and refers to the fullness of our position in Christ. This is granted to every believer in Christ.
- **Mature Son** This is contrasted with the immature son (1 Cor. 3:1; Heb. 5:11-6:2) and refers to growing into the position God has called us to or assigned us to. This must be attained by the Spirit-led believers who hears and understands God’s word.

3:28

Does not say racial/national differences, social differences, and the differences between male and female do not exist.

God has made these differences and they are natural. This is saying that these differences are not figured or recognized in the new position of being a Son of God (being in Christ.) A healthy church will have all of these different people who still maintain their natural differences yet function as the spiritual body of Christ.

We do not need to destroy the natural in order to attain the spiritual. God is the creator of both. God’s creation, both natural and spiritual, work in harmony.

3:29 According to Gal.3:16 Christ was the heir of the promises spoken to Abraham. Here it states that if we are in Christ then we are the “seed” and “heirs.”

The Legalizers (in this case, the Judiaizers) had promised the Galatians that they could become part of Abraham’s seed by obeying the Jewish laws. They would at best be imitators of Abraham’s natural seed. Paul tells them that by being in Christ, the heir of the promises, they are given the promises of Abraham by being his spiritual seed. Point: Even the natural seed (Jews) need to become Abraham’s spiritual seed by faith. So there is no advantage in taking the detour through the Law of Moses.

All that is available is in Christ. Christ is mentioned 7 times in the last 8 verses.

Three things are discussed in this three-dimensional application:

1. The height – In Christ we are reconciled to the transcendent God of the universe (3:26)
2. The width - In Christ we are united to all other believers and they to us. (3:28)
3. The length – In Christ we are joined to a long line of believers throughout history (3:29)