

# THE PROOF OF BEING MADE RIGHT WITH GOD

## GALATIANS 3:1-5

<sup>3:1</sup> *O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you?*

<sup>2</sup> *This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?*

<sup>3</sup> *Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?*

<sup>4</sup> *Have ye suffered so many things in vain? if it be yet in vain.*

<sup>5</sup> *He therefore that ministereth to you the Spirit, and worketh miracles among you, doeth he it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?*

How is a person made right with the God of the universe? How can a person be assured that when they die they will go to heaven and not hell? This question has been asked for centuries, and sadly, for so many their answers are completely disoriented to the truth of Scripture. Since the Bible is the Word of Holy God, He and He alone knows the way we can approach Him and have a right relationship with Him, it only stands to reason that we should give “great heed” to His Word. In chapter 3 of Galatians, Paul deals specifically with “the how” of being made right with God. While a man should live as good as he can, and walk as moral as possible, the sobering truth of God’s Word declares that “no person” is good enough by following rules, regulations, codes, laws, for a relationship with God. The fact is no person can do enough “good” to merit heaven. No person can live “moral enough” to be right with God. The sobering reality of each of our lives is that we are all “sinners” by nature and by choice. The greatest moral person still has lapses into sin, the person who does the best deeds, still comes terribly short in the sight of God. It requires “a perfect life” to be made right with God, and God took the perfect life of Christ, and credits to our account by “faith”. It was through their personal experience of salvation that would remind them of how they were made right with God.

**1. WARNING....FALSE TEACHERS WILL ARISE TO DISCREDIT GOD’S WORK.** One of the sobering realities that the Father always longs for us to be on guard is the sobering reality of false teachers...that lead away from the truth. Though these saints in Galatia had been saved, Satan planted false teachers to lead them away from the truth of Scripture. Paul listened and declared that...it was as though they were mesmerized and hypnotized. False teachers had come in and fascinated the people, misleading them, and deceiving them. When a believer is deceived by false teaching, he walks back into a life of legalism, missing out on enjoying the grace of God, and the result is a life of “bondage” rather than “freedom”. Also listening to false teachers meant that these saints were “disobeying the very Word of God. When any believer listens to error over and above truth...he at that moment is becoming disobedient to God. No believer ever as a right to listen and believe error, deception, and false teaching. However, the sobering reality is many do, and many are. Sadly many people are teaching that a person is made right with God by rituals, religions, rules, following certain guidelines. But the sobering question that must be asked is this.. **WHAT DOES THAT HAVE TO DO WITH THE GRACE OF GOD.** Through false teachers, believers are led away from Christ...and that is Satan’s number one goal. Since Paul explained the death of Christ, the people were without excuse for believing and following false teachers. The wonder of God is that we are accepted by Him “by grace through faith” in the shed blood of Jesus Christ. We are made right with God by “faith” and faith alone. The sobering reality is: 1) Christians can be deceived, 2) Christians can walk away from the grace of God into life of bondage, 3) Satan is going to do his best to put false teachers in front of us until the day we die. It would not be bad if false teachers were relegated to Paul’s day, but the fact is...anyone who declares a way to God other than through faith in Christ is teaching falsely. To declare that works is a way to God is false. To declare that church attendance is the way to God is false. To declare that morality is the way to God is false. The only way to God is through Jesus Christ, by grace through faith in the shed blood of Christ. Since the precious saints of Paul’s day fell under attack by false teachers, we can rest assured that we will fall under attack by false teachers. Therefore, it is significant what we allow ourselves to listen to. It is significant what we allow ourselves to watch. It is

significant, when we allow ourselves to listen to someone “famous” that is not oriented to the truth of God’s Word.

*Ephesians 2:8 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:*

*Romans 10:9 That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.*

**2. PROOF...A BELIEVER RECEIVES THE HOLY SPIRIT BY FAITH AND NOT BY WORKS.**

It is very significant what Paul says in the very first part of verse two. His goal is to stir the people to “think for themselves” in line with the truth of God. The call of God is to use our God given minds and to think, accompanied by the truth of His Word. Sadly, in the day we live, many people desire to “let others” do their thinking for them. But that is not the case with a mature saint. A mature saint never allows another to think for them. Paul’s simple question was this... “Did you receive the Holy Spirit by faith or by works?” A simple question that requires an answer. Paul realized in his own life, that all his works did not bring the Holy Spirit into his life at salvation, but a simple childlike faith in Jesus and a confession of that faith. There is not one thing a person can do to receive the Holy Spirit, and if a person does not have the Spirit of God dwelling in him or her, then they are not saved. It is the Holy Spirit in a person that declares that they are saved. The Holy Spirit is God’s “seal” that a person is redeemed. Paul’s simple question countered all the false teaching, they faced. False teachers may use elaborate words, powerful vocabulary, but simple truth will dispel their lies. Paul reminded them that they received the Holy Spirit when they trusted Christ to save them, and that will never alter for all time. While a person may be intellectual, and articulate in Bible matters, he cannot have the Spirit of Holy God apart from FAITH in Christ. When a person places his or her faith in Christ, God credits to that person’s life, the righteousness of God.

**3. PROOF...A BELIEVER GROWS ONLY BY FAITH AND NOT BY THE FLESH.** Sadly, some individuals believe that they can grow by the “works of the flesh”. In Paul’s days, they were trying harder and harder to obey Jewish laws, circumcision, ceremonial laws and much more. But “works” can never lead a believer to spiritual growth. No believer matures by his efforts, but by the moving of the Spirit of God in his life. A person begins his or her spiritual journey by faith in Christ. The Spirit of God through the Word of God and godly teachers encourage spiritual maturity. Spiritual growth comes through allowing the Spirit of God to teach us through the Word of God. When the Spirit of God comes to live within “any” man, their entire desire system is changed by Holy God. The things of God begin to take priority over the things of the world. The old appetites are completely altered through the Spirit of God. Where the mind was once focused away from God, through the Spirit the mind begins to focus on a loving, caring, wonderful God, who desires to guide us, lead us, encourage us, and equip us for His wonderful work. Since the Holy Spirit lives inside a believer. He guides our our thinking and our living into becoming more and more like Christ...not by our effort but by His power. “For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son...” (Rom. 8:29)

The goal of God’s salvation is that each saved person would look, live and be more and more like His Son, Jesus Christ, in all our actions, ways and attitudes.

**4. PROOF...A BELIEVER IS WILLING TO SUFFER FOR HIS BELIEF IN THE GOSPEL.**

There is one sobering reality of a genuine believer. He or she is willing to suffer if need be for the gospel. That was exactly the case with the saints at Galatia. Their proof of salvation was in their suffering. They were ridiculed, belittled. Paul quickly validates their faith in Christ by their suffering. Yet, in the midst of their suffering, they were about ready to throw all of that away for the smooth tongue of false teachers. The sobering reality of v.4 is the reality that the real Christian life will not be marked with ease, comfort and pleasure, but rather it will be marked with suffering, rejection, abuse, and possibly betrayal from friends and family, but the words of Jesus are comforting and clear. *Matthew 5:11-12 Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.*