

STUDYING GALATIANS

BIBLE STUDY OUTREACH @ 1984, 1993

LESSON 6
Galatians 3: 1 - 5

Life - Changing Faith

Suppose you wanted to give a gift to someone you loved very much. You'd saved for it for a long time. Then one day you saw exactly what you wanted to give. It was a very beautiful, valuable ring, but oh, it was so outrageously expensive. You knew you just had to have it to give as a token of your love, so you bought it and waited for the right moment to give it to that very special person. When the right time came you gave the gift to this one who was so important to you and it was accepted with great joy and enthusiasm.

The next day your friend came to you and said, "I have been thinking. I am sure you meant for me to have this beautiful ring, but I just cannot keep it without paying you for it." Then the person handed you a ten dollar bill. You were crushed—and then indignant. The idea of making a meager offer for such a valuable ring! The person had not refused the ring, but had simply not accepted it as a gift! You had been robbed of the joy of giving it. He had despised your intent to give the valuable gift as an expression of your love. Your heart ached and you wondered why you had wanted to give the gift at all; you wouldn't have had to but you had done it out of love.

This is a perfect illustration of how many people treat God. We should never treat Him this way, but many people do. You may say, "I would not be guilty of doing that to God." We shall see. This lesson shows how often it is done without the person's even knowing.

In Galatians 3:1 - 5 Paul turned his attention from the past episode at Antioch to the Galatians. They were guilty of just such actions toward God. Paul was aghast at what they were doing. When he wrote to them his words implied, "Oh you foolish Galatians! God has given you a gift of infinite worth, of incredible value. He has given you life, salvation and the Holy Spirit. All come to you through Jesus Christ's death for you! You accepted it as a free gift from God, in good faith." Then you turned around and said, "It can't be He meant it as a gift. I've got to prove to Him I am worth what He has done for me." This happens over and over. It is despicable because it is saying His gift isn't worth anything. It is saying, "What I pay in my trivial obedience to a few rules and my attendance each week at church will show God I believe Him. Besides these things make me feel good, so I must be all right." This is the way you rationalize; but that is not all, because when you received His gift you had such joy and blessing; you were filled with excitement and enthusiasm, and now it is all gone. Where has the joy gone? Where is the spiritual power you had in the beginning?

Paul wanted to give the Galatians a challenge that would set them right and bring them back to their former joy and fresh eagerness as sons of God. They had been ardent believers and Paul wanted to know how they could be so fervent and then be led off from the truth of the gospel. He wanted them to understand that they had received everything God had to give for their eternal life and their daily walk while they were here on earth. Nothing could be added; nothing more was necessary.

Paul asked them if they had been saved by the law or by their faith in what Jesus Christ did for them. Paul

had to know how the Galatians stood on this, for if what he feared had happened, it must be corrected at all cost. This was a vital point, though not a new one. The Apostle John said, "...yet to all who receive Him, to those who believe in His name, He gave the right to become children of God." Once you become that child you no longer have to do something to keep your membership in God's family. You belong! When Christ entered your heart you were given the Holy Spirit and sealed for eternity as God's child. Bow your head and praise God, in the Name of Jesus, for that moment when His life came into yours. Thank Him that you are clean through the Word, Who lives within you. Let your heart sing and rejoice!

Paul was a master in dealing with people-problems. Matthew Henry, (Matthew Henry's Commentary—Acts to Revelation, p. 658) says about Paul, "...he sharply reproves, and then endeavors by the evidence of truth to convince them! This is the right method when we reprove anyone for a fault or an error. We must convince them that it is a fault or error." This was what Paul was showing the Galatians They had been talked into believing the lie that God's gift of salvation wasn't sufficient in itself. So the Galatians had added their puny efforts of services and self-effort to God's gift of grace through Jesus Christ's shed blood at Calvary for the remission of their sins. They were trying to give God a token-offering for something He had done out of His overflowing love.

Major points in Galatians 3:1 - 5 to remember:

- 1) Paul appealed to the Galatians own experience. They had received the Spirit of Christ. This distinctly marked them as Christians
- 2) It was because they had received Christ that the Spirit was given to them.
- 3) Paul said they must be bewitched for they had not obeyed the truth when they had already received Christ Himself, and Him crucified.
- 4) Paul said they had received what they had by faith in Christ Jesus.
- 5) Christianity was a new thing, separate from the law, in that faith took place within a person. It was not an external thing.
- 6) The Galatians had experienced the power of the gospel. The Jews who were unconverted had never experienced or had any knowledge of this inner working power.
- 7) The Galatians had suffered for the gospel. They wondered if it was all a mistake. Paul was telling them it wasn't a mistake. The Spirit manifested Christ through them, then others met and tasted Christ through them. They had seen and experienced signs and wonders, the result of Christ being in them! This is God's witness to His Word!

"CHRIST IN YOU!"

STUDYING GALATIANS

BIBLE STUDY OUTREACH @ 1984, 1993

LESSON 6
Galatians 3: 1 - 5

SCRIPTURE TO MEDITATE UPON:

“If so you have tasted that the Lord is gracious...” 1 Peter 2:3.

Read the Meditation Scripture over several times. Think about it during the week. Before you do your questions pray that God will let you “taste” of His Word. Ask Him to help you have a deeper understanding of the following thoughts:

- 1) “If you have tasted,” you have a responsibility; you are accountable for your choices after you “have tasted.”
- 2) “If you have tasted,” you have experienced God’s mercy, His tender loving kindness and you must ask, “Am I receiving the heart teachings of the Holy Spirit?”
- 3) “If you have tasted,” you are the recipient of great JOY, but you must appropriate it.

C.H. Spurgeon once said, “Rejoice believer, in your UNION to Christ Who was numbered among the transgressors and prove that you are truly saved by living manifestly numbered with those who are new creations in Him”

QUESTIONS:

1. Reread the notes and comment on the sentence that says, “but I just cannot have it without paying you for it,” as it relates to your trust in God for your salvation through Jesus Christ.
2.
 - a. From the notes give as briefly as possible the 7 important points in Gal. 3:1 - 5.
 - b. Which one of the points seems the most important to you? Why is this?
3. Read Luke 24:22-27 and give as many outstanding details as you can.
4. How important to the Galatian believers was the eyewitness report we read about in #3?
5. What connection do you think there was between the Galatians’ inability to keep what they had been told of the gospel and their inability to stand against the Judaizers?

6.
 - a. Our lesson speaks of “hearing by faith.” What did Paul write in Romans 19:17 about this?
 - b. How important do you think it is to encourage friends and family to study the Word of God?
 - c. Can you share an illustration from your life about others seeing your example of studying the Bible? What happened?
7.
 - a. Read Eph. 1:12 - 14. What does it say about your salvation? Give as many different points as you can.
 - b. As an heir, what is your inheritance? Look up Psalm 16:5; Heb. 1:14; Heb. 6:12; Heb. 11:7; James 2:5 and 1 Peter 3:7 for added help with your answer.
8. Acts 14:21 - 23 gives us a look into Paul’s personal ministry to the Galatians. What did he do for them and what did he tell them?
9.
 - a. What did Jesus tell the rich young ruler in Luke 18:22?
 - b. The young ruler had kept all the rules, but did that assure him of eternal life? Compare the Galatians’ predicament to his.
 - c. Have you ever slipped off the track as did the Galatians?
10. Tell what Hebrews 10:32 - 39 says about:
 - a. Remembering v.32.
 - b. Being afflicted with the saints v.33
 - c. Being able to look ahead to heaven v.34
 - d. The reason for needing patience vv.35,36.
 - e. Christ’s promise to return v.37.
 - f. How the just shall live v.38.
 - g. Believing v.39.
11. Explain Gal. 3:4 in your own words.
12. Give some ways the Spirit has “ministered” to you? What were the results, or “signs” manifested in your life?
13. Tell how you can relate the preciousness of receiving God’s gift of Jesus Christ to the illustration of the ring in the notes.