

Bible verses: Galatians 3: 1-5; Deuteronomy 32:1-6; Genesis 12: 1-9; Genesis 15:1-6; Galatians 3:6-9, Galatians 3: 10-12, CCC 706

1. Evidence that justification comes through faith and not works of the Law.
 - A. The Holy spirit (3:2-5)
 - B. Abraham (3:6-9)
 - C. Old Testament Scriptures (3:10-12)
 2. Christ solves the problems of the Law of Moses and makes the blessing of Abraham available to all (3:13-14).
 3. The priority of the promise given to Abraham over the law given to Moses (35-18).
 4. What is the purpose of the law (3:19-24).
 5. What faith accomplishes for us (3:25-29).
- Paul calls the Galatians “foolish”. Moses once called God’s people the same names. Deuteronomy 32:1-6
 - Moses told the people that rebelling against God’s will after he had so miraculously freed them from slavery was unwise. Paul takes up the same language to vent his frustration over the Galatians. How can people be so foolish as to fail to understand the problem presented by the Judaizers who were troubling them?
 - How did you receive the Holy Spirit? Observance of the Mosaic Law or through hearing the gospel preached to you? They experienced the Spirit as a result of hearing, believing and obeying the gospel and not from being circumcised or observing Jewish rituals. Paul stated this was a rebirth. Galatians experience the work of the Spirit themselves, apart from the works of the Law.
 - Paul turns to Abraham, the father of the Jews, as another witness that justification comes through faith.
 - Abraham was promised 3 things by God: 1. He will make a great nation from Abraham. 2. He will make Abraham’s name great. 3. God promised to bless “all the families” of the earth through Abraham. (Genesis 12: 1-9)
 - The first two promises result in the formation of the nation of Israel which takes its place as a light to all other nations. Through the law given to Moses and through the royalty, (established in the line of David), Israel was to be a source of blessing to everyone.
 - The promise of God to Abraham comes out of God’s generosity and love. Abraham does not have to earn it in the sense of having to keep certain conditions. This is GRACE.
 - Abraham received these blessing by leaving his country, his family and his father’s house. He needs to believe that God is trustworthy to make this kind of sacrifice worthwhile. He will live by faith in God.

- If Abraham chose not to leave everything and journey to an unknown land, he simply loses the blessing. We have to leave our old way of life, our habits of sin and our idolatries. The New Testament is to repent and be baptized.
- Ten years have gone by and Abraham and Sara see no sign of God's promise being fulfilled. Abraham was struggling to believe in God. He is losing patience with God. (Genesis 15: 1-6)
- God does not get angry with Abraham but tells him he will indeed have a son and heir.
- God's power and wisdom and goodness make it possible (although difficult sometimes) to trust him and to count on the integrity of his promises.
- The trust Abraham placed in God was pleasing in God's sight. Circumcision would mark entry into God's family and blessing. Abraham was not circumcised at that time. (Genesis 17: 9-27)
- Paul uses Abraham, the father of the Jews, as an example of one who was justified by faith and not through circumcision. Those who have faith are true children of Abraham, which means that people of every nation and people can be descendants and not just the Jewish. (Galatians 3: 6-9)
- Paul understood the word "bless" to mean "justify". The blessing promised to Abraham is open to all who have faith, whether Jew or Gentile. CCC 706
- The promises God made to Abraham are fulfilled in Jesus Christ, a son of Abraham by flesh but also the One in whom all who come to him by faith and power of the Holy Spirit are blessed.
- The curse Paul refers to sums up the consequences if Israel breaks faith with God by disobeying his Laws. (Galatians 3:10-12)
- Paul compares two Old Testament passages. Habakkuk 2:4 shows that God has always counted, as righteous, those who keep the faith, trusting his goodness no matter what. The Law does not rest on faith. Paul quotes from Leviticus 18:5 showing that to live by the law one must obey it.
- *Why did God give the Law to Moses if no one could be saved by keeping it? What was the purpose of the Law? Paul will address this in the last half of Galatians 3.*