

Bibles???

The Word of God is the Absolute Truth and the Final Authority

This morning we start off with a fun history question –

In what decade were the following things invented???

Instant Coffee

The Electric Razor

The trampoline

Frozen Foods

The Jet Engine – this one might give it away.

It was the 1930's.

Another great invention from the 1930's is cake mix.

In the early 1930's, this company came up with a cake mix that required only water to be added.

Taste tests were done and surveys were made and this particular cake mix was found to be of superior quality than anything that was in the market.

It tasted good – it was moist – it was easy to make.

Millions of households would now be able to eat cake every night for dessert if they wanted to.

Perfect product right!!!

The company decides to patent its recipe with the United States government.

They spend a fortune on advertising and when the cake mix goes on sale – guess what happened? few people bought it.

The company recalls all of its unsold mix.

They hold countless focus groups, they reworked the formula based on the feedback from the focus groups and they finally released the reworked mix again.

They even had to notify the patent office of a change to their original patent.

And guess what? this time, it sold.

Everyone wanted it and it made the company huge profits.

What changed?

The reworked cake mix required the same water, but also an egg.

You see, the cake tasted the same – the original cake mix did have dehydrated eggs in it - the cake was just as moist as before.

You see, the problem was never the cake mix – it was a psychological one with the customers.

You see, the first cake mix was just too simple.

There was going to be no way that the customers would believe that something so worthwhile could be so simple.

And adding that egg changed the perception at the way people saw the cake mix.

Also, by adding the egg themselves – they felt like they contributed more to the cake.

No longer is it just adding a cup and half of water to the mix
– I had to crack the egg into the mix.

Why am I making us hungry this morning talking about cake mixes???

Because the legalist - is the one that tries to convince you that the gospel of grace is just too simple – just like the original cake mix.

And they will insist that our salvation requires us to add a few eggs of our own.

“What do you mean we are saved by grace through faith?”

What about sacraments?

What about following a list of do's and don'ts?

Their argument is that - If salvation is simply by grace through faith, than anyone can obtain it – **exactly!!!**

Turn with me to Romans 10

**[Rom 10:11-13 NKJV] 11 For the Scripture says,
"Whoever believes on Him will not be put to shame." 12
For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek, for
the same Lord over all is rich to all who call upon Him.
13 For "whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be
saved."**

Amen

This morning, we continue through our study in the book of
Galatians,

And in chapter three, Paul is going to transition from establishing his authority and the authority of the gospel that he preached – to defending the theology of the gospel that the churches in Galatia had already started to stray away from.

Let's pray...

Let's go ahead and read our text this morning, we are only going to be doing the first 9 verses.

[Gal 3:1-9 NKJV] 1 O foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you that you should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ was clearly portrayed among you as crucified? 2 This only I want to learn from you: Did you receive the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? 3 Are you so foolish? Having

begun in the Spirit, are you now being made perfect by the flesh? 4 Have you suffered so many things in vain--if indeed [it was] in vain? 5 Therefore He who supplies the Spirit to you and works miracles among you, [does He do it] by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? - 6 just as Abraham "believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness." 7 Therefore know that [only] those who are of faith are sons of Abraham. 8 And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel to Abraham beforehand, [saying], "In you all the nations shall be blessed." 9 So then those who [are] of faith are blessed with believing Abraham.

Apostle Paul wrote this epistle to the churches in Galatia because these legalists, these Judaizers had infiltrated the church and started to preach that justification by faith was not enough.

They started to preach that the Gentiles, in order to be truly saved, they had to also convert to Judaism and adhere to all their strict laws and traditions.

Most notably, circumcision.

So what we have in this epistle to the churches in Galatia is some of the strongest writings among Paul's epistles.

All the other letters that Paul writes to the other churches, he tells them about the good things that they have done and then he tells them about the things that they still need to work on.

Galatians is just exhortation upon exhortation.

And it is important that we understand that Paul had to be extremely firm with these churches in Galatia because the outcome of how they responded to these Judaizers was going to be important not only to the believers in Galatia but to the whole future of the movement called “Christianity”

So we see Paul’s firmness in the opening verse.

[Gal 3:1 NKJV] 1 O foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you that you should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ was clearly portrayed among you as crucified?

The Greek word that Paul uses here for foolish – is not the Greek word that is used for someone who is incapable of thinking for themselves.

The Greek word for that would be moros – that is the where we get the English word, moron. That is not what Paul is calling them.

The word that Paul uses here for foolish - is used for someone who has the means to reason but fails to use their power of perception.

The Galatians knew what they had been taught, the knowledge and the understanding where there. Their problem was that they were not using them.

It's the same way a parent would respond to a child that did something even though you warned them repeatedly about not doing it.

The other word I had you highlight is the word bewitched.

The thinking of the Galatians had become so unbiblical, so clouded that Paul began to wonder if a spell had been cast upon them and that was the reason that they had started to deviate from the truth.

I am pretty sure we all have loved ones who at one time walked with the Lord – loved ones who were strong in the faith – who read their bibles and then all of the sudden – they join a cult or they simply leave the fellowship altogether.

What happened?

Paul is trying to figure out how is it that deviated from the truth that he had taught them.

It was utterly foolish for the Galatians to turn aside from the Gospel of Grace when Jesus' work on their behalf had been so clearly presented and so readily received by them.

They should have known better.

Now, as Paul is writing this letter, he starts picturing himself sitting in front of the believers in Galatia and he proceeds to make the case for the gospel of grace by presenting a few questions to the churches.

[Gal 3:2 NKJV] 2 This only I want to learn from you: Did you receive the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?

Answer me this question guys,

When you were first saved, did you receive the Spirit of God by faith, or by obeying the Law of Moses?"

In other words – did the presence of the Holy Spirit in your life occur when you accepted Jesus Christ as your Lord and

Savior by faith or did it occur when you underwent the procedure to get your foreskin cut off???

And of course, the answer is by faith.

Turn with me to the gospel of John 7,

[Jhn 7:37-39 NKJV] 37 On the last day, that great [day] of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, "If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. 38 "He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water." 39 But this He spoke concerning the Spirit, whom those believing in Him would receive; for the Holy Spirit was not yet [given], because Jesus was not yet glorified.

One doesn't earn the gift of the Holy Spirit.

One doesn't have to work to clean up our life first for Him to fill you.

It's a gift from God, only received by simply believing.

If you think about it, this is the only question the churches in Galatia needed to hear.

If they understand where Paul was coming from, they would have to give up their pursuit of legalism.

[Gal 3:3 NKJV] 3 Are you so foolish? Having begun in the Spirit, are you now being made perfect by the flesh?

You see church, the problem that the Galatians had was that they were deceived into thinking that spiritual growth or spiritual maturity could be achieved through the works of the

flesh, instead of a continued simple faith and abiding in Jesus.

Notice how Paul replaces the word “law” with “flesh”

Because in reality, they were hoping to achieve spiritual maturity adhering to the law but in doing so – they were doing it in the flesh.

This verse lays out one of the fundamental differences between the principle of law and the principle of grace.

Under law, we are blessed and grow spiritually by earning and deserving.

That is what the law says – if I do this then I will get this.

Under grace, we are blessed and grow spiritually by believing and receiving.

It is important to understand that God deals with us under the covenant of grace; we should not therefore respond on the principle of law.

Paul's message to the Galatians,

You began in the spirit – Hearing the Word and receiving it by faith. Don't allow people to tell you that more is required of you – that is foolishness.

[Gal 3:4 NKJV] 4 Have you suffered so many things in vain--if indeed [it was] in vain?

Once again, Paul is asking the churches in Galatia to reflect on their past, when you began as Christians, you were persecuted because of your simple faith in Christ.

People came down on you, laughed at you and made fun of you.

Yet you continued to believe in the simplicity of the gospel.

You have already been persecuted because of your belief in grace – don't turn from grace now.

[Gal 3:5 NKJV] 5 Therefore He who supplies the Spirit to you and works miracles among you, [does He do it] by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?—

Who supplied the Holy Spirit?

Obviously the Spirit was given as a gift from God. We just read from the gospel of John a few minutes ago where it states that.

But we also must remember that miracles and blessings are a gift from God as well.

But the Galatians had been convinced by these legalists that all of these can be earned through their works. Through their adhering to the law.

And Paul drives home this vital truth of the gospel – they had not submitted to circumcision or to adhering of the laws – all they had done was hear the message of the gospel, believe the message of the gospel and the Spirit was given to them. And this truth undermined what the Galatians were in the process of doing which was to go back to the law.

Now, starting in verse six, Paul uses a tremendous illustration to prove his point.

You see, some of the Judaizers, they were using the example of Moses as the classic example of what people ought to be doing. Adhering to the law.

Paul goes back further than Moses – and pretty much says – you want to talk about the father of faith, let talk about Abraham.

[Gal 3:6 NKJV] 6 just as Abraham "believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness."

Turn with me to Genesis 15,

Now, Abraham was chosen by God – not because Abraham was a good person.

Not because Abraham was a strong believer, in fact Abraham was most likely a pagan idolater when God chose him.

God chose Abraham simply because of grace.

And because of grace, God gives Abraham the following promise.

[Gen 15:1-6 NKJV] 1 After these things the word of the LORD came to Abram in a vision, saying, "Do not be afraid, Abram. I [am] your shield, your exceedingly great reward." 2 But Abram said, "Lord GOD, what will You give me, seeing I go childless, and the heir of my house [is] Eliezer of Damascus?" 3 Then Abram said, "Look, You have given me no offspring; indeed one born in my house is my heir!" 4 And behold, the word of the LORD

[came] to him, saying, "This one shall not be your heir, but one who will come from your own body shall be your heir." 5 Then He brought him outside and said, "Look now toward heaven, and count the stars if you are able to number them." And He said to him, "So shall your descendants be." 6 And he believed in the LORD, and He accounted it to him for righteousness.

Verse 6 – Abraham believed and as a result of that - the Lord put him in a right standing with Himself.

Was Abraham credited with a right standing with God because he was circumcised?

No, because Abraham doesn't get circumcised for another 14-15 years. You can read about that in chapter 17.

Was Abraham put in a right standing before God because he obeyed the law?

No, because the law was not given yet. It would be another 430 years before the law is given to Moses.

But God considered Abraham righteous because of his faith.

Abraham believed the promises of God and that is all it took. Even though Abraham was approaching 99 years old and his wife 90 years old, he placed his faith on God who is great enough and powerful enough to keep His promise.

And Paul's argument is that if Father Abraham was considered righteous by God because of his faith, why then, are they even considering trying to be righteous through works.

**[Gal 3:7 NKJV] 7 Therefore know that [only] those who
are of faith are sons of Abraham.**

This is a rebuke to the message of the Judaizers.

One of the reasons that they used to force new believers to convert to Judaism is that by converting to Judaism somehow you are physically linked to Abraham.

The treated Gentile Christians as second class Christians.

And for the Jew, they cherished their heritage. They cherished being called “sons of Abraham”

Yet Paul’s argument in this verse is what truly matters is a spiritual link to Abraham.

And for all of us who have accepted Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior, because we have been justified by Christ and

deemed righteous before God by grace through faith, we can also be considered sons of Abraham.

Turn with me to the gospel of John 8,

Because Jesus is going to make it very clear that just because a person has a physical lineage to Abraham, they can still have the devil as their father.

[Jhn 8:37-44 NKJV] 37 "I know that you are Abraham's descendants, but you seek to kill Me, because My word has no place in you. 38 "I speak what I have seen with My Father, and you do what you have seen with your father." 39 They answered and said to Him, "Abraham is our father." Jesus said to them, "If you were Abraham's children, you would do the works of Abraham. 40 "But now you seek to kill Me, a Man who has told you the

truth which I heard from God. Abraham did not do this.

41 "You do the deeds of your father." Then they said to

Him, "We were not born of fornication; we have one

Father--God." 42 Jesus said to them, "If God were your

Father, you would love Me, for I proceeded forth and

came from God; nor have I come of Myself, but He sent

Me. 43 "Why do you not understand My speech?

Because you are not able to listen to My word. 44 "You

are of [your] father the devil, and the desires of your

father you want to do. He was a murderer from the

beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because

there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks

from his own [resources], for he is a liar and the father

of it.

[Gal 3:8 NKJV] 8 And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel to Abraham beforehand, [saying], "In you all the nations

shall be blessed." In verse eight, Paul once again – makes it clear that the scriptures from the beginning point that even the Gentiles (Galatians) would be justified by faith.

Now, "Faith" is simply the means by which we obtain salvation.

The actual work of salvation was accomplished by Jesus Christ on the cross, dying for all of our sins.

The way that we make His death valid for our sins is through believing in Jesus Christ.

It's not just "faith" for the sake of "faith". It's faith in Jesus.

Now, where is Paul's reference in scripture?

Genesis 12:3 – that is what Paul is quoting here.

[Gen 12:3 NKJV] 3 I will bless those who bless you, And I will curse him who curses you; And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed."

Notice that it does not say – only your direct descendants Abraham are going to be blessed. It says all the families/nations of the earth shall be blessed.

How were all the nations blessed through Abraham?

Because from him came the line of the Messiah.

And the Messiah has brought salvation for the whole world.

Once again, predating circumcision and predating adherence to the law.

9 So then those who [are] of faith are blessed with believing Abraham.

The ones who can really claim to be related to Abraham are those who learn to trust God for their salvation.

And ultimately church, that is why people chose to go to a work based religion because they have failed to learn to trust God for their salvation.

They are looking for the cake mix that they can call their own by adding their own egg into it.

Let's pray...

To Receive Christ do the following:

Admit, "I am a sinner."

Confess and be willing to turn from your sin.

Believe, by faith that Jesus Christ died for you on the cross.

Receive, through prayer, Jesus Christ into your heart and receive eternal life.

Dear Lord Jesus,

I know that I am a sinner and need Your forgiveness. I

believe that You died on the cross for my sins. Please

forgive me for my sins and cleanse me by Your blood. I

accept You by faith as my personal Lord and Savior. Give

me a thirst for Your Word and Help me to follow You all of

my days. In Jesus' name I pray, Amen.