

# Who Are Abraham's Children?

Michael Woody | Galatians 3:1–9

*The example of Abraham reminds us we are never made Spiritual outside of the Spirit.*

---

## WHY THIS TEXT?

1. Our last study was around how to die to legalism; Paul did this by clarifying the Gospel
  - a. Do I bear the marks of legalism or of grace? The legalist is marked by jealousy, oversensitivity to slights, “metallic” harshness toward mistakes, and an ungenerous default mode in decision making.
  - b. Why am I tolerating legalism - because I have not died to the Law! I may profess Christ, and truly be saved, but I am in the process of abandoning Him for the Law!
  - c. What do I do?
    - i. I regard myself as crucified (dead), but alive.
    - ii. I regard myself as alive, but not for me.
    - iii. I regard myself as flesh, but I live by faith.
2. Today we begin Paul’s explanation of the relationship between justification by faith and the law?
3. Galatians 2:15-17 was that relationship in a kernel format; Paul now expands upon that kernel.

4. Paul's central concerns here are to address the identity of those whom God accepts and the basis on which God accepts them. To this end Paul introduces Abraham to make three general points.
  - a. First, Abraham's true heirs are not doers of "the works of the law", but all those who, like Abraham, have faith (Gal 3:6–9).
  - b. Second, the law, which was based on "doing," brought a curse on those under it, though Christ became that curse for us, allowing the promises and the Spirit of God to come to both Jew and Gentile (Gal 3:10–14).
  - c. Third, because God's covenant with Abraham and "his seed" came before the law, the promise cannot be dependent on the law (Gal 3:16).

## **WHAT IS TAUGHT?**

FAITH ALONE IS HOW THEY WERE REDEEMED!

1. The Apostle begins by asking a question to reprove their embracing of false doctrine, Who cast a spell on you?
  - a. The word foolish is 'without understanding' and Paul is calling to their attention that they do not understand the basis of faith alone!
  - b. He reiterates that though they had trusted Christ by faith they continued to seek for justification by the works of the law
  - c. If we were to make this very open in its question we might say, Who cast a spell on you? Do you realize that seeking a works righteousness after salvation nulls and voids the basis of one's salvation?
3. Matthew Henry says, Note, It is not enough to know the truth, and to say we believe it, but we must obey it too; we must heartily submit to it, and stedfastly abide by it. Note, also, Those are spiritually bewitched who, when the truth as it is in Jesus is plainly set before them, will not thus obey it. Several things proved and aggravated the folly of these Christians
  - a. Jesus Christ had been evidently set forth as crucified among them (v. 1)

- b. He appeals to the experiences they had had of the working of the Spirit upon their souls (v. 2)
- c. He calls upon them to consider their past and present conduct, and thence to judge whether they were not acting very weakly and unreasonably (v. 3, 4)
- d. He appeals that they God had sent the Spirit upon them and that His working of miracles by His servants was not by the Law but by faith (v. 5)

#### FAITH ALONE IS A DOCTRINE THE JUST HAVE ALWAYS LIVED BY!

1. In this section the Apostle uses Abraham as an example of those accepted by God on the basis of faith.
2. The quote here is also found in Romans 4 and it comes from the life of Abraham: a pagan idol worshiper chosen by God to be the father of faith.
3. Four truths from the example of Abraham:
  - a. Abraham believed in God's promise of a Seed, who the Apostle identifies in 3:16, and God imputed to Abraham righteousness (v. 6), this comes from Genesis 15:6.
  - b. It is only those who enter the promise by faith that are the children of Abraham (v. 7)
  - c. Genesis 12:3 looked forward to the redemption of the Galatians and of us (v. 8)
  - d. It was through faith in the promise of God that Abraham was blessed, and it is only in the same way that others obtain this same standing. (v. 9)

#### **WHY DOES IT MATTER?**

1. The Judaizers were claiming that Abraham and all his children belonged to God, not by faith alone, but by works of the law.
2. The Judaizers had appealed to a misunderstanding of the Old Testament for their basis and Paul brings them to a correct understanding.

3. To believe that I begin to look like Christ by faith but that I complete this transformation by obedience to the Law negates faith
4. We are never made Spiritual outside of the Spirit.