**Galatians 3:1-14**

Paul starts out in chapter one introducing the letter and **calling out the problem - the** teaching of the Judaizers. In Chapter 2 he goes through all that had happened in the early church to combat this false teaching. He reminds them of, Peter’s vision and ministry to Gentiles, **Peter’s hypocrisy** at Antioch and Paul’s rebuke, and the Jerusalem council. The council has addressed this false teaching and soundly rejected it.

Now Paul calls on **the book the** Judaizers claimed to teach from - the Old Testament. Paul uses Old Testament scripture to refute the dangerous heresy that the Galatians were beginning to believe in.

Since the beginning of time Satan has tried to get men to add to or take away from God’s instruction. True believers balk at the idea of taking something away from the scripture. But all too often they have heard someone speak of a new “revelation” that leads to more knowledge or power for living. This is what the Judaizers offered. Listen to us and we will show the way to “true” spiritual maturity. Paul shows them that they don’t even understand the “Law” they claim to live up to.

***O foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you? It was before your eyes that Jesus Christ was publicly portrayed as crucified.***

The word Paul uses for foolish does not mean **mental deficiency,** it means laziness and carelessness. The Galatians had been taught the truth. They were accepting this false teaching without taking the time to confirm it with the teaching of Paul and the rest of scripture.

It is often used of people with a wrong attitude and lack of judgement. He uses it in 1 Timothy about greedy people:

**9 But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation, into a snare, into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction.**

Instead of relying on what they knew to be true they allowed their feelings and **emotions to drag them away.** People typically do not join cults because of their great logic, but because something about the cult makes them feel good or feel accepted.

The were bewitched by the Judaizers. The word means **charmed, fascinated**, or slandered. They had told them that if they obeyed these “laws” it would make them complete or perfect. It was flattering to think they could do good works that would make them look good.

Paul reminds them of his teaching about Jesus being crucified publicly. Publicly portrayed has the idea of **putting it on a poster for all to see**. Paul had preached so clearly to them that could almost see Jesus hanging on the cross and His blood running down.

That blood had freed them from the law. **It had taken the glory of man** - works religion and replaced it with the glory due Christ.

**8 And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. 9 Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, 10 so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, 11 and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. Phil 3:8-11**

Crucified translates a perfect passive participle, indicating that the crucifixion was a **historical fact that had continuing results. John** declares that "if we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9). A more literal translation is, "He is still righteous to keep on forgiving our sins." No ritual, ceremony, regulation, or any other thing devised or accomplished by men can pick up where the cross leaves off—because the cross never leaves off. The cross is the continuing and eternal payment for all sin, and every sinner who puts his trust in the cross is forever and continually being forgiven - John MacArthur

***2 Let me ask you only this: Did you receive the Spirit by works of the law or by hearing with faith? 3 Are you so foolish? Having begun by the Spirit, are you now being perfected by the flesh? 4 Did you suffer so many things in vain—if indeed it was in vain?***

Paul appeals to their **own experience** of putting their faith in Christ. He asks the rhetorical question - “were you saved by faith and now you want to be perfected by works?”

The answer is obviously no. They had received the Spirt by faith:

The Spirit had convicted them. John 16:7-11

They were born of the Spirit. John 3

They were baptized by the Spirit. 1 Cor. 12:12-14

They were sealed by the Spirit. Eph. 1:13-14

**3 In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, 14 who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory. Eph. 1:13-14**

The word guarantee in the modern Greek word for **engagement ring,** a promise of things to come.

Why would they now try to add works? They had received everything they needed.

**3 His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence, 2 Pet. 1:3**

**Good works are important, but it depends on our motives.** If our motive is to make ourselves look good, in God’s economy it is worthless. But if it is done out of gratitude and to honor Christ it is priceless.

In verse four Paul asked them if they suffered these things in vain. He is asking them, “Did you not suffer or experience this kind of salvation by faith?”

***5 Does he who supplies the Spirit to you and works miracles among you do so by works of the law, or by hearing with faith—***

Supplies means to supply with **great generosity.** It was used of patrons of the arts or people who gave their wealth to support the army. It was also used of a groom’s love for his bride.

Paul is talking of God’s superabundance of grace and power He gives to His children.

Miracles may have been physical miracles that God did while Paul was there or the **miracle of the Holy Spirit that change**d every believer and gave them the power to resist sin.

**Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, 21 to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen. Eph. 3:20**

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

***7 Know then that it is those of faith who are the sons of Abraham. 8 And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, “In you shall all the nations be blessed.” 9 So then, those who are of faith are blessed along with Abraham, the man of faith.***

Paul now uses the **Old Testament to disprove** the teaching of the Judaizers. The Old Testament saints came through faith as well.

Able and Noah had no law but believed what God told them and obeyed His instruction.

The Judaizers like most Jews saw Abraham as the father of the nation. God told him to circumcise all the males in his household. That’s what distinctly made him a Jew. But they did not realize that circumcision was a mark of salvation not the source of it. Paul quotes Genesis 15:6,

**6 And he believed the Lord, and he counted it to him as righteousness.**

It was at least **fourteen years later** when God told Abraham to circumcise all the males in his household (Genesis 17).

The Old Testament told them Gentiles would be saved,

**4 “Behold, my covenant is with you, and you shall be the father of a multitude of nations”. Gen. 17:4**

They were so proud to call Abraham their father. The problem was that they believed being a descendant of Abraham sealed righteousness with God.

**39 They answered him, “Abraham is our father.” Jesus said to them, “If you were Abraham's children, you would be doing the works Abraham did, 40 but now you seek to kill me, a man who has told you the truth that I heard from God. This is not what Abraham did. John 8:39**

It should be noted also that Abraham is not only the pattern for justification by faith but for obedient living by that faith.

By faith Abraham, when he was called, obeyed by going out to a place which he was to receive for an inheritance; and he went out, not knowing where he was going.

***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.” 11 Now it is evident that no one is justified before God by the law, for “The righteous shall live by faith.” 12 But the law is not of faith, rather “The one who does them shall live by them.”***

**Evident** means clear or blatantly obvious.

The false teachers wanted the Galatians to follow the Mosaic law. Paul again turns the Old Testament against them by quoting Deut. 27:26 and Hab. 2: 4

**26 “‘Cursed be anyone who does not confirm the words of this law by doing them.’ And all the people shall say, ‘Amen.’**

**2“Behold, his soul is puffed up; it is not upright within him,**

**but the righteous shall live by his faith.**

He helps them to see that if they were going to live by the law, they had to live it **perfectly**. They knew they could not “abide by all things written in the book”. Choosing the law was all or nothing. Christ freed them from that. Why would they want to go back. When even the Old Testament clearly said the righteous would live by faith.

***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”— 14 so that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles, so that we might receive the promised Spirit through faith.***

**Redeemed** means to buy up, i.e. ransom, fig. to rescue from loss: often used of buying a slave’s freedom.

Jesus rescued us from the bondage of sin by buying us back, paying our debt by dying on the cross. He took our curse upon Himself

In ancient Judaism a criminal who was executed, usually by stoning, was then tied to a post, a type of tree, where his body would hang until sunset as a visible representation of rejection by God.

It **was not that a person became cursed** by being hanged on a tree but that he was hanged on a tree because he was cursed.

Blessing means bountiful gift.

When the Galatians had recieved Christ, they had received His bountiful gift of grace though the Holy Spirit.

When we receive that gift it is for the purpose of bringing glory to God.

Men are redeemed in order to exhibit God's majestic being before all creation. His supreme purpose is to demonstrate His glorious grace against the backdrop of man's sinfulness, lostness, and hopelessness.

**24 Now to him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you blameless before the presence of his glory with great joy, 25 to the only God, our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion, and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen. Jude**