

BRIEF PERSPECTIVE ON THE LETTER TO THE GALATIANS (3:1-14)

Paul continues in his letter to the Galatians, stressing yet again, that we are saved through Grace, not by our own works, not with our own strength, but through Jesus Christ. If the Galatian church needed constant reminders, it says a lot about the human nature: we have a tendency to forget, even these simple truths. Even in today's churches, we need these reminders too. We get so engrossed with the world we live in, we forget to have faith in Jesus Christ.

We have a tendency to forget and by default follow the law, and become legalistic. The passage we'll be looking at can be applicable to the Galatians that wrestled with the law and can be related to us today as we wrestle with today's laws and daily living.

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WARMING UP

1. What are some unusual daily rituals/routines you always end up doing, almost without consciously thinking about, and you do them by default?
2. Why do you do them? Is it due to cultural/religious reasons, or just your personality?
3. How would you respond if someone told you to stop these unusual daily rituals/routines?

INTO THE PASSAGES

Read Galatians 3:1-5 - Foolish people

4. Why do you think Paul rebukes the Galatian church in these verses?
5. Why is it “foolish” and “bewitched” (3:1) to choose human effort over the Spirit?
6. Do you also forget these truths in which Paul addresses? Is there a verse in this section that really hits home for you personally? If so, why?

Read Galatians 3:6-14 - Children of Abraham

7. Why did promise and faith take precedence over physical ancestry in deciding who were “Abraham’s children”? (See Genesis 21:8-12 and Romans 9:6-8.)
8. Jews claim to be the children of Abraham— that is, heirs of God’s promises to him. Who would you conclude should be the true children of Abraham? (Compare Galatians 3:7.) How would you
9. In Genesis 12:1-3 and Galatians 3:8-9, what does it mean that all nations would be blessed through Abraham? How would you convince this to be true with a Jew today? And how about a Muslim?

10. How can we differentiate between the religion-driven things that we do and those that are faith-driven?

MOVING FORWARD

Life with Christ means living by faith. Living by faith means following Christ wholeheartedly, even to the point of knowing it is not by works, or human effort, but instead Christ has already paid the price.

Many times we do rituals and things to make ourselves feel good spiritually. Perhaps we need to let go of these tendencies.

LIFE TOGETHER

As a body of believers, let’s live together reminding each other of God’s promises: that we are loved, Christ was crucified for us so we can live a faith-driven life instead of a law-driven one.

Let us spend some time praying about the rituals/routines we need to let go of.

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Leaders Guides

These notes are primarily for the Into the Passage portion, and are to be used just as guidelines or commentary notes. Most of them are my own thoughts, so take that with a grain of salt. Let the Word of God lead you to truth, not these notes.

INTO THE PASSAGES

Read Galatians 3:1-5 - Foolish people

4. Why do you think Paul rebukes the Galatian church in these verses?

Clearly the Galatians were still getting caught up with their law-abiding legalism, despite having embraced faith in Christ, still attaining to human efforts.

5. Why is it “foolish” and “bewitched” (3:1) to choose human effort over the Spirit?

It seems “foolish” to accept Christ and yet still have the desire to practice observing the law, seeking to be made perfect through the flesh and not through Christ; almost like you’re taking matters into your own hands and it is like Christ being crucified did not matter or change things, undoing what Christ has done.

Read Galatians 3:6-14 - Children of Abraham

7. Why did promise and faith take precedence over physical ancestry in deciding who were “Abrahams children”? (See Genesis 21:8-12 and Romans 9:6-8.)

Grace does not run in the blood, nor are there special privileges to being saved if you are part of the ancestry line of Abraham.

8. Jews claim to be the children of Abraham— that is, heirs of God’s promises to him. Who would you conclude should be the true children of Abraham? (Compare Galatians 3:7.)

Heirs of God are promised to all, should they believe that Christ was crucified and died for our sins. There is no limit to this

promise of God (skipping ahead to Galatians 3:26-28 sums it up nicely.)

9. In Genesis 12:1-3 and Galatians 3:8-9, what does it mean that all nations would be blessed through Abraham? How would you convince this to be true with a Jew today? And how about a Muslim?

Once accepting Christ and living in faith in Christ, we are grafted in to the family of God, and thus are made to become children of Abraham. To speak with a Jew one might need to approach it through reminding him/her of the Messianic prophecies of Christ coming, found in the OT. Speaking with a muslim, however, is tricky. But likewise with people of other faiths, approaching with care, prayer and Christ’s love being the focus, let the truth of the gospel speak truth into their hearts.

10. How can we differentiate between the religion-driven things that we do and those that are faith-driven?

We need to free ourselves of rituals/routines. It is important not to get too legalistic. Even if it means “I spend X amount of time having quiet time, therefore I am super holy.”