

Exegetical Notes for Galatians 3:1-5

KEY

- ATR** = Robertson, A.T. *Word Pictures in the New Testament*. Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1933.
- BAG** = Bauer Arndt and Gingrich. *A Greek-English Lexicon to the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*.
- Bruce** = F.F. Bruce. *The Epistle to the Galatians: a Commentary on the Greek Text. New International Greek Testament Commentary*. Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 1982.
- Calvin** = John Calvin. *Calvin's Commentaries: Galatians*.
- Carson, Moo, Morris** = D.A. Carson, Douglas Moo, Leon Morris. *An Introduction to the New Testament*.
- CNTOT** = Beale and Carson, Eds. *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament*.
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- Gill** = John Gill. *Gill's Commentary on the Bible*.
- Jerome** = Raymond Edward Brown, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, and Roland Edmund Murphy. *The Jerome Biblical Commentary*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1996.
- Keener** = Craig S. Keener. *The IVP Bible Background Commentary: New Testament*.
- Lexham** = Douglas Mangum, and Derek R. Brown. *Galatians: Lexham Bible Guide*. Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2012.
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- MacArthur** = John MacArthur. *MacArthur New Testament Commentary: Galatians*. Chicago: Moody Press, 1987.
- Metzger** = Bruce M. Metzger. *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament*.
- Ryken** = Philip Graham Ryken. *Galatians: Reformed Expository Commentary*. Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 2005.
- Schaff** = Philip Schaff. *Saint Chrysostom: Homilies on Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, Thessalonians, Timothy, Titus, and Philemon. Vol. 13. A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church, First Series*. New York: Christian Literature Company, 1889.
- Schreiner** = Thomas R. Schreiner, *Galatians, Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2010.
- Simeon** = Charles Simeon. *Horae Homileticae: Galatians-Ephesians. Vol. 17*. London: Holdsworth and Ball, 1833.
- Spence-Jones** = H. D. M. Spence-Jones, Ed. *Galatians. The Pulpit Commentary*. London; New York: Funk & Wagnalls Company, 1909.
- Stott** = John Stott. *The Message of Galatians*. Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity Press, 1971.
- Strauss** = Lehman Strauss. *Devotional Studies in Galatians and Ephesians*. New York: Loizeaux Brothers, 1957.
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Wright1 = Wright, N.T. *Paul for Everyone: Galatians and Ephesians*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2004.

Wright2 = Wright, Tom. *Paul for Everyone: Galatians and Thessalonians*. London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 2004.

Vincent = Vincent, Marvin Richardson. *Word Studies in the New Testament*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1887.

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Parsing Verbs and Declining Nouns

Verbs:

ποιμανατε (ποιμαινω = to tend, shepherd || Verb: Aorist Active Imperative, Second Person Plural).

ἀποκαλυπτεσθαι (ἀποκαλύπω = to reveal, disclose || Verb: Present Passive Infinitive).

Nouns (gender before case):

πατηματων (παθημα = suffering || Noun: Neuter Genitive Plural).

Participles (gender before case):

μελλουσης (μελλω = to be about to || Participle: Feminine Genitive Singular Present Active).

Adjectives (gender before case):

(ἐπιεικης = gentle, kind || Adjective: Masculine Dative Plural).

Independent Personal Pronouns:

ἡμιν (ἐγω = I || First Person Independent Personal Pronoun: Dative Plural).

ὑμιν (συ = you || Second Person Independent Personal Pronoun: Dative Plural).

αὐτῷ (αὐτος = He, Him || Third Person Independent Personal Pronoun: Masculine Dative Singular).

Demonstrative Pronouns (gender before case):

(τουτο = this || Near Demonstrative Pronoun: Neuter Nominative Singular).

Reflexive Pronouns (only masculine and feminine - the genitive is the lexical form as there is no nominative case):

(ἐμαυτου = myself || First Person Reflexive Pronoun: Masculine Genitive Singular).

(σεαυτου = yourself || Second Person Reflexive Pronoun: Masculine Genitive Singular).

(ἐαυτου = himself, herself, oneself || Third Person Reflexive Pronoun: Masculine Genitive Singular).

Relative Pronouns:

(ὃς = who/that, of whom, to whom, whom [referring to people]; that/which, of which, to which, which [referring to things] – Translation depends on case || Relative Pronoun: Masculine Nominative Singular)

4th quest 4 τσαῦτα ἐπάθετε εἰκῆ ;
 τοσοῦτος πάσχω εἰκῆ
 So many Have you For
 suffered nothing

(indi
r quest) εἶ γε
 If Indeed

1st att ^{pt}/_c / sub
j 5 ὁ οὖν
 ὁ οὖν
 The Therefore

2nd att ^{pt}/_c καὶ ἐνεργῶν δυνάμεις ἐν
 καὶ ἐνεργέω δύναμις ἐν
 And Who works Miracles Among

(5th quest) ἐξ ἔργων νόμου ἢ ἐξ ἀκοῆς πίστεως ;
 ἐκ ἔργον νόμος ἢ ἐκ ἀκοή πίστις
 By Works Of Law Or By Hearing With faith

voc

vocative

quest

question

rel

relative clauses

cl

clause

att

attributive genitive (pp. 86-88) and participle (p. 618)

ptc

participle

comple

complementary infinitive (p. 598) or participle (p. 646)

inf

infinitive

adv

adverbial

temp

temporal

(

(...) indicates an understood verb or part of speech

indir

indirect

subj

subject

* Dean Deppe, *The Lexham Clausal Outlines of the Greek New Testament* (Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software, 2006), Ga 3:1–5.

Main Idea

The Galatians do not need to be circumcised and to observe the works of law in order to belong to the people of God because they have clearly received the Holy Spirit; the reception of the Spirit *is the mark* that signifies that one belongs to the people of God.

Translation

Galatians 3:1–5

1a exclamation **O foolish Galatians!**
n

brhetorical **Who has cast a spell over you, before whose eyes Jesus**
question **Christ was publicly proclaimed**

c apposition as the
ion crucified
one?

2a rhetorical **I want to learn only this from you: Did you receive the Spirit**
question

b means by works of law, or

c contrast by hearing with faith?

3a rhetorical **Are you so foolish,**
question

b means in that you are now perfected by the flesh,
(of 3a)

c temporal after you have begun in the
oral Spirit?
(of
3b)

4a rhetorical question **Have you suffered so many things in vain—**

b condition if indeed they are in vain?

5a inference Therefore, **does the one who supplies you with the Spirit and**
(of 1–4)

b series **works miracles among you,**

c means **do it by works of law or**

d contrast **by hearing with faith?**

Structure¹

¹ Thomas R. Schreiner, *Galatians*, Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2010), 178–179.

1 **O foolish Galatians!**

?1 *Who has bewitched you,
before whose eyes
Jesus Christ
was publicly portrayed
as crucified?*

2 This is the only thing I want to learn from you:

?2 *did you receive the Spirit
by the works of the Law
or
by hearing with faith?*

3 ?3 *Are you so foolish?*

?4 *Having begun by the Spirit
are you now being perfected by the flesh?*

4 ?5 *Did you suffer so many things in vain—
if indeed it was in vain?*

5 Consequently,

?6 *does He provide you with the Spirit
and work miracles among you
by the works of the Law
or
by hearing with faith?*

TRANSLATION, OUTLINE AND CENTRAL PROPOSITION

GREEK TEXT (NA27):

1 ὦ ἀνόητοι Γαλάται, τίς ὑμᾶς ἐβάσκανεν, οἷς κατ' ὀφθαλμοὺς Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς προεγράφη ἐσταυρωμένος; 2 τοῦτο μόνον θέλω μαθεῖν ἀφ' ὑμῶν· ἐξ ἔργων νόμου τὸ πνεῦμα ἐλάβετε ἢ ἐξ ἀκοῆς πίστεως; 3 οὕτως ἀνόητοί ἐστε, ἐναρξάμενοι πνεύματι νῦν σαρκὶ ἐπιτελεῖσθε; 4 τοσαῦτα ἐπάθετε εἰκῆ; εἶ γε καὶ εἰκῆ. 5 ὁ οὖν ἐπιχορηγῶν ὑμῖν τὸ πνεῦμα καὶ ἐνεργῶν δυνάμεις ἐν ὑμῖν, ἐξ ἔργων νόμου ἢ ἐξ ἀκοῆς πίστεως;

ENGLISH TRANSLATION:

1 O foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you, before whose eyes Jesus Christ was publicly portrayed as crucified? 2 This is the only thing I want to learn from you: did you receive the Spirit by the 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? 5 Consequently, does He provide you with the Spirit and work miracles among you by the works of the Law or by hearing with faith?

PASSAGE SUBJECT/THEME (what's t/passage talking about): The change wrought by the Spirit in the Galatians' lives . . .

PASSAGE COMPLEMENT/THRUST (what's the passage saying about what it's talking about): . . . is proof that justification is by faith alone and not by the law.

PASSAGE MAIN IDEA (central proposition of the text): The change wrought by the Spirit in the Galatians' lives is proof that justification is by faith alone and not by the law.

CENTRAL PROPOSITION OF THE SERMON: Justification by Faith Alone: Don't Forget the Change

SERMONIC IDEA/TITLE: "Don't Forget the Change" (Parts 1 and 2)

SERMON OUTLINE:

Introduction (key words and concepts):

1. What is a rhetorical question?
2. The 6 rhetorical questions of 3:1-5
3. Paul's unfolding argument beginning back in chapter 1:11 - 2:21
4. 2:16 - Paul's main thesis: justification by faith alone
5. Chapters 3-4 form the probatio (Latin "proof") of Paul's main thesis
6. Objective truth vs. subjective experience

7. Paul presumes that the Galatians were converted (comparing 3:1-5 to 2 Corinthians 13:5-6)
8. Trinitarian structure of verses 1-5

I. Paul's First Defense of Justification by Faith Alone: Don't Forget the Change (3:1-5)

A. Has Christ Changed You? (3:1)

1. First Question: Who Duped You?

B. Has the Holy Spirit Changed You? (3:2-4)

1. Second Question: Did You Receive the Spirit by Doing or Believing? (v. 2)
2. Third Question: Are You Really That Foolish? (v. 3a)
3. Fourth Question: Can Your Efforts Perfect What the Spirit Began? (v. 3b)
4. Fifth Question: Did You Suffering For Nothing? (v. 4)

C. Has the Father Changed You? (3:5)

1. Sixth Question: Does He Provide the Spirit by Your Doing or Believing?

HISTORICAL/CULTURAL/GRAMMATICAL CONTEXT

Literary Context

The long argument defending Paul's apostleship stretching from 1:10–2:21 has concluded. We saw earlier that 1:10 functions as a transitional verse bridging 1:6–9 and 1:11–2:21. Interestingly, 2:15–21 also functions as a transition to the next major section of the letter (3:1–4:11), where Paul defends his gospel theologically over against the Judaizers.

Betz, using rhetorical categories, identifies the section beginning in 3:1 as the *probatio* (proofs for main thesis).¹ Cosgrove argues that 3:1–5 is the decisive paragraph in the letter, showing that the Spirit is the primary issue in Galatians. Hence, Cosgrove rejects the notion that justification is central in Galatians or that the presenting issue in the letter centers on what is required to enter the people of God. Instead, to him, the central issue is the continued work of the Spirit in the Galatians. Paul exhorts them to stay in Christ.² I will argue below in 3:3 that such an interpretation misreads what Paul says. Furthermore, the view is flawed because it fails to see the crucial role that 2:15–21 plays in the argument, so that it functions as the thesis, or as Betz says, the *propositio* (main thesis) for the remainder of the letter.

Even though Betz's rhetorical analysis of the letter does not succeed, he is not far off the mark in describing 2:15–21 as the *propositio*. The fundamental issue in Galatians, and in 3:1–5, is justification. The reception of the Spirit, as Paul argues in this paragraph, functions as the decisive evidence that the Galatians are justified by faith.

Paul's argument begins from what is indisputable: the Galatians have received the Spirit. He concludes from this that they are justified by faith instead of by works of law. In addition, the view proposed by Cosgrove misreads the significance of circumcision. The Judaizers followed the standard Jewish view that circumcision was necessary to enter the people of God. Circumcision was not conceived in Judaism or by the Judaizers as necessary to continue one's devotion to God. It was required to belong to the people of God. Surely the Spirit plays a major role in the letter, but such a judgment overlooks the crucial function of 2:15–21 and the summarizing nature of 6:11–18. [Schreiner, 177–178]

Note the series of 6 questions, a rhetorical device.

“A rhetorical question is a question that you ask without expecting an answer. The question might be one that does not have an answer. It might also be one that has an obvious answer but you have asked the question to make a point, to persuade or for literary effect.”
[examples.yourdictionary.com]

The Merchant of Venice by Shakespeare also has the effective use of rhetorical questions. Following are some of the most famous rhetorical questions by Shylock in the play.

Shylock: “If you prick us, do we not bleed?”

If you tickle us, do we not laugh?
If you poison us, do we not die?
And if you wrong us, shall we not revenge?"

Common in Paul: Cf. Romans 6:1. Cf. "Are you out of your mind?"

The 6 questions Paul asks can be reduced to one (twice repeated): "I would like to learn just one thing from you: Did you receive the Spirit by observing the law, or by believing what you heard?"

The word "dumbfounded" describes Paul's attitude, much as we saw in 1:6.

One may wonder why Paul doesn't just flat out warn them that they are in danger of proving the falsity of their salvation. Rather, Paul seems to imply that he thinks they are converted. That is the point: he does! Cf. 5:10. Paul has warned them of the danger of apostasy (1:6-9). How Paul addresses them at this point is akin to his warning to the Corinthians in 2 Cor. 13:5.

Paul does work from the perspective of the Galatian's experience here – before he goes on to the objective exposition of Scripture (using Abraham as an example) and the doctrine of justification by faith alone.

There is a Trinitarian structure here:

- I. The Believer's Experience with Christ (3:1)
- II. The Believer's Experience with the Holy Spirit (3:2-4)
- III. The Believer's Experience with the Father (3:5)

Of the broader section (vv. 1-18) Longenecker writes:

Gal 3:1-18 is one of the most familiar and closely studied of Paul's letters. That is so because of its concentration of themes central to the Christian gospel, its attack against legalism, and the complexity of Paul's arguments in support of a law-free gospel." [Longenecker, Galatians, 98]

3:1 EXEGESIS

GREEK TEXT:

ὦ ἄνόητοι Γαλάται, τίς ὑμᾶς ἐβάσκανεν, οἷς κατ' ὀφθαλμοὺς Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς προεγράφη ἐσταυρωμένος;

ὦ (ὦ̅ = O! || Interjection)

ἄνόητοι (ἄνόητος = foolish || Adjective: Masculine Vocative Plural).

Γαλάται, (Γαλάτης || Noun: Masculine Vocative Plural).

τίς (τίς = who, what, which || Interrogative Pronoun: Masculine Nominative Singular).

ὑμᾶς (σὺ = you || Second Person Independent Personal Pronoun: Accusative Plural).

ἐβάσκανεν, (βάσκαίνω = to bewitch || Verb: Aorist Active Indicative, 3S).

οἷς (ὅς = who/that, of whom, to whom, whom [referring to people]; that/which, of which, to which, which [referring to things] – Translation depends on case || Relative Pronoun: Masculine Dative Plural).

κατ' (= before).

ὀφθαλμοὺς (ὀφθαλμος || Noun: Masculine Accusative Plural).

Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς ---

προεγράφη (προγράφω = to show forth, publicly portray, placard in public || Verb: Aorist Passive Indicative, 3S).

ἐσταυρωμένος; (σταυροῦμαι = to crucify || Participle: Masculine Nominative Singular Perfect Passive).

ENGLISH TRANSLATION:

O foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you, before whose eyes Jesus Christ was publicly portrayed as crucified?

CONTEXTUAL, GRAMMATICAL, THEOLOGICAL, APPLICATIONAL ANALYSIS:

Metzger's Textual Notes on 3:1:

3:1 ἐβάσκανεν

The Textus Receptus, following C Dc K L P Ψ most minuscules vgmss syr^h goth eth al, adds τῆ ἀληθείᾳ μὴ πειθεσθαι from 5:7.

3:1 προεγράφη

The Textus Receptus, following D E F G K L many minuscules itd, g syr^h goth al, adds ἐν ὑμῖν, which the AV takes with the following ἐσταυρωμένος (“crucified among you”). The text is decisively supported by κ A B C Ψ 33* 104 234 424c 915 1739 itr vg syr^p copsa, bo arm eth al.

Bruce Manning Metzger, United Bible Societies, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament, Second Edition a Companion Volume to the United Bible Societies' Greek New Testament (4th Rev. Ed.)* (London; New York: United Bible Societies, 1994), 524–525.

O foolish Galatians! (ὦ ἀνόητοι Γαλάται,)

“ἀνοετος . . . denotes the stupidity that arises from deadness and impotence of intellect.” [Wuest, Ga 3:1] This is mental flabbiness. We are to think.

On two other occasions in his writings Paul used the vocative case to appeal directly to his readers (2 Cor 6:11; Phil 4:15), but only here in Galatians did he add the prefixed “Oh” (Gk., ὦ; cf. Moffatt; Williams), an emotive particle that reinforces the apostle’s mood of indignation and concern. [George, 205]

Who has bewitched you, (τίς ὑμᾶς ἐβάσκανεν,)

τίς (τίς = who, what, which || Interrogative Pronoun: Masculine Nominative Singular). The singular may refer to the perpetrator that Paul singles out in 5:10 – or it may refer to Satan (1 Pet 5:8; 2 Cor 11:3). I think it's more likely that, as a rhetorical question, there's not really an answer. The emphasis isn't on the “who” but on the “bewitching.”

ἐβάσκανεν, (βάσκαίνω = to bewitch || Verb: Aorist Active Indicative, 3S). Not “the devil made me do it.”

The metaphor comes from a rather popular superstition of giving someone “the evil eye.”

Use in Plato:

Now I should not be surprised if the argument of Cadmus met with the same fate.”“My friend,” said Socrates, “do not be boastful, lest some evil eye put to rout the argument that is to come. [Plato, *Phaedo*, 95 B. Plato in Twelve Volumes Translated by Harold North Fowler; Introduction by W.R.M. Lamb., vol. 1 (Medford, MA: Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press; London, William Heinemann Ltd., 1966)]

It is as if they have been bewitched and someone has cast a spell on them. Cf. people that we've known who have changed in their character in some significant, almost inexplicable way. It is as if they have been brainwashed.

before whose eyes Jesus Christ was publicly portrayed as crucified? (οἷς κατ' ὀφθαλμοῦς Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς προεγράφη ἐσταυρωμένος;)

“The whole expression is metaphorical and describes the familiar practice of making public announcements by means of bills or posters. In this case the announcement is “the death of Jesus Christ on the cross.” [UBS, 53]

προεγράφη (προγράφω = to show forth, publicly portray, placard in public || Verb: Aorist Passive Indicative, 3S).

Placarded. Not some recreation or visual aid that Paul used. Rather, an accurate description of a historical event that was itself public and that was vividly portrayed in Paul's preaching and embraced by the Galatians.

Paul likely was referring to the vivid, unforgettable way in which he first presented the story of Jesus' suffering and death to the Galatians. In effect, he was saying to them, “How can you have been so deceived by these heretics when in your mind's eye Jesus was, as it were, impaled on the cross of Calvary right before you? Yes, you have actually seen Christ crucified plastered on a billboard; how could you ever lose sight of that?” Of course, it is not merely the gruesome facts about Jesus' death but rather the supreme truth that “God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself” (2 Cor 5:19, KJV) that gives power to such portrayals of the crucifixion. [George, 209]

“Let those who want to discharge the ministry of the gospel aright learn not only to speak and declaim but also to penetrate into consciences, so that men may see Christ crucified and that His blood may flow. When the Church has such painters as these she no longer needs wood and stone, that is, dead images, she no longer requires any pictures.” [Calvin, 147]

Cf. 1 Cor. 1:18, 23, 2:2.

ἑσταυρωμένος; (σταυροῶ = to crucify || Participle: Masculine Nominative Singular Perfect Passive). Note perfect tense. Historical act that continues to reverberate.

How can one who knows Christ be so distracted that he turns his attention away from the cross back to Moses?

This verse is a solemn warning to every congregation that gathers for worship and every preacher who stands behind a sacred desk to proclaim God's Word. However large or small the congregation, however powerful or ineffective the preacher, a contest of eternal moment is being waged, with the souls of men and women in the balance. With so much at stake, the content of our preaching must be nothing less than Jesus Christ and him crucified (1 Cor 2:2). [George, 207]

Complete atonement Christ has made,
And to the utmost farthing paid
whate'er his people owed;
How then can wrath on me take place,
If sheltered in his righteousness,
and sprinkled with his blood?

[quoted in, G. S. Bishop, *Grace in Galatians* (Swengel, Pa.: Reiner, 1968), 25]

3:2 EXEGESIS

GREEK TEXT:

τοῦτο μόνον θέλω μαθεῖν ἀφ' ὑμῶν· ἐξ ἔργων νόμου τὸ πνεῦμα ἐλάβετε ἢ ἐξ ἀκοῆς πίστεως;

τοῦτο (τουτο = this || Near Demonstrative Pronoun: Neuter Accusative Singular).

μόνον (μόνος || Adverb).

θέλω (θέλω || Verb: Present Active Indicative, 1S).

μαθεῖν (μανθανω = to learn || Verb: Aorist Active Infinitive).

ἀφ' (απο = from || Preposition).

ὑμῶν· (συ = you || Second Person Independent Personal Pronoun: Genitive Plural).

ἐξ ἔργων (ἔργον || Noun: Neuter Genitive Plural).

νόμου (νόμος || Noun: Masculine Genitive Singular).

τὸ πνεῦμα (Noun: Neuter Accusative Singular).

ἐλάβετε (λάμβανω = to receive || Verb: Aorist Active Indicative, 2P).

ἢ (logical disjunctive conjunction).

ἐξ ἀκοῆς (ἀκοῆ = hearing || Noun: Feminine Genitive Singular). The word may refer to the act of hearing (a message), or the message that is itself heard.

πίστεως; (Noun: Feminine Genitive Singular). Genitive of attendant circumstances.

ENGLISH TRANSLATION:

This is the only thing I want to learn from you: did you receive the Spirit by the works of the Law or by hearing with faith?

CONTEXTUAL, GRAMMATICAL, THEOLOGICAL, APPLICATIONAL ANALYSIS:

This is the only thing I want to learn from you: (τοῦτο μόνον θέλω μαθεῖν ἀφ' ὑμῶν·)

What follows is the central rhetorical question. All others hinge on and relate to this one.

did you receive the Spirit by the works of the Law or by hearing with faith? (ἐξ ἔργων νόμου τὸ πνεῦμα ἐλάβετε ἢ ἐξ ἀκοῆς πίστεως;)

ἐλάβετε (λάμβανω = to receive || Verb: Aorist Active Indicative, 2P). Past action.

Central to Paul's theology (theology of the entire Bible): when a person comes to faith and is justified that individual receives the gift of the H.S. (cf. Rom. 8:9-10). This was the mark of a new age of salvation, something predicted by the prophets (Joel 2:28-32, cf. Acts 2:17-21 / Rom. 10:13). Part and parcel with the New Covenant predicted by the OT prophets (esp. Ezek. and Isaiah) and fulfilled in t/death, burial and resurrection of Jesus – and the giving of t/Spirit at Pentecost.

O.T. / N.T. as it relates to the H.S. - continuity vs. discontinuity (cf. James Hamilton, God's Indwelling Presence: The Holy Spirit in the Old and New Testaments).

Parallel back to 2:16.

ἐξ ἀκοῆς (ἀκοῆ = hearing || Noun: Feminine Genitive Singular). The word may refer to the act of hearing (a message), or the message that is itself heard.

πίστεως; (Noun: Feminine Genitive Singular). Genitive of attendant circumstances.

The reference to the Spirit confirms that the conversion of the Galatians is in view, for the Spirit is the sign that one belongs to the people of God (cf. 1 Cor 2:12). At conversion the Holy Spirit is poured out in one's heart (Rom 5:5). Those who belong to Christ and are genuinely Christians have the Spirit dwelling in them (Rom 8:9; cf. 8:14–15). Conversely, the natural person does not have the Spirit (1 Cor 2:14). The Spirit authenticates one's salvation and functions as the guarantee that God will complete his saving work (2 Cor 1:22; 5:5; Eph 1:14).

In a similar way, Peter defended the inclusion of Gentiles into the church of Jesus Christ apart from circumcision by appealing to the gift of the Spirit (Acts 15:8; cf. 10:44–48). Since Gentiles had the Spirit, circumcision was not required. Paul's argument here is strikingly the same. Since the Galatians have the Spirit, they are clearly Christians and belong to the people of God; hence, circumcision and observing the law are not required to belong to his people.²⁰ The issue the Galatians must resolve is whether they received the Spirit by doing the works of the law or through hearing with faith. Paul uses the exact same phrase to express the same contrast in 3:5. The meaning of the phrase “works of law” was discussed in 2:16. There it was argued that the term refers to all that the law requires, though, given the Galatian context, the presenting issue was circumcision. [Schreiner, 182]

Cf. Romans 10:17. Cf. James 1:22 - Luther could write that the only organs of a Christian man are his ears.

Summarized, does one receive the Holy Spirit (salvation) by hearing and believing or by doing and obeying?

Not a text upon which to try to outline an *ordo salutis*. Regeneration comes before conversion and regeneration marks the initial work of the HS. This refers to the indwelling of the HS, not the initial work of the HS.

ἐξ ἀκοῆς πίστεως can be understood in various ways:

The phrase “hearing with faith” (ἀκοῆς πίστεως) could be interpreted in various ways. Diverse interpretations are possible since the noun “hearing” (ἀκοή) can refer to the act of hearing (Matt 13:14; 2 Pet 2:8) or the message heard (John 12:38; Rom 10:16). So too, the noun “faith” (πίστις) may refer to trusting God (Rom 4:5, 9; 1 Thess 1:8 etc.) or to the content of what is believed (Gal 1:23; 1 Tim 4:1, etc.). Therefore, the phrase may be interpreted as (1) hearing with trust;²¹ (2) the message heard that demanded faith;²² (3) the message that enables faith;²³ (4) the message of the faith (i.e., the Christian message); or (5) hearing of the faith (i.e., the Christian message).²⁴ “Faith” (πίστις) in Galatians typically refers to trust in God, and this meaning dominates in 2:16–3:9.²⁵ Therefore, it seems unlikely that Paul refers to the message of the Christian faith here.

The parallel text in Rom 10:16–17, where both nouns are used, supports the notion that trust is the meaning here as well. “For Isaiah says, ‘Lord, who has believed (ἐπίστευσεν) our message (ἀκοή)?’ Hence, faith (πίστις) comes from hearing (ἐξ ἀκοῆς), and hearing (ἀκοή) through the word (ῥήματος) of Christ.” There is no doubt that “faith” (πίστις) means “trust” here, for it is parallel to the verb “believed” (ἐπίστευσεν). So, we have further reasons to think that the noun “faith” (πίστις) means trust in Gal 3:2.

The more difficult issue in Gal 3:2 is whether the noun I have translated “hearing” (ἀκοή) means “hearing” or “message.” Indeed, in Rom 10:16 the noun in question (ἀκοή) refers to the message proclaimed, while in 10:17 the act of hearing is in view.²⁷ The alternation between the two in Rom 10:16–17 suggests that the meaning is not greatly affected whichever view we opt for. What is “heard,” after all, is the “message” of the gospel. The Galatians received the Spirit “by hearing with faith” or “through the message that required faith.” In both cases the emphasis is on faith or trusting God, and what was heard was the gospel. I suspect Paul puts the emphasis on hearing since he contrasts two human activities: doing and hearing. Still, what was heard was the message, so a sharp distinction between the two must not be pressed. [Schreiner, 182–183]

Also fits with the connection to Abraham in v. 6.

See Moo, pages 182-83:

But the main issue Paul wants to raise in his rhetorical question is the means by which the Galatian Christians first came to experience God's Spirit: was it "by means of works of the law" (ἐξ ἔργων νόμου) or "by means of hearing accompanied by faith" (ἐξ ἀκοῆς πίστεως)? These phrases pickup the key contrast in Gal. 2:16 between "works of the law" and "the faith of Christ." "Works of the law" will again refer to human actions done in obedience to the torah, the law of Moses (see the commentary and the third additional note on 2:16). But the phrase ἀκοῆς πίστεως is much harder to interpret since the meaning of both nouns is disputed and their genitive relationship is ambiguous We begin with the qualifying genitive πίστεως. Some interpreters downplay any focus on human response in the word, arguing that it can be reduced basically to "the proclamation of the gospel," "the faith message" (Hays 2002: 130-31; Martyn 1997: 284, 286-89), or even "the message about Christ's faithfulness" (Matera 1993: 290; D. Campbell 2009: 8.13-56; cf. de Boer 2011 174-76). This interpretation is interwoven with the larger interpretive issue of the πίστις Χριστοῦ (*pistis Christou*, faith of/in Christ) debate. We have found good reasons for maintaining the traditional understanding of this phrase as an objective genitive ("faith in Christ"; see the comments on 2:16 and "The Faith of Christ" in the introduction), making it likely that the reference here also is to human believing in Christ. And this interpretation receives confirmation from the connection that Paul makes between the Galatians' πίστις and Abraham's faith (v. 6; see esp. Hunn 2006).

If the genitive πίστεως, then, refers to human faith, it is possible to understand ἀκοή to refer to "what is heard," meaning "the message." This could make contextual sense, since there is implied reference to the preaching of the gospel in verse 1 (Boers 2006: 165-68). The genitive πίστεως could then be an objective genitive, yielding the interpretation "the message that evokes faith" (H. Johnson 1987: 185-88; Das 1995: 178; Mundle 1977: 15). But there is little in the context to suggest that the gospel creates faith. On this understanding of ἀκοή and πίστις, it is more likely that the genitive is loosely attributive, the idea amounting to "believing what you

heard" (NIV, NRSV, NLT, NET, NJB, CEB; see, e.g., Bruce 1982b: 149; R. Longenecker 1990: 103). But the word ἀκοή can also mean the activity of hearing; so it is also possible that the phrase in this verse (and in v. 5) means "hearing accompanied by faith" (RSV, ESV, NASB, HCSB. e.g., Burton 1921: 147; Lightfoot 1881: 135; Dunn 1993a: 154; Hong 1994: 170-71; Vanhoye 1993: 98-101; Silva 2004: 236; Harmon 2010: 125- 33). Paul brings together the word ἀκοή with faith in only one other text, Rom. 10:16b-17, which provides some evidence for each of these interpretations of ἀκοή . . . Faith, then, comes from hearing, the hearing through the word of Christ [AT]). As our translation suggests, ἀκοή in verse 16b refers to "what is heard," but in verse 17 ἀκοή means "hearing" itself. This latter meaning is the one that ἀκοή usually has in Paul (1 Cor. 12:17; 1 Thess. 2:13 [likely]; 2 Tim. 4:3, 4), and probably what the word means also here in Gal. 3. "Hearing" conveys something of the connotation of the equivalent Hebrew word: faithful receptivity, an "attentiveness" to the word of God that includes both trust in its content and giver and the disposition to obey. See (*sama`*, hear), for example, in Exod. 15:26; 19:5; 23:22; Deut. 11:13, 27; 15:5; 28:1, 2; 2 Sam. 22:45; Jer. 17:24; and 1 Sam. 15:22 LXX ("To hear [ἀκοή] is better than sacrifice" [AT]; cf. Garlington 2003: 134; O'Donovan 1994: 110). The genitive πιστεως, then, indicates that the "hearing" here is a "hearing" that "involves" faith, or that is "accompanied by faith" (attributive genitive), or even, "the 'hearing' that Christians call faith" (epexegetic genitive; cf. Williams 1989: 83-93; Hong 1993: 129-31). As Paul's argument proceeds, it becomes clear that faith is the key issue. But here Paul wants to associate faith with hearing in order or to remind the Galatians of their initial response to the preaching of the gospel. [Moo, pages 182-83]

In these verses the term "Spirit" is introduced for the first time in Galatians. It appears again at critical junctures throughout the book (3:14; 4:6, 29; 5:5; 6:8) and is central to Paul's description of the life of freedom and love to which every believer is called (5:16–26). When Paul spoke of the Spirit, he was talking about the Holy Spirit of God to whom he attributed the personal characteristics of deity. The Holy Spirit leads believers and may be grieved by their sin; he reveals the mystery of the gospel and intercedes for the saints in prayer; he baptizes, indwells, seals, fills, and empowers Christians to live a life pleasing to God. Above all, the Holy Spirit enables the church to confess Jesus as Lord (1 Cor 12:3). Without his vivifying presence these words are but an empty slogan. Thus here, and also later in Galatians, the Holy Spirit is introduced in the context of the doctrine of the Trinity. Paul had just spoken of his proclamation of the cross of Christ; in 3:5 he would refer to the Father who gave his Spirit to the Galatians. While Paul had in mind the observable manifestation of miracles at this point, he would later refer to the more fundamental gift of divine sonship the Holy Spirit bestows on all who trust in Christ. "Because you are sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts" (4:6). [George, 210]

Note the ministry of the Holy Spirit in the life of believers Cf. to our union with X.

JOH 7:39 But this He spoke of the Spirit, whom those who believed in Him were to receive; for the Spirit was not yet {given,} because Jesus was not yet glorified. (NASB)

JOH 14:17 {that is} the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not behold Him or know Him, {but} you know Him because He abides with you, and will be in you. (NASB)

ACT 1:8 but you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth. " (NASB)

ACT 2:38 And Peter {said} to them, "Repent, and let each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. (NASB)

ACT 19:2 and he said to them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" And they {said} to him, "No, we have not even heard whether there is a Holy Spirit." (NASB)

2CO 11:4 For if one comes and preaches another Jesus whom we have not preached, or you receive a different spirit which you have not received, or a different gospel which you have not accepted, you bear {this} beautifully. (NASB)

GAL 3:14 in order that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles, so that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith. (NASB)

GAL 4:6-7 And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" Therefore you are no longer a slave, but a son; and if a son, then an heir through God. (NASB)

Two options (fits w/context of the Judaizers): Work of the Spirit or Works of the Law; Believing or Doing.

3:3 EXEGESIS

GREEK TEXT:

οὕτως ἀνόητοί ἐστε, ἐναρξάμενοι πνεύματι νῦν σαρκὶ ἐπιτελεῖσθε;

οὕτως (οὕτως = thus, so || Adverb).

ἀνόητοί (ἀνόητος = foolish || Adjective: Masculine Nominative Plural). Same word used in v. 1.

ἐστε, (ἐμί || Verb: Present Active Indicative, 2P).

ἐναρξάμενοι (ἐναρχομαι = to begin || Participle: Masculine Nominative Plural Aorist Middle).

πνεύματι (πνεῦμα || Noun: Neuter Dative Singular).

νῦν (Adverb).

σαρκὶ (σαρξ || Noun: Feminine Dative Singular).

ἐπιτελεῖσθε; (ἐπιτελεω = to complete, accomplish || Verb: Present Middle/Passive Indicative, 2P). “To bring something to the place where it is complete.” [Wuest, Ga 3:3]

ENGLISH TRANSLATION:

Are you so foolish? Having begun by the Spirit are you now being perfected by the flesh?

CONTEXTUAL, GRAMMATICAL, THEOLOGICAL, APPLICATIONAL ANALYSIS:

Are you so foolish? (οὕτως ἀνόητοί ἐστε,)

Cf. Phps “Surely you can’t be so idiotic”; NEB “Can it be that you are so stupid?” Same word used in v. 1.

Having begun by the Spirit are you now being perfected by the flesh? (ἐναρξάμενοι πνεύματι νῦν σαρκὶ ἐπιτελεῖσθε;)

A sine qua non of salvation:

Romans 8:9 However, you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him.

Begun – Spirit – Salvation (cf. v. 2).

Perfected – Flesh – Sanctification.

Incongruous to begin one way and continue another. Like starting a car with gasoline, pulling out the tank, and then pushing it.

ἐπιτελεῖσθε; (ἐπιτελεω = to complete, accomplish || Verb: Present Middle/Passive Indicative, 2P). “To bring something to the place where it is complete.” [Wuest, Ga 3:3]

On σαρκί - cf. John 3:6; Philippians 3:3, 4; Romans 6:19, 7:5, 18, 25, 8:3; II Corinthians 1:17. Some see a veiled inference to circumcision here: “Ultimately, of course, Paul alludes to the rite of circumcision considered at present by the Galatians.” [Betz, Galatians, 134, as cited by Schreiner]

One could argue here that the issue in Galatians was not how to get into the people of God but how to stay in the people of God.³³ We must carefully sort out Paul’s view in this matter and distinguish it from the view of the Judaizers. The false teachers were not giving advice about progress in the Christian life, for their view, as in Judaism, was that circumcision was required for entrance into the people of God.³⁴ Therefore, the Judaizers argued that those uncircumcised were not part of the covenant enacted by the Lord (Gen 17:9–14; Lev 12:3). The Judaizers argued that the Galatians must be circumcised to belong to the people of God.

Paul, however, believed that the Galatians were Christians because they had already received the Spirit. Hence, he frames the matter in terms of progress in the Christian life. In other words, Paul writes from his perspective; he was not even willing to grant the premise of the false teachers. He assumes that the Galatians are Christians, and thus he describes their desire to be circumcised as a misguided attempt to make progress in the Christian life on the basis of the flesh instead of the Spirit.

We see here as well that the Christian life follows the same course whether the issue is justification or sanctification. It is not as if justification is through the Spirit and by faith, and sanctification is by works and human effort. Both justification and sanctification are due to the Spirit’s work and are the result of faith.³⁵ [Schreiner, 184–185]

³³ So Gundry, “Grace, Works, and Staying Saved in Paul,” 8–9; Fee, Galatians, 107. For this view, see also Cosgrove, who argues that the presenting issue in Galatians is not justification or what is required to enter the people of God, but the continued work of the Spirit in the lives of the Galatians (Cross and the Spirit, 2, 8–15, 32–35, 38–42, 49–51, 86). So also Scott J. Hafemann, “Paul and the Exile,” 340, n. 29. Such a reading fails to see the fundamental nature of 2:15–21 in the argument, misreads 3:3, and misunderstands as well why circumcision was required (i.e., to enter the people of God).

Regardless, one cannot build upon a good foundation with bad materials. Cf. spending \$\$\$ on a great foundation for a building and then using poor materials to build on the structure. Cf. Col 2:6-15.

3:4 EXEGESIS

GREEK TEXT:

τοσαῦτα ἐπάθετε εἰκῆ; εἴ γε καὶ εἰκῆ.

τοσαῦτα (τοσαῦτος = to many, so much, so great || Demonstrative Pronoun: Neuter Accusative Plural).
ἐπάθετε (πάσχω = to suffer || Verb: Aorist Active Indicative, 2P).

εἰκῆ; (εἰκῆ = without reason, in vain || Adverb).

εἴ γε (= if indeed).

καὶ εἰκῆ. (εἰκῆ = without reason, in vain || Adverb).

ENGLISH TRANSLATION:

Did you suffer so many things in vain—if indeed it was in vain?

CONTEXTUAL, GRAMMATICAL, THEOLOGICAL, APPLICATIONAL ANALYSIS:

Did you suffer so many things in vain—if indeed it was in vain? (τοσαῦτα ἐπάθετε εἰκῆ; εἴ γε καὶ εἰκῆ.)

ἐπάθετε (πάσχω = to suffer || Verb: Aorist Active Indicative, 2P). “The crucial term here is , which always in the LXX and elsewhere in the NT (some 41 times in addition to Gal 3:4) is used in the unfavorable sense of “experience suffering” . . .” [Longenecker, 104]. Cf. 1 Peter 2:20,23, 3:17. Seems highly unlikely that Paul means something different here.

Contextually, “experience” seems to be a better option. Grammatically, it's hard to defend.

English translations split between two words that have different meanings: “suffer” and “experience.”

“Did you suffer so many things in vain—if indeed it was in vain?” [NASB / ESV (ESV note “experience”)]

“Were all your experiences wasted? I hope not!” [NCV]

“Have you experienced so much in vain—if it really was in vain?” [NIV (note “suffered”)]

Your experience translates a verb which is ambiguous, since it could be understood either negatively or positively. Negatively, it could be understood as “suffering” and therefore could refer to the persecutions that the Galatian Christians had gone through (Phps “Has all your painful experience brought you nowhere?”; Knox “Was it to no purpose that you went through so much?”). Positively, it could refer to the spiritual experiences of the Galatians as a result of their reception of the Holy Spirit (JB “Have all the favours you received been wasted?”; NAB

“Have you had such remarkable experiences all to no purpose ...?”; NEB “Have all your great experiences been in vain ...?”). [UBS, 55–56]

Paul habitually uses it in the sense of suffering evil, and there is no decisive instance, either in N.T. or LXX, of the neutral sense. In Class., where it is used of the experience of benefits, it is always accompanied by some qualifying word. When it stands alone it signifies to suffer evil. The evidence on the whole makes very strongly for the meaning suffer; [Vincent, 113–114]

No record of persecution in North Galatia, but there is for South Galatia (Acts 14:2, 5, 19, 22). As for a record in Galatians of these believers having suffered, see 4:29.

When Paul uses the language of vanity (εἰκῆ, cf. 1 Cor 15:2; Gal 4:11)⁴¹ in soteriological contexts, he teaches that faith is futile if one does not persevere to the end. Failure to continue in the faith will lead to eschatological judgment. [Schreiner, 185]

3:5 EXEGESIS

GREEK TEXT:

ὁ οὖν ἐπιχορηγῶν ὑμῖν τὸ πνεῦμα καὶ ἐνεργῶν δυνάμεις ἐν ὑμῖν, ἐξ ἔργων νόμου ἢ ἐξ ἀκοῆς πίστεως;

ὁ (ὁ || Definite Article: Masculine Nominative Singular).

οὖν (Logical Inferential Conjunction). First use listed in BAG: “Inferential, denoting that what it introduces is the result of or an inference fr. what precedes *so, therefore, consequently, accordingly, then.*”

ἐπιχορηγῶν (ἐπιχορηγεῖν = to supply, provide || Participle: Masculine Nominative Singular, Present Active). Same present active participle used in 2 Cor. 9:10.

ὑμῖν (σὺ = you || Second Person Independent Personal Pronoun: Dative Plural).

τὸ πνεῦμα (Noun: Neuter Accusative Singular).

καὶ ἐνεργῶν (ἐνεργεῖν = to work || Participle: Masculine Nominative Singular, Present Active).

δυνάμεις (δύναμις || Noun: Feminine Accusative Plural).

ἐν ὑμῖν, (σὺ = you || Second Person Independent Personal Pronoun: Dative Plural).

ἐξ ἔργων (ἔργον || Noun: Neuter Genitive Plural). “It is a great word for God’s activities (Phil. 2:13).” [ATR]

νόμου (νόμος || Noun: Masculine Genitive Singular).

ἢ (logical disjunctive conjunction).

ἐξ ἀκοῆς (ἀκοῆ = hearing || Noun: Feminine Genitive Singular).

πίστεως; (Noun: Feminine Genitive Singular). Genitive of attendant circumstances.

ENGLISH TRANSLATION:

Consequently, does He provide you with the Spirit and work miracles among you by the works of the Law or by hearing with faith?

CONTEXTUAL, GRAMMATICAL, THEOLOGICAL, APPLICATIONAL ANALYSIS:

This verse parallels v. 1. The post-positive οὖν indicates that Paul is bringing his argument from experience to an end.

Consequently, does He provide you with the Spirit and work miracles among you (ὁ οὖν ἐπιχορηγῶν ὑμῖν τὸ πνεῦμα καὶ ἐνεργῶν δυνάμεις ἐν ὑμῖν,)

οὖν (Logical Inferential Conjunction). First use listed in BAG: “Inferential, denoting that what it introduces is the result of or an inference fr. what precedes *so, therefore, consequently, accordingly, then.*”

The verb for give expresses the idea of “supply abundantly,” “giving freely and liberally.” Paul’s use of the present tense form indicates that, for him, the experience of receiving the Spirit is not merely an experience in the past but can be thought of as being in progress, even up to the time of his writing this letter. The continuity in God’s giving his Spirit may be expressed in

some languages as “he constantly gives the Spirit,” “he continually gives the Spirit,” or “he is always supplying the Spirit.” [UBS, 57]

“He” here is clearly “God” not Paul [contra Aquinas]

The association of the Spirit with miracles – sign miracles? Timothy George writes in footnote 17:

Paul’s reference to the fact that God “works miracles” among the Galatians has been interpreted variously by commentators on this passage. Some see this as a reference to the exorcism of evil spirits, others to ecstatic phenomena or divine healings and the like. Whatever they were, Paul was not speaking merely of the miracles he performed in Galatia, some of which are recorded in Acts, but of the continuing miraculous manifestations of the Spirit among the believers of Galatia. Such miraculous signs often accompany the initial evangelization of a particular region. There is no more reason to assume that such miracles were limited to the days of the apostles than there is to teach that the Great Commission has expired with them. At the same time, it is important to note that while Paul, here and elsewhere, accepted the validity of miraculous manifestations of the Spirit, he did not separate this dimension of the Spirit’s ministry from the sanctifying work of inner transformation. As E. deW. Burton put it, “Yet it must also be borne in mind that in the view of the apostle it was one spirit that produced alike the outward charismata and the inward moral fruit of the Spirit (5:22–23)” (A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians, ICC [Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1921], 151). See also W. Grundmann, “δύναμαι,” TDNT 2.304–17, and D. J. Lull, *The Spirit in Galatia: Paul’s Interpretation of Pneuma as Divine Power* (Chico, Cal.: Scholars Press, 1980). [George, 214, footnote 17].

This was an early letter, so I would assume that there were sign miracles that accompanied the establishing of these churches. Apostles are still on the scene. Cf. 2 Cor. 12:2.

Application today?

by the works of the Law or by hearing with faith? (ἐξ ἔργων νόμου ἢ ἐξ ἀκοῆς πίστεως;)

To be understood in the same sense as in v. 2.