

Galatians Part 3

Note:

In this teaching, the following terms are used: “new creation”, “new man” or “new self”, “Christ in You”, “holy spirit” and “gift of holy spirit”. All these terms refer to that which is received and born in a person when he or she becomes born again.

The King James Version, English Standard Version, the Amplified Bible and the Lamsa Bible will all be used or referred to.

Turn to Hebrews 12

A few words need to be said about faith. In the King James version, Hebrews 12:2a says:

“**2a** Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of *our* faith...”

The word “*our*” in that verse is in italics because it has been added; it is not in the text. That little three letter word can cause much difficulty. The word “our” implies that there can be many faiths. This is our faith, another group over there has another faith. People have the impression that each denomination and religion can have its own faith. This is simply not true.

Turn to Ephesians 4 in the English Standard Version (ESV)

Jesus is the author (or beginner) and finisher of faith. Therefore, faith could not be available to anyone before he finished it. That means that anyone who died before the day of Pentecost in the 1st century could not have faith. Before the day of Pentecost, the disciples who followed Jesus did not have faith because it was not yet available.

Ephesians 4:4 – 6

4 There is one body (*the body of Christ*) and one (*gift of holy*) Spirit—just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call— (*the hope of the return of Christ and our gathering together with him*)

5 one Lord (*Jesus Christ*), one faith (*the faith of Jesus Christ*), one baptism (*into Christ; not water*),

6 one God (*not three*) and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.

Turn to Romans 3

So, there is just one faith, and Jesus was the beginner and finisher of it. That is the faith we have been given.

Romans 3:22

22 the righteousness of God through (*the*) faith ~~in~~ of Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction:

Anyone who confesses Jesus as Lord and believes in their heart that God raised him from the dead receives the righteousness of God, by way of the faith of Jesus Christ. This is all part of salvation which is received and retained in that creation of the new spiritual self which is created IN Christ Jesus. This is God's workmanship which is received by grace. That new creation, God's workmanship that we have become, is as righteous as God is.

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Romans 12:3

3 For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned (or given to everyone).

This is saying that all the believers have the SAME MEASURE of FAITH. It is NOT possible to have any more. So when people say that "...you have to have more faith...", they are not speaking biblically according to the gospel of Christ.

Turn to Galatians 2

Since we ALL have the maximum faith which is available and we all have the righteousness of God in us, it is not possible to think too highly of the new spiritual self which God has created in this body of flesh. Thinking soberly is thinking according to the Word of God with spiritual insight and understanding according to the operation of our new spiritual selves.

Galatians 2:16

16 yet we know (we don't doubt or question) that a person is not justified by works of the law (this is works of the flesh) but (we **are** justified) through (the) faith ~~in~~ (of) Jesus Christ, so we also have believed in Christ Jesus, in order to be justified by (the) faith ~~in~~ (of) Christ and not by works of the law, because by works of the law no one will be justified.

Many religious, church going people live in fear of the "day of judgment", wondering if they are going to make it into heaven or be sent somewhere else. Well, did you know that when you are born again, you have already gone through a judgment with a verdict of "Not guilty"? Jesus Christ was our substitute – he discharged all the outstanding penalties against us which resulted in the dismissal of any and all judicial action against us. None of the believers will ever go through any of the future judgments as recorded in the bible.

Galatians 2:20

20 I (the old self of the flesh) have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I (the old self of the flesh) who live, but Christ who lives in me (the new self of the spirit). And the life I (the new self) now live in the flesh I (the new self) live by faith ~~in~~ (of) the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

We have learned that Jesus is the beginner and finisher of faith. The believers in the old testament of the bible could not and did not have faith. The faith of Jesus Christ is received as a gift of grace; it's part of salvation. By the faith of Jesus Christ we are justified and we have the righteousness of God. Every believer has the same measure of faith – no more and no less than anyone else. We all have the same amount of faith as the apostle Peter or the apostle Paul or any other believer. Faith cannot be increased and it cannot be decreased.

The believers live by the faith of Jesus Christ, NOT THE LAW!

Romans 10:4 says

4 For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.

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You could accurately say that Christ is the end of *religion* for righteousness to everyone who believes. The immensity of this little verse is breathtaking. This truth expressed here is that all the religious structures, organizations, positions, enterprises, status, training programs and anything else associated with religion in Jerusalem, Athens, Rome and anywhere else is ended. The chief priests, Pharisees, Sadducees, teachers, lawyers, scribes, rulers and elders who were zealous for the law and religion were out of a job. Their status and influence under the law was at an end. That manner of life was finished.

The truth of Romans 10:4 continues to live and speak today. There is no Godly spiritual significance or power to any religion, religious organization, structure, or position. Christ is the end of any religious law or commandments contained in ordinances. Do you understand why the devil fights so viciously against the gospel of Christ? If the genuine gospel of Christ is accurately taught, understood and applied, then the religious structures constructed by the devil come tumbling down.

Galatians 3:6

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

Abraham lived in the old testament, before the law came. He operated spiritual believing and it was counted to him as righteousness. That is what was available before faith came.

Galatians 3:9

9 So then, those who are of faith (*those are the born again believers*) are blessed along with Abraham, the ~~man of faith~~ “faithful”, or “Abraham the believer”.

10 For all who rely on works of the law 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.”

How many people believe this verse? How many disbelieve this verse?

How was your quality of life when attempting to live by religious laws and commandments and ordinances? Well, this verse just communicated the reason why.

Galatians 3:11

11 Now it is evident that no one is justified before God by the law, for (*he is quoting old testament scripture here, Hab. 2:4*) “The righteous shall live by ~~faith~~ believing.”

It cannot be “faith” here because this is a reference which was written in the old testament. No one can be justified by observing religious rituals and living by religious laws and commandments.

Galatians 3:12

12 But the law is not of faith, rather “The one who does them (*the commandments contained in ordinances*) shall live by them.”

The law is not of faith, it is not our life. Remember Galatians 2:20?

Galatians 3:13

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”—

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14 so that in Christ Jesus (*in full fellowship with Christ Jesus*) the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles, so that we might receive (*into manifestation*) the promised Spirit through faith.

Only one man was able to do all the works of the law, and that was Jesus Christ. He fulfilled the Law of Moses. Then, he became our substitute, becoming a curse for us. It is by his accomplishments that the blessing of Abraham became available to us.

Amplified version of the Bible

Galatians 3:15

15To speak in terms of human relations, brethren, [if] even a man makes a last will and testament (a merely human covenant), no one sets it aside or makes it void or adds to it when once it has been drawn up and signed (ratified, confirmed).

16Now the promises (covenants, agreements) were decreed and made to Abraham and his Seed (his Offspring, his Heir). He [God] does not say, And to seeds (descendants, heirs), as if referring to many persons, but, And to your Seed (your Descendant, your Heir), obviously referring to one individual, Who is [none other than] Christ (the Messiah).

17This is my argument: The Law, which began 430 years after the covenant [concerning the coming Messiah], does not and cannot annul the covenant previously established (ratified) by God (*with Abraham*), so as to abolish the promise and make it void.

The law of Moses specifically and any other religious law generally does not and cannot change, alter or invalidate the promises God made to Abraham.

Even in our legal system, once a last will and testament has been drafted and confirmed, it stands as is. No one may legally alter the terms of that will.

Galatians 3:18

18For if the inheritance [of the promise depends on observing] the Law [as these **false teachers** would like you to believe], it no longer [depends] on the promise; however, God **gave it** to Abraham [as a free gift solely] by virtue of His promise.

Abraham did not do anything to earn the promise. God gave it to Abraham as a free gift.

Galatians 3:19

19What then was the purpose of the Law? It was added [later on, after the promise, (*To what? To help people walk by the spirit? No!*)] to disclose and expose to men their guilt because of transgressions and [to make men more conscious of the sinfulness] of sin; and it was intended to be in effect until **the Seed** (the Descendant, the Heir) should come, to and concerning Whom the promise had been made. And it [the Law] was arranged and ordained and appointed through the instrumentality of angels [and was given] by the hand (in the person) of a go-between [Moses, an intermediary person between God and man].

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By the law is the knowledge of sin. The law brings about sin consciousness. Now that justification and the righteousness of God is available, why would anyone want to live under religious legalism? Since faith and the gift of holy spirit is available, religious legalism is a miserable, ungodly way to live.

Galatians 3:20

20 Now a go-between (intermediary) has to do with and implies more than one party [there can be no mediator with just one person]. Yet God is [only] one Person [and He was the sole party in giving that promise to Abraham. But the Law was a contract between two, God and Israel; its validity was dependent on both].

The promise given by God to Abraham ONLY depends upon God's action, not Abraham's action. The promise of God does not require a mediator.

I know that 1 Timothy 2:5 says

5 For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus

The translators notes about this verse in the NET Bible state:

“mediator,” conveys a wrong impression in contemporary English. Jesus was not a mediator, for example, who worked for compromise between opposing parties. Instead he was the only one able to go between man and God to enable them to have a relationship, but entirely on God's terms.

Galatians 3:21

21 Is the Law then contrary and opposed to the promises of God? Of course not! For if a Law had been given which could confer [spiritual] life, then righteousness and right standing with God would certainly have come by Law.

22 But the Scriptures (*the old testament*) [picture all mankind as sinners] shut up and imprisoned by sin, so that [the inheritance, blessing] which was promised through faith in Jesus Christ (the Messiah) might be given (released, delivered, and committed) to [all] those who believe [who adhere to and trust in and rely on Him].

23 Now before the faith came, we were perpetually guarded under the Law, kept in custody in preparation for the faith that was destined to be revealed (unveiled, disclosed),

24 So that the Law served [to us Jews] as our trainer [our guardian, our guide to Christ, to lead us] until Christ [came], that we might be justified (declared righteous, put in right standing with God) by and through faith.

25 But **now that the faith has come**, we are no longer under a trainer (the guardian of our childhood).

26 For in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God through faith.

The law and all its commandments contained in ordinances is no longer in effect. Faith came and we ARE NOT under the law of Moses or any other religious law that man and the devil may

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construct.

Galatians 3:27

27For as many [of you] as were baptized (*no water here*) into Christ [into a spiritual union and communion with Christ, the Anointed One, the Messiah] have put on (clothed yourselves with) Christ.

If water baptism were required for anyone to be born again, then salvation would be by works, not by grace. Being baptized into Christ indicates an immersion into Christ, into everything he is and everything he represents. This occurs when a person is born again – it is the same as being created IN Christ Jesus as Ephesians 2:10 says. This creation is a work of God, it is not our work. Like it or not, our new spiritual self is clothed with Christ, our new spiritual self is in constant fellowship with Christ.

Galatians 3:28

28There is [now no distinction] neither Jew nor Greek (*in Christ, race has no spiritual significance or impact*), there is neither slave nor free (*in Christ, social status has no spiritual significance or impact*), there is not male and female (*in Christ, gender has no spiritual significance or impact*); for you are all one in Christ Jesus. (*we are all one in an unbreakable fellowship with Christ Jesus*)

29And if you belong to Christ [are in Him Who is Abraham's Seed], then you are Abraham's offspring and [spiritual] heirs according to promise.

The old self of the flesh has no part or inheritance in this promise as it is too weak, too corrupt. The old self of the flesh has been crucified with Christ.

The new spiritual self which God has created in each one of us is the genuine offspring of Abraham.

Galatians 4:1

1NOW WHAT I mean is that as long as the inheritor (heir) is a child and under age, he does not differ from a slave, although he is the master of all the estate;

2But he (*the heir*) is under guardians and administrators or trustees until the date fixed by his father.

3So we [Jewish Christians] also, when we were minors, were kept like slaves under [the rules of the Hebrew ritual and subject to] the elementary teachings of a system of external observations and regulations.

4But when the proper time had fully come, God sent **His Son**, born of a woman, born subject to [the regulations of] the Law,

Did you, or I, or anyone else have anything to do with bringing the messiah the first time? No, we did not. God is the one who sent His son.

Galatians 4:5

5To purchase the freedom of (to ransom, to redeem, to atone for) those who were subject to the Law, that we might be adopted and have sonship conferred upon us [and be recognized as God's sons].

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6And because you [really] are [His] sons, God has sent the [Holy] Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, Abba (Father)! Father!

Did you, or I, or anyone else have anything to do with the gift of holy spirit being sent into our hearts? No, we did not! God is the one that sent that gift to us. The flesh is much too weak and polluted to be able to do any work like this. In fact, it says in Ephesians 2:1 that "...you were dead...". Dead people are not able to do anything but stink.

This gift of holy spirit is God's creation of our new spiritual self which cries out to God, "Father! Father!". Our new spiritual self is the true you which is able to be in fellowship with God, worshiping Him in spirit and in truth.

Galatians 4:7

7Therefore, you are no longer a slave (bond servant) but a son; and if a son, then [it follows that you are] an heir by the aid of God, through Christ.

Each individual believer is no longer a slave, legally obligated to serve the god of this world. We have been freed from bondage and have become an heir of God through Christ.

Galatians 4:8

8But at that previous time, when you had not come to be acquainted with and understand and know the true God, you [Gentiles] were in bondage to gods who by their very nature could not be gods at all [gods that really did not exist].

9Now, however, that you have come to be acquainted with and understand and know [the true] God, or rather to **be understood and known by God**, how can you turn back again to the weak and beggarly and worthless elementary things [of all religions ~~before Christ came~~], whose slaves you once more want to become?

A slave is OBLIGATED and FORCED to serve. There is no choice! It is FORCED SERVICE with NO BENEFIT to the slave.

Galatians 4:10

(As a slave)

10You (religiously) observe [particular] days and months and seasons and years!

11I am alarmed [about you], lest I have labored among and over you to no purpose and in vain.

12Brethren, I beg of you, become as I am [free from the bondage of Jewish ritualism and ordinances], for I also have become as you are [a Gentile]. You did me no wrong [in the days when I first came to you; do not do it now].

The believers have been troubled by false, counterfeit teachers and leaders who are promoting a counterfeit gospel. Because of this spiritual attack, they have been deceived into practicing religious legalism. This legalism nullifies the grace of God. So Paul is very concerned that all his labor among the believers in Galatia will have been to no purpose.

In the following section there is a subject which has given Bible scholars difficulty. The King James Version says that Paul had an "...infirmity of the flesh...". The Lamsa Bible says that "...I was weak

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in the flesh...”. There has been no end of guesswork and private interpretation about what that weakness was. The scriptures do not explain what this infirmity or weakness was all about. We must remember that these scriptures we are reading were written and addressed to the believers in Galatia. That audience knew exactly what Paul was referring to.

Galatians 4:13

13 On the contrary, you know that it was on account of a ~~bodily ailment~~ (physical weakness) that [I remained and] preached the Gospel to you the first time.

14 And [yet] although my ~~physical condition~~ weakness was [such] a trial to you, you did not regard it with contempt, or scorn and loathe and reject me; but you received me as an angel of God, [even] as Christ Jesus [Himself]!

15 What has become of that blessed enjoyment and satisfaction and self-congratulation that once was yours [in what I taught you and in your regard for me]? For I bear you witness that you would have torn out your own eyes and have given them to me [~~to replace mine~~], if that were possible.

16 Have I then become your enemy by telling the truth to you and dealing sincerely with you?

Turn to John 6 in the ESV

Paul is ministering to the needs of these believers by revelation and spiritual believing. They needed the truth of the gospel of Christ re-taught to them. The devilish spiritual influences attacking among them were to be exposed. They needed reteaching in order to break the bondage that was once again gaining hold upon them. Does this make Paul their enemy? Think about this – if people are offended when you speak the Word of God (by revelation and spiritual believing), does it mean that you did something wrong, or that you were unloving? Well, lets take a look at John 6 and see.

Jesus Christ was just teaching about the bread of life. He IS the bread of life which came down from heaven. Manna was not the bread of life. The salvation of the believers at that time was dependent upon them believing that Jesus was the messiah who had been sent by God. Jesus was teaching them that he is that food, that nourishment which endures to eternal life.

Those who had followed him as disciples for a short while had a problem with this teaching.

John 6:60

60 When many of his disciples heard it, they said, “This is a hard saying; who can listen to it?” (Did they admit to having difficulty with their understanding? No, they accused Jesus of imparting 'hard sayings'. They found fault with him.)

61 But Jesus, knowing in himself that his disciples were grumbling about this, said to them, “Do you take offense at this?”

62 Then what if you were to see the Son of Man ascending to where he was before?

63 It is the Spirit who gives life; **the flesh is no help at all**. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life.

64 But there are some of you who do not believe.” (For Jesus knew from the beginning who those were who did not believe, and who it was who would betray him.)

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65 And he said, “This is why I told you that no one can come to me unless it is granted him by the Father.”

66 After this many of his disciples turned back and no longer walked with him.

67 So Jesus said to the Twelve, “Do you want to go away as well?”

Jesus taught his disciples the truth by revelation and spiritual believing, and some of them rejected him. They would no longer endure listening to him. Jesus did not retreat into self examination, he did not hire a speech coach, he did not hire a communications or public relations consultant. There was nothing wrong with Jesus or his communications skills or his message. It is interesting to note that he did not go running after the former disciples to try to get them to come back.

Turn to Galatians 4, in the Amplified Bible.

When Jesus and Paul spoke the word of God, the word of Truth by spiritual believing, they spoke without regard to the response of the audience. They poured out their lives whether anyone believed or not.

Galatians 4:16

16 Have I then become your enemy by telling the truth to you and dealing sincerely with you?

17 These men [the Judaizing teachers] are zealously trying to dazzle you [paying court to you, making much of you], but their purpose is not honorable or worthy or for any good. What they want to do is to isolate you [from us who oppose them], so that they may win you over to their side **and get you to court their favor.**

These false, counterfeit teachers, who were teaching the law of Moses were attempting to gain followers and fans. They desired to be religious rock stars who were sought after by their followers. These counterfeits were using the believers so that they could feed off the believers. As we read in Galatians chapters 1 and 2, it was apparent that these counterfeit teachers and leaders were accustomed to moving comfortably among the genuine leadership of the body of Christ. Their primary attacks on the body of Christ were directed at the genuine spiritual leadership. Once the leaders caved in to the attacks, the rest of the believers would follow.

Galatians 4:18

18 It is always a fine thing [of course] to be zealously sought after [as you are, provided that it is] for a good purpose and done by reason of purity of heart and life, and not just when I am present with you!

19 My little children, for whom I am again suffering birth pangs until Christ is completely and permanently formed (molded) within you,

20 Would that I were with you now and could coax you vocally, for I am fearful and perplexed about you!

Paul is not concerned about anyone who is genuinely and honestly zealously seeking after them. He is not jealous that they may be obtaining spiritual benefit from any other genuine visionary. He is not attempting to lord over them at all.

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Paul is working to help them recover from this spiritual fault, so that they once again walk in the spirit instead of the flesh.

At this point in his letter Paul communicates his deep concern for them and his desire to minister to them in person.

That wraps up part 3. Next time in Part 4, we will learn just exactly what these counterfeit, false, religious leaders were teaching and what the believers decided to do in response.

Be thankful for and enjoy THE MEASURE of the Faith of Jesus Christ which has been given as a gift to each one of us. Be thankful for and enjoy the JUSTIFICATION you have IN fellowship with Christ Jesus. Be thankful for and enjoy the RIGHTEOUSNESS of GOD which each one of us has received by the faith of Jesus Christ. Be thankful for and enjoy your fellowship with the heavenly father. You ARE Gods workmanship, created in Christ Jesus. You can't think too highly of yourself or the other believers as you see yourself according to the truth of the word of God, the gospel of Christ.